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## HTA still seeks contract, will not strike

By **Brendan Rooney**  
Correspondent

HOLYOKE – Turning to new developments, it has been more than 300 days since Holyoke teachers have been under contract. Negotiations between the Holyoke Teachers Association union (HTA), HPA (Holyoke Paraprofessionals Association), and the district continue to carry on, as roadblocks keep manifesting along the way, impeding progress.

HTA President Nick Cream and HTA Vice President Alex Cespedes, as well as Mayor Joshua Garcia and Holyoke Superintendent Anthony Soto all discussed their views on the current contract situation.

The HTA unveiled its latest contract proposal in which they are seeking 14 sick days, three weeks of family leave, additional time for prep, and for licensure to be removed from the pay scale, all while remaining steadfast in their main stated goal of improving staff

retention, stabilizing classrooms, and closing the gap in terms of salaries and working conditions closer to those in neighboring districts. Cream said that the union and district are close on the numbers, but the main sticking point is the district's position on licensure and how to execute pay steps.

Soto said that the district has made some movement with their latest offer.

"We have come down from 188 to 186 (school) days, along with reductions in total work hours at all lev-

els of teaching in comparison with previous contracts," Soto told us. "We also created 5 days of weekly prep periods, while creating a space for collaboration that not only reinforces teaching but ultimately benefits the students."

Cream said that "Without a strong contract, teachers do not stay long enough to earn their licenses," before noting that the union currently has over 200 unlicensed teachers, due in part to the critical staffing needs in the

district. Regarding teaching departures from the district, according to DESE, it was revealed that more than 1,345 teachers have left Holyoke since 2015, including when the district was under state receivership, and this year, working without a contract. "I just want to be clear that our current compensation model isn't requiring licensure; it's rewarding licensure," Soto said.

The superintendent and union president both confirmed that currently, 200 unlicensed teachers work in

the district.

"Our students deserve licensed teachers in front of them, and we continue to work with teachers who are on waivers and those who are unlicensed, and are trying to support them in doing what it takes," Soto said. "This current comp proposal adds a lane for professional licensure."

Soto explained that there is still a lane present in terms of various compensation levels dependent on the indi-

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## CPAC makes funding proposal

By **Gregory A. Scibelli**  
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HOLYOKE – While some tried to repeal it, the Community Preservation Act is still going strong in the City of Holyoke, with property owners paying a small surcharge on their property taxes to secure some state funding to be used for specific purposes.

Those purposes include affordable housing, historical preservation, and recreation.

While the city council approves all funding requests from the fund, the Community Preservation Act Committee makes the recommendations for funding.

According to a recent memo by the CPAC, six projects made the cut this year, totaling nearly \$700,000.

According to the funding breakdown, \$421,960 will come from the historic fund, \$250,000 from the open space and recreation fund, and \$0 will come from the affordable housing account.

The six projects recommend are work on Scott Tower at Anniversary Hill Park, work to the City Hall steps, window restoration at Holyoke Health center, a horse restoration for Friends of MGR, Butler's Pantry at Wistariahurst Museum, and a garden on Dwight St. requested by Neighbor to Neighbor.

For Scott Tower, a restoration of the tower and associated landscaping funds have been requested. The CPA funds will be combined with other grant funding for the project as well as a previous \$100,000 grant from the CPA.

Friends of the Holyoke Merry-Go-Round seek \$31,960 to restore four horses for the merry-go-round, which are near 100 years old. The Friends have been working since 2003 to do a full restoration of the 48 carousel horses.

Holyoke Health Center on High St. needs \$225,000 to restore windows. It is a historic property and thus the restoration needs to be done specifically in order to preserve the character and historic integrity of the building. While the historic look will remain, the windows will be energy-efficient.

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## Voting advocacy event held for community

By **Ben Hernandez**  
Correspondent

SOUTH HADLEY – State representatives gathered at the Village Green in South Hadley on Apr. 26 to speak on community voting engagement and voter empowerment. Through the two-hour event, Massachusetts Senator Jake Oliveira and State Representative Homar Gomez spoke on the country's voting history, the proposed SAVE act, and the importance of voting in local elections.

Partnered with the League of Women Voters Amherst, the first MHC Votes! event was created to bridge the gap between local government and the community. State government officials made speeches, educated the public on local government roles and responsibilities, and fielded questions from the public.

"We really wanted to create a place where we could combine our student population with the local community," said Bailey Dillon, the senator for MHC Votes; a student advocacy group run from Mount Holyoke College created with the express purpose of



MHC Votes! representatives before the event.

"bringing voting accessibility to all levels."

Voter accessibility was in the minds of all the speakers attending. Oliveira's speech highlighted how equal voting is a recent invention, taking over one hundred years to include

women and minorities in the voting process. He also mentioned that one hundred years ago, non-landowners wouldn't be able to serve in office, a stipulation that he mentioned that would disqualify him from his current position.

"One hundred years ago, it required you not just to be a white male, but also to be a landowner in order to be a member of the state Senate," he mentioned during his impassioned speech to protect voter rights. "I'm one of the two

renters in the state Senate, so I wouldn't even be eligible to be a member of my body one hundred years ago."

Oliveira mentioned the 19th Amendment, which guarantees all American

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Turley photo by Ben Hernandez

"We really wanted to create a place where we could combine our student population with the local community."  
– Bailey Dillon

## Concert celebrates Cinco de Mayo

HOLYOKE – A Cinco de Mayo concert with the BOMBYX Brass Collective will take place on Tuesday, May 5 at De La Luz Soundstage at 7 p.m. The venue is located at 114 Race St, Holyoke.

Cinco de Mayo at De La Luz Soundstage unfolds as a vibrant brass celebration, where the BOMBYX Brass Collective paints with bold tones and rich textures across a program rooted in Mexican musical heritage. Featuring works by

Mexican composers Nubia Jaime

Donjuan and Omar Arellano Osorio alongside Aaron Copland's iconic El Salón México, the evening blends tradition, storytelling, and contemporary artistry. Additional selections beyond the theme round out the program, adding contrast and surprise, like unexpected spices in a well-crafted dish.

At the heart of the performance is Sahuaro, from Donjuan's Little Mexican Suite, a rhythmic and atmospheric homage to the towering cactus landscapes of northern Mexico. Osorio's Yú-Kú – A Mexican Waltz, written for BOMBYX Brass, draws listeners into the mountainous regions of Oaxaca, echoing the sound of village wind bands and

the enduring relationship between land and community. Together, these works offer a deeply rooted and evocative musical journey shaped by place, memory, and cultural identity.

Beyond the stage, the celebration continues with a themed menu from De La Luz's in-house café, with dishes inspired by traditional Mexican recipes. Paired with the electrifying sweep of Copland's El Salón México—a lively mosaic of folk melodies and dance hall energy—the evening becomes a full sensory experience. Music, food, and atmosphere come together in one unforgettable night along the canal, where every note and every bite tells a story.



## Duffy officially announces re-election campaign

HOLYOKE –

This week, State Representative Patricia Duffy officially announced her candidacy for re-election, highlighting a tenure defined by landmark funding for veterans, expanded educational opportunities, and a fierce commitment to local autonomy.

Since taking office, Duffy has focused on delivering tangible results for the district, most notably joining the advocacy for a \$400 million state investment for the Veterans Home. Beyond the financial commitment, Representative Duffy was instrumental in ensuring that local stakeholders maintain a seat on the statewide Veterans Home board, guaranteeing that those who live and work in the community have a direct say in the care of our heroes.



Patricia Duffy

"Our work has always been about making sure this community isn't just heard, but is leading the conversation," said Duffy. "From the halls of the State House to residents in

the district, my priority is ensuring our district has the resources and the ability to shape our own future. I do that by both bringing Holyokers' voices to Boston and my colleagues to Holyoke.

Duffy has hosted both the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Housing and the Gateway Cities Legislative Caucus in Holyoke, bringing them together with developers looking to take advantage of the House Development Incentive Program (HDIP). She went on to lead the advocacy for increasing access to that program in

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# HCC awarded \$455K for clean energy careers training

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College has been awarded a \$455,000 grant from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center to continue and refine its clean energy careers training programs.

In particular, the grant will pay for two free training programs for up to 30 individuals, Introductory Training in Construction, Electricity and Clean Energy Systems in fall 2026, and Solar Installer / Electrical Pre-Apprenticeship program in spring 2027.

HCC piloted both programs in 2025 after receiving a \$1.42 million grant from the Mass. Executive Office of Education for climate-related workforce training initiatives. The new award is part of a \$7 million allocation in clean energy and climatetech grants announced last month by the Healey-Driscoll administration.

“The first grant was really to design, develop, and essentially figure out what would work in our market,” said Kermit Dunkelberg, HCC assistant vice president of adult basic education and workforce development. “Now we’ll not just be continuing but refining these programs to achieve even stronger outcomes.”



Jayshawn Brown, a student in HCC’s solar tech training program, works on a solar panel installation project at Dean Technical High School.

The MassCEC grants will support 17 organizations through four programs: Equity Training Implementation; Climate Critical Training, Equipment and Infrastructure; Climate Critical Underrepresented Business Support; and

Student and Young Adult Career Awareness and Training. They are designed to help local organizations expand inclusive training, career awareness, and business support for jobs such as electricians, solar technicians, HVAC-R technicians, energy auditors, refrigeration techni-

cians, and EV charger technicians.

HCC received its grant through the Equity Training Implementation program track.

HCC was the only community college in Massachusetts to receive a dedicated grant, while the

Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges, a consortium of all 15 community colleges in the state, received \$120,000 to support HVAC programs across the community college system.

“Massachusetts is leading the nation in clean energy and climatetech, and that leadership depends on a strong, skilled workforce,” said Gov. Maura Healey. “These investments will connect with residents across the state to good-paying careers while helping employers meet growing demand. We are building a clean energy economy that creates opportunity in every region and real jobs for Massachusetts workers.”

HCC’s key partners in the grant are Holyoke’s Dean Technical High School, where the clean energy training classes meet, and solar industry companies PV Squared and SolaBlock.

Other partners include MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board, Coalition for Equitable Economy, Springfield Works, Browning the Green Space, and the Entrepreneurship & Business Collaborative.

“Thanks to these grants,

we’ve been able to connect students to career pathways that can be very challenging to get into,” said Mary Wager, HCC workforce and economic development training manager. “Through our programs and partnerships, students are introduced to building trades unions, in particular, the electrical workers union and carpentry union, as well as solar installer and electrical apprenticeship opportunities.”

Since 2025, HCC has run the introductory clean energy introductory program three times, the solar tech program once, a weatherization program two times, and recently introduced an Introduction to Manufacturing and Clean Energy Applications pilot program.

“These programs are creating opportunities for underserved populations,” said Dunkelberg. “It’s not just opening the pathways but reaching deeply into the community to create the access that’s been missing.”

Program enrollment will begin during the summer, but applicants can fill out a general interest form now at [hcc.edu/cleanenergy](http://hcc.edu/cleanenergy).

## Transfer coordinator receives lifetime achievement award

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College Transfer Affairs Coordinator Mark Broadbent received a lifetime achievement award from the New England Transfer Association, a non-profit association of transfer professionals from two- and four-year colleges and universities.

Broadbent, a resident of Longmeadow, was presented with the Dr. Mary E. Dunn Lifetime Achievement in Transfer Award at the association’s 2026 annual conference, which was held April 13-15 at the Hotel Northampton in Northampton, Mass. The award recognizes individuals who have made significant and sustained contri-

butions to transfer in New England through their advocacy, leadership, and mentoring.

Broadbent has worked at HCC since 1990 and served as coordinator of transfer affairs for 34 years.

“This award is well deserved,” said Renee Tastad, assistant vice president of student affairs and enrollment management. “Mark’s work has opened doors and created transfer paths for countless HCC students. He continues to elevate HCC as a college of academic excellence through our many transfer programs.”

Each year, HCC transfers hundreds of graduating students to colleges

and universities both near and far, with University of Massachusetts Amherst, Westfield State University, Elms College, Western New England, Smith College, and Mount Holyoke College being among its top transfer partners.

“It’s an honor, and it’s humbling,” said Broadbent. “It’s an outstanding award.”

Broadbent earned a bachelor’s degree in history from Syracuse University and a master’s degree in psychological services from Springfield College. He started working at HCC as a Springfield College intern and then moved into Admissions and the TRIO program before landing in his current position.



HCC Transfer Affairs Coordinator Mark Broadbent recently received a lifetime achievement award

## Gold, Silver and Coin Buyback with Olde Tavern Antiques

CHICOPEE – The Chicopee Council on Aging will host a Gold, silver and coin buyback event on Friday, May 15 at 8:30 a.m. at Chicopee Council on Aging’s RiverMills Center, located at 5 W. Main Street.

Join Olde Tavern Antiques at RiverMills Center for a Gold, Silver and Coin exchange. Olde Tavern Antiques of Connecticut will be at RiverMills to buy your old gold, silver and coins that you are ready to party with.

This is not an appraisal event.

You will receive payment on the spot if you accept the offer, and a percentage of the earnings will go back to the FRIENDS of RiverMills Center. You must register in advance.

## National Day of Prayer scheduled at Holyoke 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.

Are you having difficulty communicating with your partner, struggling with boundaries, and healthy relationships?

We invite you to join us Friday afternoons from 1-2:30 pm to explore these topics and more.

This group will be held in zoom, is educational, confidential, and free.

Please contact Pat James 413-726-8661.

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## Wistariahurst to host Mother's Day Plant Sale

HOLYOKE – Wistariahurst Museum welcomes spring with the second annual Mother's Day Market being held Saturday, May 2 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. 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 experience 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, so make sure not to miss out.

Wistariahurst Museum's Mother's Day Market offers something for everyone. From plants, 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).



## Fenton declares run for Governor's Council

SPRINGFIELD – Michael A. Fenton, a Springfield attorney, today announced his candidacy for the Massachusetts Governor's Council, District 8, representing 102 cities and towns, primarily located in Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin, and Berkshire counties.

Fenton enters the race with a focused mission: bringing the legal expertise, impartiality, and regional advocacy that Western Massachusetts communities need.

"The Governor's Council is one of the most consequential and least understood bodies in Massachusetts government, and our region needs to take full advantage of the power of the position, both through its constitutional authority and the influence that comes from the position's proximity to the Governor" said Fenton. "It shapes the future of our courts and provides extraordinary opportunities to advance our region's interests even beyond the confirmation of appointments. Our Governor's Councilor needs to have a strong working relationship with the Governor, not a combative one. When I am at the table, I will work with the Governor to advocate for nominations and funding of critical projects in Western Mass."

The Governor's Council is an eight-member elected body that advises the Governor on judicial nominations, confirms appointments to the bench, reviews pardons and commutations, and oversees other critical state appointments. The Lieutenant Governor presides over Governor's

Council meetings. "I will fight for regional equity and work to recruit and confirm serious, accountable judges to the bench. I intend to be a strong voice on the Council advocating for Western Massachusetts" said Fenton.

Fenton pointed to the fact that no current member of the Supreme Judicial Court, the Parole Board, or the Appellate Tax Board hails from Western Massachusetts. "These appointees make decisions that impact the lives of everyone in our Commonwealth, and Western Massachusetts deserves to be represented. There is a long tradition of regional diversity on the Supreme Judicial Court, the Parole Board, and the Appellate Tax Board. In recent years, the Governor's Council has gotten away from that practice, and our region has been left behind. If elected, I will restore that proud tradition of regional diversity and ensure Western Mass has representation on the SJC, the ATB, and the Parole Board."

### A Proven Attorney

Fenton focuses his law practice in the areas of commercial real estate, business planning, commercial finance and estate planning. He is a graduate of Western New England University School of Law, where he served on the Law Review, and earned a Master of Business Administration. He is currently an adjunct professor at the law school. His practice involves representing principals in business planning, businesses in the purchase and sale of enterprises, lenders and borrowers in commercial financing transactions, developers in

the acquisition and permitting of projects, and individuals in establishing comprehensive and sophisticated estate plans. He regularly represents businesses, lenders, and individuals throughout Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin, and Berkshire County. Fenton brings to this race something no other candidate offers; years of firsthand experience evaluating legal arguments, judicial reasoning, and the standards that separate good judges from great ones.

"The Governor's Council confirms our judges and oversees our courts," said Fenton. "We deserve a Governor's Councilor who is a member of the bar, understands the law, and can evaluate a nominee's judicial temperament from experience."

### Public Service Experience and Impartiality

Fenton's record in public service has been defined by impartiality and sound judgment. As a member of the Springfield City Council for seventeen years, a former five-time City Council President, Fenton has earned a reputation for making decisions based on evidence and the public good. He would bring that same standard to the Governor's Council.

"First and foremost, the Governor's Council must evaluate nominees on their legal qualifications and fitness for the bench," said Fenton. "I will bring impartiality and legal rigor to every confirmation."

### A Proactive Advocate for Western Massachusetts Courts

Western Massachusetts has real needs on the

Governor's Council. The region's Superior Court recently faced a critical judicial shortage; a gap that built up over time and left communities without the judicial resources they need and deserve. Fenton has spent his career being proactive, not reactive, when it comes to delivering results for the region.

"Western Massachusetts went without fully staffed courts for too long, and the impacts were real. Members of the bar have been very vocal about these issues and have brought their concerns to me" said Fenton. "District 8 needs a representative who will be proactive, not reactive, when it comes to ensuring our region has the judicial resources it deserves."

### Rooted in District 8

Fenton has spent his entire life and career in Springfield and Western Mass. "I know these communities, practice law in these communities, and have spent decades advocating for the people who call them home. Our area has some of the busiest court houses in the Commonwealth, and it is critical that the citizens of the four western counties receive full access to justice, through property funded and staffed court rooms."

Fenton and his family are longtime residents of Springfield. He is an active member of the Western Massachusetts legal community and has spent years in public service at both the local and regional level.

To learn more about Mike Fenton's campaign for Governor's Council District 8, visit [www.votemikefenton.com](http://www.votemikefenton.com) or follow the campaign on social media.

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## A Strike Will Hurt Our Students and Families



Over the past year, the Holyoke School Committee, with its appointed bargaining team, and the Holyoke Teachers Association (HTA) have spent many hours at the table working through the issues that matter most for our educators: compensation, the day and work year, and the health and safety of our teachers. This process is also significant because, for the first time in years, this work is being done under local governance, by the people closest to our schools and our students. This is how it should be done and reflects the progress we have made as a community by leaving the judicial administration, working together, in good faith, to move our district forward.

Our teachers deserve fair pay, supportive working conditions, and respect. These beliefs

have guided this process from the beginning and resulted in the current proposal that reflects compromise, investment in our educators, and a path forward that also protects the long-term stability of our schools and our city.

Thanks to our teachers' advocacy and the steady focus of the district's bargaining team, the School Committee's most recent proposal offers a reduced work year from 188 to 186 days, along with reductions in overall working hours across all grade levels compared to prior contracts. It also preserves weekly preparation periods while creating space for collaboration that strengthens instruction and ultimately benefits our students.

Regarding compensation, this proposal represents a potential \$8.6 million investment over three years. On average, teachers would see an estimated 20% increase for the duration of the contract, including an 8.9% increase in the first year alone, followed by additional increases in years two and three. This is in addition to the 19.6% increase received in the previous contract over three years. Veteran educators would see even greater gains through longevity payments. This proposal is unprecedented, and it does so responsibly, avoiding unsustainable costs that could result in layoffs, larger class sizes, or cuts to the very programs our students depend on.

This is a contract offer that keeps us on track to continue delivering meaningful gains. It reduces workload, invests in our educators, and maintains stability for our students, especially those who rely on our schools the most. It is, in itself, remarkable given the financial challenges facing nearby districts in municipalities that have had to cut teaching positions and programs, seek overrides to fund core services, or manage significant budget gaps.

A strike is not the answer for Holyoke. For a community like ours, the consequences are serious, even if a strike lasts only one day. Many of our students rely on schools not only for education, but also for stability, meals, specialized services, and a safe environment during the day. Teachers, we've made real progress together, under local control. Now is the time to finish the work and keep our focus where it belongs, on the success and well-being of the children of Holyoke.

I encourage HTA leadership to submit the School Committee proposal to a vote among their members. Let's not strike in Holyoke. It's not good for our students, families, teachers, staff, or community. Instead, let's finish our school year strong, together.

Joshua A. Garcia, Mayor, City of Holyoke  
Proud father of two Holyoke Public School Children

## Una huelga perjudicará a nuestros estudiantes y a sus familias

Me han llegado rumores sobre una posible huelga de la Asociación de Profesores de Holyoke, a pesar de que siguen en marcha las gestiones de mediación para resolver las negociaciones del convenio colectivo.

Durante el último año, el Comité Escolar de Holyoke, junto con su equipo de negociación designado, y la Asociación de Profesores de Holyoke (HTA) han dedicado muchas horas a la mesa de negociaciones para abordar las cuestiones más importantes para nuestros educadores: la remuneración, la jornada y el año laboral, y la salud y la seguridad de nuestros profesores. Este proceso también es significativo porque, por primera vez en años, este trabajo se está llevando a cabo bajo la administración local, por parte de las personas más cercanas a nuestras escuelas y a nuestros alumnos. Así es como debe hacerse. Y refleja el progreso que hemos logrado como comunidad al salir de la administración judicial, trabajando juntos, de buena fe, para hacer avanzar nuestro distrito.

Nuestros profesores merecen un salario justo, condiciones de trabajo que les apoyen y respeto. Estas convicciones han guiado este proceso desde el principio y han dado lugar a la propuesta actual, que refleja compromiso, inversión en nuestros educadores y un camino a seguir que también protege la estabilidad a largo plazo de nuestras escuelas y nuestra ciudad. Gracias a la defensa de nuestros profesores y al enfoque constante del equipo de negociación del distrito, la propuesta más reciente del Comité Escolar ofrece una reducción del año laboral de 188 a 186 días, junto con reducciones en las horas de trabajo totales en todos los niveles de enseñanza en comparación con los contratos anteriores. También mantiene los periodos de preparación semanales, al tiempo que crea un espacio para la colaboración que refuerza la enseñanza y, en última instancia, beneficia a nuestros alumnos.

En lo que respecta a la remuneración, esta propuesta supone una inversión potencial de \$8.6 millones de dólares a lo largo de tres años. En promedio, los docentes obtendrían un aumento estimado del 20% durante la vigencia del contrato, incluyendo un incremento del 8.9% solo en el primer año, seguido de aumentos adicionales en el segundo y tercer año. Esto se suma al aumento del 19.6% recibido en el contrato anterior a lo largo de tres años. Los educadores con más antigüedad obtendrían beneficios aún mayores gracias a los pagos por antigüedad. Esta propuesta no tiene precedentes, y lo hace de forma responsable, evitando costos insostenibles que podrían dar lugar a despidos, clases más numerosas o recortes en los programas de los que dependen nuestros alumnos.

Se trata de una oferta de contrato que nos mantiene en el buen camino para seguir obteniendo avances significativos. Reduce la carga de trabajo, invierte en nuestros educadores y mantiene la estabilidad para nuestros alumnos, especialmente para aquellos que más dependen de nuestras escuelas. Es, en sí misma, notable, dados los retos financieros a los que se enfrentan los distritos vecinos, que han tenido que recortar puestos docentes y programas, solicitar excepciones para financiar servicios básicos o gestionar importantes déficits presupuestarios.

Una huelga no es la solución para Holyoke. Para una comunidad como la nuestra, las consecuencias son graves, aunque la huelga solo dure un día. Muchos de nuestros alumnos dependen de las escuelas no solo para recibir educación, sino también para encontrar estabilidad, comidas, servicios especializados y un entorno seguro durante el día. La solución es seguir negociando y cerrar el contrato. Profesores, juntos hemos logrado avances reales, bajo control local. Ahora es el momento de terminar el trabajo, cerrar un acuerdo y mantener nuestra atención donde debe estar: en el éxito y el bienestar de los niños de Holyoke.

Ánimo a los dirigentes de la HTA a que sometan la propuesta del Comité Escolar a votación entre sus miembros. No hagamos huelga en Holyoke. No es bueno para nuestros alumnos, familias, profesores, personal ni comunidad. En su lugar, terminemos el curso escolar con fuerza, juntos.

Joshua A. Garcia, Alcalde, Ciudad de Holyoke  
Padre orgulloso de dos niños de las Escuelas Públicas de Holyoke



## Should I collect SS now or wait two years until age 70?

Dear Rusty:

I am 67 and 9 months old, collecting a modest SS survivor benefit with plans to collect my own much larger benefit at age 70.

I was confident this plan was a good one, but recent turbulent events make me nervous that cuts could come to Social Security at any time without warning. Would it be prudent to file for my own Social Security as soon as possible so that my benefit might be "grandfathered" in before any sudden and drastic cuts occur? I do not generally panic, but these are unprecedented times. I would be quite comfortable with the benefit listed on my 2024 statement for my current age; I was just hoping to maximize the benefit by waiting.

When I go to the Social Security website to view my 2025 annual statement to see the personalized monthly retirement benefit estimates for ages 68, 69 and 70 that section no longer shows. This omission makes me uncomfortable. Can I find out what my current benefit estimate would be for ages 68, 69 and 70? Or should I just rely on the 2024 statement?

Signed:  
Nervous in Portland

Dear Nervous:

Please do not be nervous that recent "turbulent events" pose a threat to your future Social Security benefits. Those events do not, in any way, jeopardize your future Social Security benefits, because Social Security is completely separate from all other federal political issues and finances. The primary problem with Social Security became an issue long before the current administration took office.

The Trustees of Social Security have been warning Congress for decades that Social Security's finances require Congressional attention. The fact is that Social Security revenue (as predicted decades ago) became insufficient to pay all benefit obligations in about 2021. Since that time, money from Social Security's reserved funds (Trust Funds) has been used to pay full benefits to all.

In 2020, there was nearly \$3 trillion in SS reserved funds, but that has now dwindled to about \$2.5 trillion as reserves are used to supplement SS payments. And that problem continues. The Trustees of SS now predict that the reserves will be fully depleted in about 2032, at which time, lacking program reform by Congress, Social Security will be forced to pay out only what it receives in revenue. And that would mean an estimated cut of about 23% to everyone's monthly SS benefit. In the unlikely event that happens, wouldn't a 23% reduction to your larger age 70 benefit be better than a 23% cut to your lower age 68 benefit?

No one wants those cuts to happen least of all politicians because it would amount to political suicide (seniors are, after all, a very large voting bloc). Thus, we believe that Congress will act to reform Social Security to

prevent any general benefit cuts from happening. It will, however, require Congressional bipartisanship because the reforms needed for Social Security are likely unsavory to some.

Those reforms may include SS tax increases and changes to the basic structure of the SS program to align it with today's demographic reality. The program needs reform, which Congress has, unfortunately, neglected to provide for many years.

And this neglect will likely also continue, at least through the forthcoming mid-term elections. It seems the nature of Congress is to wait until the last possible moment to offer corrective legislation.

Here's what to keep in mind: Congress already knows how to reform Social Security to avoid any future benefit cuts; they just lack the bipartisanship to accomplish that reform. For our part, the Association of Mature American Citizens has offered to Congress a commonsense reform plan via its "Social Security Guarantee." AMAC's proposal has received a positive reception in Congressional circles and we are optimistic that the proposal will provide financial stability to the program for generations. AMAC continues to advocate for SS reform in Washington, D.C. on a regular basis, even more intensely as the depletion of the SS Trust Funds grows closer.

We do not suggest changing your strategy for claiming Social Security benefits based upon fear the program will cut benefits. That's because it's unlikely that all benefits will be cut because we believe Congress will eventually enact reform. And even in the unlikely event that Congress neglects to reform the program by 2032, the percentage of reduction to a higher monthly SS benefit amount would be better than a similar reduction to a lower benefit amount. In other words, your original plan is still a prudent one.

Regarding your question about your estimated benefits, I expect your most recent SS statement didn't include future benefits because you are already collecting SS survivor benefits. You can contact SSA at 1-800-772-1213 to obtain the future SS retirement estimates you seek.

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.

## Alternative to airport TSA lines ...



## "Beets," me

I was so happy to finally get into the vegetable garden this past week.

My peas seeds are sown! Yippee!

Next on my list is beets. I have to admit that I am no beet aficionado. In fact, I began eating beets only a few years ago.

Who knows what turned me off in my younger years. Maybe it was the fact that I only knew beets by way of a can - we never grew them in our home garden. They honestly didn't look or taste all that yummy, especially to a kid who ate a total of two other vegetables; that is, of course, if corn counts.

Anyway, I think what finally convinced me to include beets in my garden was the fact that the plants are multipurpose (you can eat both the greens and the roots) and beets themselves are wonderful "keepers." Lately, there is a lot of talk about the benefits of eating them in relation to heart health.

Let me give you a brief run down on how to grow beets.

Beet seeds are unique in appearance. I can only describe them as multi-faceted "orbs."

The orb is a grouping of seeds. You can go through the trouble of trying to separate them by way of wax paper and a rolling pin, but most folks don't bother.

Because the orb is thick, however, and moisture must penetrate it in order for it to germinate, a good soaking is beneficial. Although you can try starting beets nearly as soon as the soil can be worked in spring, it is probably best to wait until two weeks before the last expected frost.

In our location that translates into the first or

second week of May. This timeframe will give them the most desirable soil temperature (sixty degrees plus) for germination.

Be sure that you keep the seed bed moist until the seeds pop up, and continue to provide at least one inch of water throughout the growing season if Mother Nature does not. Steady moisture will keep your beets sweet and crack-free.

I should also mention that beets prefer a soil that is slightly alkaline, and well-drained but fertile. In other words, sprinkle some lime and work a couple inches of compost into the soil!

Beet seeds should be sown an inch or so apart- my theory is to sow once and sow heavy. Because multiple plants may come from one "orb" it is critical that you thin your plants: first to one and a half inch spacing and then, when beets are the size of a marble, to a final spacing of three inches apart.

Don't feel badly when you are thinning - you are honestly doing your plants a favor. Beets that are grown too close together will never develop to their full potential.

Instead of letting the thinnings go to waste, make a salad and be grateful for some early season greens. Even when beets are at their final spacing I will rob the patch of some leaves every now and then for the very same reason. As long as I am prudent, no harm will be done to the developing roots.

Some beet varieties are grown especially for their greens. Try "Bull's Blood,"

an heirloom variety known for its large and sweet reddish-purple leaves.

"Early Wonder Tall Top" is another oldie - prized as much for its early beet greens as it for its beets.

Looking for less leaf and more beet? Try "Detroit Dark Red Short Top." Well over one hundred years old, this late variety is great for canning.

Beets also come in a wide array of colors. For a dependable and tasty yellow beet try "Touchtone Gold." Another interesting heirloom beet is "Chiogga" (aka "Bassano").

Cercospora Leaf Spot of Swiss Chard, Beets, and Spinach is a common fungus that appears as circular rings on the leaves, making them unsightly and barely edible.

There are a number of tactics that claim to help if this is a problem for you. Water at the base of the plant, and do it early in the day so it dries out by evening, especially in the summer months when humidity heightens the spread.

Likewise, if you make successive sowings, space them a distance apart from one another. There are organic and chemical means of control that are worth investigating.

If that's not for you, give growing these plants a break for two-three years and likely you'll be in the clear to attempt trying again. Some companies offer disease free seed, too.

It's worth looking into. 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.

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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

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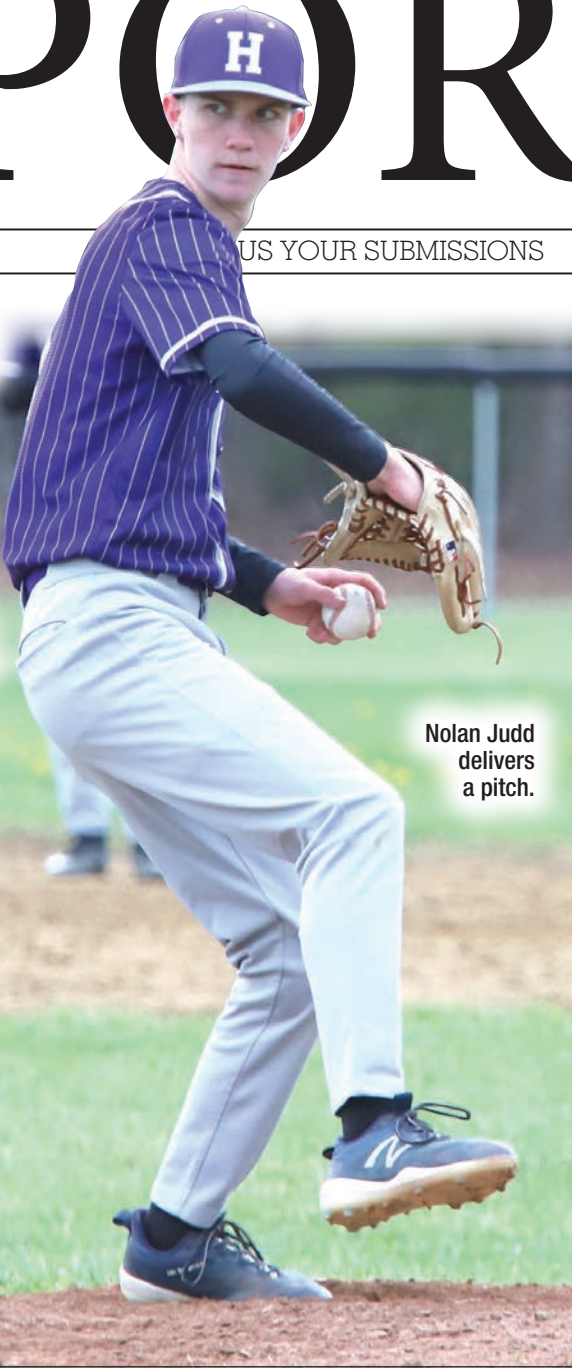
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## Holyoke picks up win over Granby

GRANBY – Last Monday afternoon, Holyoke baseball defeated host Granby 12-4. The Knights got their seventh win of the season and are close to qualifying for the state tourna-

ment. The Knights got three hits and five RBI from Jeremy Francisco. Michael Medina had two hits and two RBI. Holyoke will next face East Longmeadow on Friday, May 1 at 5 p.m.



Nolan Judd delivers a pitch.



Jeremy Francisco squeezes the out at first



Aiden Robinson cuts off a throw and sends it across the diamond.



Wilfred Ortiz fires a throw down to second.



Carter Felsentreger takes a swing.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Ryan Greaney makes contact.



Alexander Laury goes low to get a hit.



Xavier Mattos starts a play with a bump.

## Knights pick up first win

HOLYOKE – It has been a struggle for the Holyoke High School boys volleyball team. The Knights fell 3-0 in five straight matches and seven out of nine this season. But the Knights finally grabbed their first win of the season on Monday, Apr. 27, sweeping Duggan Academy 3-0. Holyoke looks to add on to that with a home match on Friday, May 1 against Veritas Prep at 5 p.m.



Tason Dennis sets the ball back toward the net.

## Cougars baseball sweep doubleheader

HOLYOKE – Men's baseball won both games of their home doubleheader against Massasoit CC on Saturday, thus sweeping the three-game series against their regional opponent. The first game of the doubleheader was a close one that saw the Cougars come from behind to earn a 9-8 walk-off win after trailing 8-5 heading into the bottom of the seventh inning. Game two on Saturday was not so close as Holyoke mercy-ruled their opposition, the game ending 24-4 in the fifth inning. The Cougars won the first meeting between the sides 7-4 on Thursday at Massasoit.

Men's baseball has a regional record of 7-8 and an overall record of 9-18. They have won four of their last six games, including the last three in a row. The Cougars have a fighting chance of qualifying for the postseason with three of their six remaining contests being regional games.

Matt Drobiak (Holyoke, MA / South Hadley HS) was spectacular for the Cougars on Saturday, batting a perfect 7 for 7 with three doubles in the two games. Drobiak drove in six RBIs, three in each contest, and scored five total runs. He was the winning pitcher in game one, moving to the mound in the fifth inning



Natra Kuon pivots to keep the ball in play.



Turley photos by David Henry Yeriel Velazquez goes for the block.



Cosmo Bond getd a bump.

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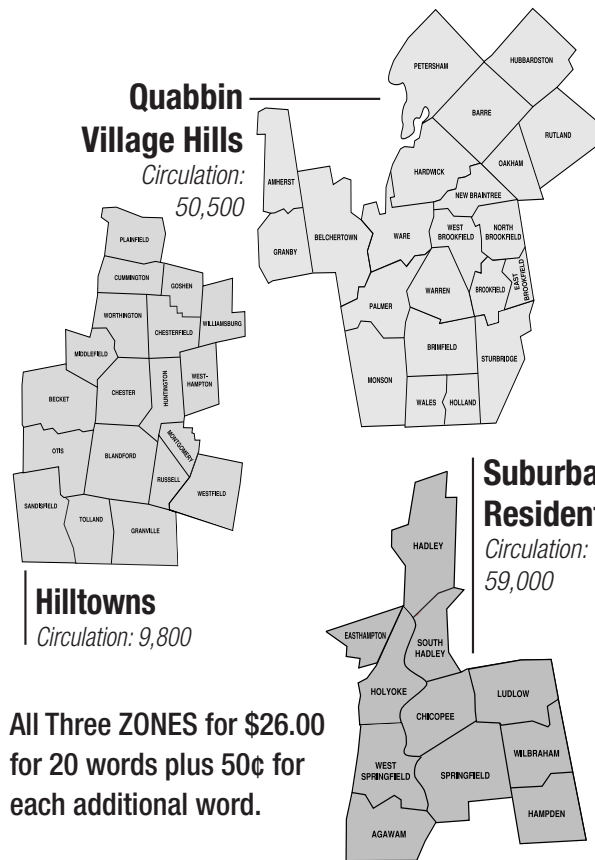
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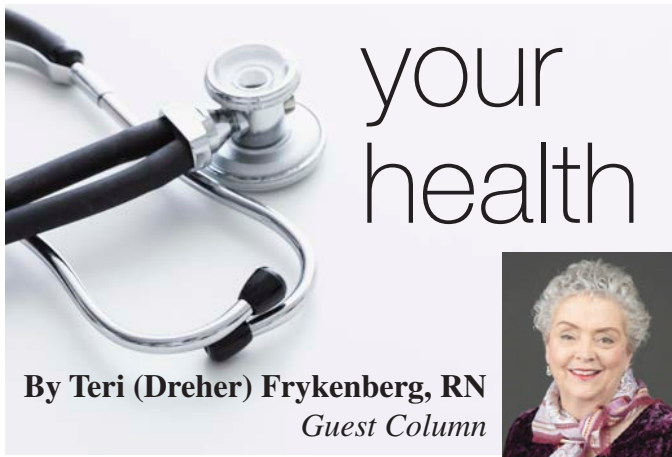
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By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN  
Guest Column

# A spring cleaning for your medicine cabinet

ing out “expired” aspirin or acetaminophen. You can also make medications last longer by keeping them in a cool, dry place away from pets, kids and adolescents. The bathroom medicine cabinet, despite its name, is about the worst place to keep them because of warmth, humidity and accessibility.

**Opioids**  
According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 105,000 people died from drug overdose in 2023, and more than three-quarters of the deaths involved opioids.

These powerful painkillers are potentially addictive and dangerous, even deadly. If your dentist gave you a few Oxycodone or Vicodin tablets to take after a procedure, and if you kept a few “just in case,” get rid of them.

**Antibiotics**  
Keeping antibiotics past their expiration date and disposing them willy-nilly is a recipe for disaster. Old antibiotics don’t perform as well, which may cause a bacterial infection to last longer and

become more serious. Flushing them or putting them down the drain puts them into the environment and can encourage antibiotic resistance or “superbugs,” making infections harder to treat in the future.

**Liquids**  
Liquid medications like cough syrups are especially prone to bacterial growth once they have been opened. The preservatives that keep ingredients sterile degrade over time.

When that happens, bacteria can multiply inside the bottle. Using these products can introduce bacteria into a person’s eyes, ears or digestive system, progressing to an infection.

Old eye drops, for example, pose a major contamination risk. Bacteria can grow in an opened bottle of preservative-free eye drops. Putting them in your eyes, an organ that is connected to the bloodstream, can cause all kinds of havoc from mild irritations to eye ulcers.

**Keep on hand**  
The most useful medica-

tions are those that help deal with common aches, allergies and illnesses. These include:

- Pain relievers/fever reducers: Acetaminophen (i.e. Tylenol), ibuprofen (i.e. Motrin) or aspirin.

- Antihistamines: Medications such as Benadryl, Claritin, Zyrtec or their generic equivalents.

- Antacids: This can include tablets like Tums or liquids like milk of magnesia.

- Decongestants: Common ones include Sudafed and Neo-Synephrine. Be careful using nasal decongestants, as they can cause rebound congestion.

- Antidiarrheals: Don’t be caught without some Imodium, Pepto-Bismol or their generic cousins.

Twice a year, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) hosts a National Prescription Take-Back Day. The next one will be on Saturday, Oct. 24. Meanwhile, you can dispose of medications free of charge at many pharmacies and law enforcement offices

in Massachusetts. Visit [mass.gov/safely-dispose-of-prescription-drugs](http://mass.gov/safely-dispose-of-prescription-drugs) for locations. Unused medications thrown in the trash can be retrieved and abused, or illegally sold. If they are flushed, they can contaminate the water supply. Proper disposal of unused drugs saves lives and protects the environment.

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.

Research has found that 80% of households have unused or expired medications on a shelf somewhere, probably in the medicine cabinet. You can do your part to reduce that percentage.

There are several reasons for the build-up of unused and expired meds. A doctor may change a dose or switch a patient to a different drug before the first prescription is finished. We often stop taking a medication once our symptoms go away, such as with antibiotics or painkillers.

Unpleasant side effects may cause us to stop taking something. And providers

may prescribe more medication than we actually need for a recovery period.

Here are some things to look for:

**Expiration dates**  
Since 1979, drug manufacturers have been required to stamp an expiration date on their products, the date at which the manufacturer guarantees the full potency and safety of the medication. With the exception of nitroglycerin, insulin and liquid antibiotics, most drugs are OK to use well after their “expiration date”; they may just lose some potency.

So, you can save money by not automatically throw-

ing out “expired” aspirin or acetaminophen. You can also make medications last longer by keeping them in a cool, dry place away from pets, kids and adolescents. The bathroom medicine cabinet, despite its name, is about the worst place to keep them because of warmth, humidity and accessibility.

These powerful painkillers are potentially addictive and dangerous, even deadly. If your dentist gave you a few Oxycodone or Vicodin tablets to take after a procedure, and if you kept a few “just in case,” get rid of them.

Keeping antibiotics past their expiration date and disposing them willy-nilly is a recipe for disaster. Old antibiotics don’t perform as well, which may cause a bacterial infection to last longer and

become more serious. Flushing them or putting them down the drain puts them into the environment and can encourage antibiotic resistance or “superbugs,” making infections harder to treat in the future.

When that happens, bacteria can multiply inside the bottle. Using these products can introduce bacteria into a person’s eyes, ears or digestive system, progressing to an infection.

Old eye drops, for example, pose a major contamination risk. Bacteria can grow in an opened bottle of preservative-free eye drops. Putting them in your eyes, an organ that is connected to the bloodstream, can cause all kinds of havoc from mild irritations to eye ulcers.

The most useful medications are those that help deal with common aches, allergies and illnesses. These include:

- Pain relievers/fever reducers: Acetaminophen (i.e. Tylenol), ibuprofen (i.e. Motrin) or aspirin.

- Antihistamines: Medications such as Benadryl, Claritin, Zyrtec or their generic equivalents.

- Antacids: This can include tablets like Tums or liquids like milk of magnesia.

- Decongestants: Common ones include Sudafed and Neo-Synephrine. Be careful using nasal decongestants, as they can cause rebound congestion.

- Antidiarrheals: Don’t be caught without some Imodium, Pepto-Bismol or their generic cousins.

Twice a year, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) hosts a National Prescription Take-Back Day. The next one will be on Saturday, Oct. 24. Meanwhile, you can dispose of medications free of charge at many pharmacies and law enforcement offices

## Annual ‘Mini Golf and Games at the Library’ to be held at HPL

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://sward.smug-mug.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 auction 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@holyokelibrary.org](mailto:nancy@holyokelibrary.org) or visit <https://www.holyokelibrary.org/Pages/Index/227230/library-minigolf-and-games>.

## South Hadley Library to host blood drive

SOUTH HADLEY – On Saturday, May 11 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. South Hadley Health Department will host a blood drive. Appointments are

strongly recommended.

The event will be held in the community room and eligible donors will also receive a \$10 gift card to Starbucks,

Amazon, Big Y, or Panera Bread.

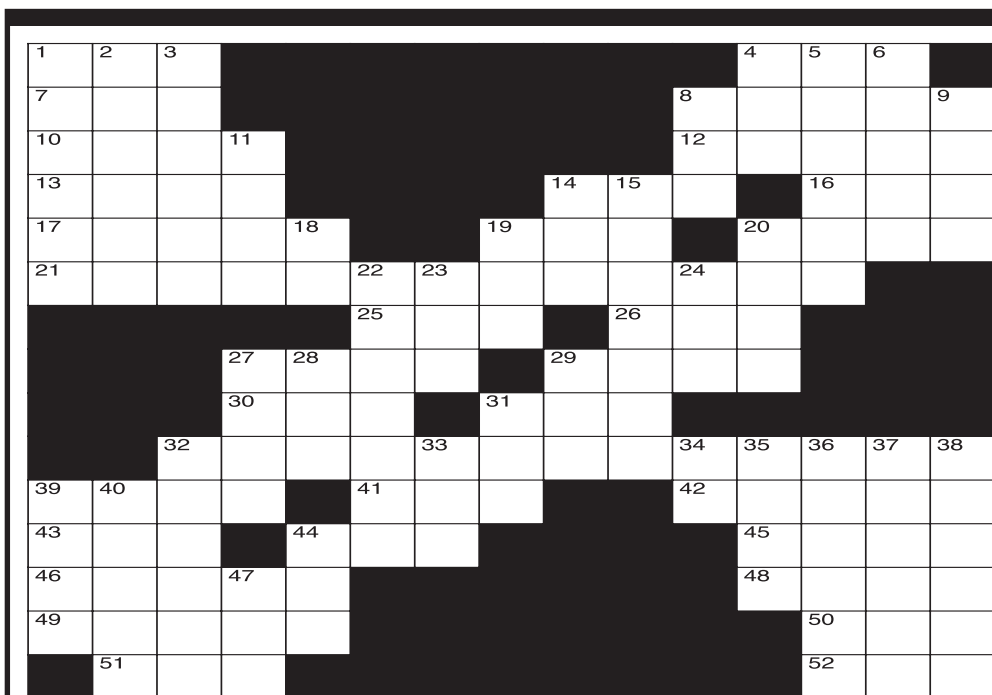
To register, contact Fiona Cioch at [fcioch@southhadley.ma.gov](mailto:fcioch@southhadley.ma.gov) or call 413-887-8008.

## St. Paul’s Church holding bingo fundraiser

SOUTH HADLEY – 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).



- CLUES ACROSS**
- Purchase
  - British news organization
  - Midway between northeast and east
  - Language specialist group
  - Fancy automobile
  - Small loop or series of loops
  - Exploiter
  - Don’t know when yet
  - Group of languages
  - One who’s finished
  - After B
  - Angled
  - A place to adopt pets
  - Swiss river
  - Young boy
  - Unexciting American comedian Vidale
  - Peyton’s little brother
  - Corporate higher-up
  - “All in the Family” star
  - Strike something forcefully
  - Up in the air (abbr.)
  - Clay earth pigments
  - Means to record brain activity
  - Small constellation
  - Embraces
  - Brief description
  - Exclude
  - White (French)
  - Insect
  - A major division of geological time
  - Soviet Socialist Republic
- CLUES DOWN**
- Type of whale
  - In tune
  - A citizen of Yemen
  - Actress Ling
  - One who supports
  - Circus performer
  - Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
  - Quantitative fact
  - Utah city
  - Where a golfer begins
  - Attendant
  - The ancient Egyptian sun god
  - Book of Chronicles (abbr.)
  - Benedictine monk
  - Not turbulent
  - Car mechanics group
  - Buffer used in chemistry
  - Fall heavily
  - Pie \_\_\_ mode
  - The Brits love it
  - Children’s TV channel (abbr.)
  - Jacksonville footballer
  - Helps little firms
  - \_\_\_ and behold
  - A way to resemble
  - Fingers
  - Excessive indulgences
  - You might be an “empty” one
  - “How the West Was Won” writer
  - European river
  - They begin the alphabet
  - The body’s messenger

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 6

**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.  
WEEKEND MASSES:  
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)



Your Community Church

**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  
Instagram: [stpaulsepiscopalchurch\\_holyoke](https://instagram.com/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.

# Public Notices

## City of Holyoke Notice of Public Hearing

The DGR Committee of the Holyoke City Council will hold a public hearing to hear a Special permit application of Wayne Versace for a nonconforming structure to construct an attached deck and install a rear entry door at 5 Brightwood Ave per 4.7.5. Hearing will take place on **Monday, May 18, 2026 at 6:30 pm** at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us) Meeting ID 824 0539 6605 Meeting Passcode 689658 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode. For a copy of the application or to provide comments, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at [Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org](mailto:Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org) or by phone 413-322-5525.

DGR Chair, Richard Purcell  
05/01, 05/08/2026

## City of Holyoke Notice of Public Hearing

The DGR Committee of the Holyoke City Council will hold a public hearing to hear a Special permit application of Cypress Acquisitions, LLC c/o MacDermid Reynolds & Glissman P.C for alteration of a nonconforming structure at 2201 Northampton Street per 4.7.3. Hearing will take place on **Monday, May 18, 2026 at 6:30 pm** at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us) Meeting ID 824 0539 6605 Meeting Passcode 689658 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode. For a copy of the application or to provide comments, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at [Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org](mailto:Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org) or by phone 413-322-5525.

DGR Chair, Richard Purcell  
05/01, 05/08/2026

## City of Holyoke Office of Purchasing INVITATION TO BID DONAHUE PARTIAL ROOF REPLACEMENT IFB 2026-45 MGL c. 149 Over \$150K

THE CITY OF HOLYOKE, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed bids from Contractors for the Partial Roof Replacement and Accessibility Upgrades - Donahue Elementary School at Maurice A. Donahue Elementary School in Holyoke, Massachusetts, in accordance with the documents prepared by CSS ARCHITECTS INC.

The Project consists of but not limited to: Roof Replacement, Accessibility Upgrades, Fire Alarm System Upgrades.

The work is estimated to cost \$3,240,000.00

Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.149 §44A-J & to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §§26 to 27H inclusive.

THIS PROJECT IS BEING ELECTRONICALLY BID AND HARD COPY BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Please review the instructions in the bid documents on how to register as an electronic bidder. All Bids shall be submitted online at [www.biddocs.com](http://www.biddocs.com) and received no later than the date and time specified.

General bidders must be certified by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) in the following category of work, General Building Construction, and must submit a current DCAMM Certificate of Eligibility and signed DCAMM Prime/General Contractor Update Statement.

**General Bids will be received until 20 May 2026 at 2:30PM EDT and publicly opened online, forthwith. Filed Sub-bids for the trades listed below will be received until 13 May 2026 at 2:00PM EDT and publicly**

**opened online, forthwith. Filed sub-bidders must be DCAMM certified for the trades listed below and bidders must include a current DCAMM Sub-Bidder Certificate of Eligibility and a signed DCAMM Sub-Bidder's Update Statement.**

TRADES: Roofing and Flashing, Elevators, Plumbing, Heating / Ventilating / Air-Conditioning(HVAC), and Electrical Work.

General bids and sub-bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit that is not less than five(5%) of the greatest possible bid amount (including all alternates), and made payable to City of Holyoke. **Documents are available starting on 4/29/2026 through [biddocs.com](http://biddocs.com) please reference project # D26-TY1F as this project # is unique to this bid at Donohue School.** The city reserves the right to reject any and all bids if in the city's best interest.  
05/01/2026

## City of Holyoke Office of Purchasing INVITATION TO BID HOLYOKE FIRE DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS ROOF REPLACEMENT (MGL c.149 Over \$150K) Project. No. IFB 2026-36

THE CITY OF HOLYOKE, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed bids from Contractors for the Holyoke Fire Department Headquarters Roof Replacement Bidding project in Holyoke, Massachusetts, in accordance with the documents prepared by ARCHITECTURE ENVIRONMENT LIFE, INC. The Work of Project is defined by the Contract Documents and consists of but not limited to: Demolition of the existing asphalt shingle roofing system located on the sloped roof areas and installation of a new asphalt shingle roofing system in the same locations. The new roofing system shall include asphalt shingles, felt paper and ice and water shield, which will be tied into the existing to remain flat roofing system. Existing roofing components that are to remain and integrated with the new roofing system including the low-slope membrane roofing system, associated lap flashing, copper flashing, copper fascia and cleats, copper gutters and downspouts, existing roof decking and electrical/mechanical systems located on the roof. The Work of Project is defined by the Contract Documents and consists of demo of existing roof and installation of new roofing on sloped asphalt roofing areas, and masonry pointing and cap for the elevator shaft for the Holyoke Fire Department Headquarters building for the City of Holyoke.

The work is estimated to cost \$150,000.00.

**All bidding Requests for Information (RFIs) shall be submitted online via email to the Holyoke Purchasing/Procurement Officer Jaime Morrow at [morrowj@holyoke.org](mailto:morrowj@holyoke.org) by May 14, 2026 at 10:00AM EDT** for General Bids. Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.149 §44A-J and to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §§26 to 27H inclusive. General bidders must be certified by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) in the following category of work, "General Building Construction", and/or "Roofing and Flashing" and must submit a current DCAMM Certificate of Eligibility and signed DCAMM Prime/General Contractor Update Statement. **General Bids will be received until May 21, 2026 on 2:00PM EDT and publicly opened online, forthwith.** General bids and sub-bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit that is not less than five (5%) of

the greatest possible bid amount (including all alternates), and made payable to the CITY OF HOLYOKE.

**PRE-BID CONFERENCE / SITE VISIT: Scheduled Date and Time: May 7, 2026 at 10:00AM EDT**

**Address: Conduct conference at the Holyoke Fire Department Headquarters, 600 High Street, Holyoke, MA 01040.**

**DOCUMENTS ARE AVAILABLE STARTING ON 4/29/26 AT 10AM by requesting electronically from [morrowj@holyoke.org](mailto:morrowj@holyoke.org)**

The city reserves the right to reject any and all bids if in the city's best interest.  
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. HD24P0065PM In the matter of: Luis Rodriguez of Holyoke, MA Protected Person/ Disabled Person/Respondent CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF CONSERVATOR'S ACCOUNT

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, you are hereby notified pursuant to Rule 72 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court, that the first account(s) of **Nancy C Godbout of Granby, MA** as Conservator of the property of said Respondent has or have been presented to the Court for allowance.

**You have the right to object to the account(s).** If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **05/25/2026**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to object to the account(s). If you fail to file the written appearance and objection by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you, including the allowance of the account(s).

Additionally, within thirty days after said return day (or within such other time as the Court upon motion may order), you must file a written affidavit of objections stating the specific facts and grounds upon which each objection is based and a copy shall be served upon the Conservator pursuant to Rule 3 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court.

You have the right to send to the Conservator, by registered or certified mail, a written request to receive a copy of the Petition and account(s) at no cost to you.

**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 14, 2026  
Rosemary A. Saccamoni  
Register of Probate  
05/01/2026

## Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD26P0528EA Estate of: Peter James Hogan Date of Death: 01/09/2026 CITATION ON GENERAL PROBATE PETITION

To all interested persons:  
A Petition has been filed by: **Kelley J Bean of Chicopee, MA and Julie L Hogan of Hadley, MA**

requesting To Account for; Preserve; and Turn Over Assets of the Estate of Peter James Hogan and for such further Relief as set forth

in the Petition.

**You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before 10:00 a.m. on 05/14/2026.**

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

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

Date: April 09, 2026  
Rosemary A Saccamoni,  
Register of Probate  
05/01/2026

## 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 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD26P0732EA Estate of: Peter Anthony Kinney

**Also known as:  
Peter A Kinney, Peter Kinney  
Date of Death: 05/12/2025  
CITATION ON PETITION  
FOR FORMAL  
ADJUDICATION**

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

The Petitioner requests that **Jean E Jonker of Holyoke, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

**You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 05/22/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.**

**UNSUPERVISED  
ADMINISTRATION UNDER  
THE MASSACHUSETTS  
UNIFORM PROBATE CODE  
(MUPC)**

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

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

Date: April 24, 2026

Rosemary A Saccamoni,  
Register of Probate  
05/01/2026

## City of Holyoke Conservation Commission

Pursuant to MGL Chap. 131 §40 and the Holyoke Wetlands Ordinance, the Holyoke Conservation Commission will hold a **Public Meeting on Thursday May 14th, 2026 at 6:15 p.m.** remotely via zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83189025752?pwd=SXN3V77mZm-dKzQoFJ7VNSmDVfWef0m.1> to review a Request for Determination of Applicability filed by Matthew Sokop on behalf of the City of Holyoke for the reconstruction of the existing Race Street right-of-way between Cabot Street to Sargeant Street in Holyoke, MA. The proposed project includes work within the 100-foot Buffer Zone to Bank and 50-foot Buffer Zone to Bank associated with the Second Level canal and Land Under Waterbodies and Waterways.

Signed,  
Jeffery Horan, Chairperson  
05/01/2026

## LEGAL NOTICE CITY OF HOLYOKE GAS & ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT SPECIALTY CONSTRUCTION & FACILITIES MAINTENANCE ANNUAL CONTRACT

Sealed bids for the above contract will be received by Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept until **2:00 p.m., May 28, 2026**, at the office of the Manager, 99 Suffolk St, Holyoke, MA 01040, at which time proposals will be publicly opened and read.

**Bid Deposit:**  
A Bid Deposit in the amount of \$20,000 must accompany all bids and may be in the form of a certified, treasurer's, or cashier's check payable to HG&E from a responsible bank or trust company; cash; or a bid bond from a licensed surety payable to HG&E.

**Prevailing Wage Rates:**  
Rates, which are to apply to the work, are set by the Mass. Dept of Labor & Industries.

A Certificate of Eligibility from the Mass. Division of Capital Asset Management & Maintenance, as well as an Update Statement are required.

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

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

Please mark sealed envelopes, **"Bid for Specialty Construction & Facilities Maintenance Contract"** and address them to:

**James M. Lavelle, Manager**  
Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept  
99 Suffolk St  
Holyoke, MA 01040  
05/01/2026

## City of Holyoke Office of Purchasing INVITATION TO BID SULLIVAN PARTIAL ROOF REPLACEMENT IFB 2026-46 MGL c. 149 Over \$150K

THE CITY OF HOLYOKE, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed bids from Contractors for the Partial Roof Replacement and Accessibility Upgrades - Sullivan Middle School at Lt. Clayre Sullivan Middle School in Holyoke, Massachusetts, in accordance with the documents prepared by CSS ARCHITECTS INC.. The Project consists of but not limited to: Roof Replacement, Accessibility Upgrades, Fire Alarm System Upgrades

The work is estimated to cost \$3,800,000.00.

Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.149 §44A-J & to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §§26 to 27H inclusive.

THIS PROJECT IS BEING ELECTRONICALLY BID AND HARD COPY BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Please review the instructions in the bid documents on how to register as an electronic bidder. All Bids shall be submitted online at [www.biddocs.com](http://www.biddocs.com) and received no later than the date and time specified.

General bidders must be certified by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance

(DCAMM) in the following category of work, General Building Construction, and must submit a current DCAMM Certificate of Eligibility and signed DCAMM Prime/General Contractor Update Statement.

**General Bids will be received until 20 May 2026 at 2:00PM EDT and publicly opened online, forthwith.**

**Filed Sub-bids for the trades listed below will be received until 13 May 2026 at 2:00PM EDT and publicly opened online, forthwith. Filed sub-bidders must be DCAMM certified for the trades listed below and bidders must include a current DCAMM Sub-Bidder Certificate of Eligibility and a signed DCAMM Sub-Bidder's Update Statement.**

TRADES: Masonry, Roofing and Flashing, Tile, Painting, Elevators, Plumbing, Heating / Ventilating / Air-Conditioning (HVAC) and Electrical Work.

General bids and sub-bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit that is not less than five(5%) of the greatest possible bid amount (including all alternates), and made payable to City of Holyoke. **Documents are available starting on 4/29/2026 through [biddocs.com](http://biddocs.com) please reference project # D26-ZFVV as this project # is unique to this bid at Sullivan School.** The city reserves the right to reject any and all bids if in the city's best interest.  
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. HD24P0065PM In the matter of: Luis Rodriguez of Holyoke, MA Protected Person/ Disabled Person/Respondent CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF CONSERVATOR'S ACCOUNT

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, you are hereby notified pursuant to Rule 72 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court, that the **Temporary Conservator's first and final** account(s) of **Nancy C Godbout of Granby, MA** as Conservator of the property of said Respondent has or have been presented to the Court for allowance.

**You have the right to object to the account(s).** If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **05/25/2026**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to object to the account(s). If you fail to file the written appearance and objection by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you, including the allowance of the account(s).

Additionally, within thirty days after said return day (or within such other time as the Court upon motion may order), you must file a written affidavit of objections stating the specific facts and grounds upon which each objection is based and a copy shall be served upon the Conservator pursuant to Rule 3 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court.

You have the right to send to the Conservator, by registered or certified mail, a written request to receive a copy of the Petition and account(s) at no cost to you.

**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 14, 2026  
Rosemary A. Saccamoni  
Register of Probate  
05/01/2026

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**STRIKE**, from page 1

vidual having a Bachelor's, Master's Degree, or professional, or all three.

"There is a column present for when a teacher becomes professionally licensed, and to the HTA's point, it's probably unlike many other communities around, but it is an important thing given the context of Holyoke, so the intention of that was never to say 'you don't have your license, you can't work here,'" Soto said. "And a lot of other communities, if you don't get your license in 3 years, they lay

you off and the teacher then has to go to another district, and that has not been the experience here in Holyoke, and I don't believe their is any intention to engage in that practice, because the truth is we want to continue to support our teachers, and we feel the pursuit of a license, matched with the compensation increase is worth it."

Regarding the licensure requirement, Cream added, "They're basically using Holyoke, like we said, as an experiment ground, a place to say, 'let's try this out and see how it works.' Paying people differently based on

doing the same exact work in a classroom next to somebody is not going to fix that; it's actually going to make it worse. "We, as leadership that represents 540 people, can't really accept a deal that is going to punish so many of our members. That would be very irresponsible of us as leaders if we took that deal. Our position is the same: equal pay for equal work."

Mayor Garcia referenced the proposed pay scale on social media, adding, "On average, this new proposal would give teachers an estimated 20% increase during the duration of the contract, including an increase of

8.9% in the first year alone, followed by additional increases in the second and third years."

Then, this past Wednesday, both sides sparred over who was responsible for canceling a meeting to further negotiations.

The last time the school committee had a mediation session was prior to school vacation on April 14th, and at the end of that meeting, they talked about when the next meeting was going to be," Soto said.

Cream then added that when the district filed for mediation back in August

of last year, they "fought for about three months to get back to the table because we did not believe we were at an impasse. So we came back to the table in November, and in doing so, we lost about three months there, and then in February, the state told us that we had to go to mediation because we had this open case."

**HPA continues to look for a deal**

Also to note, this past Thursday, the aides' union held a bargaining session with the district from inside Sullivan School, and as of this moment, additional details from that hearing

will be revealed in a future edition, as their current contract is set to expire this June. The HPA revealed that they have gathered feedback from every paraprofessional in the district, and came to the consensus of professional compensation, health and safety, fair and humane leave policies, and respect.

**Important dates**

The next mediation session between the district and unions is scheduled for Wednesday, May 6. However, in the meantime, the HTA is scheduled to hold a rally later this evening at 4:30 p.m. at Holyoke Heritage State Park.

**CPAC**, from page 1

For the Butler's Pantry project, funding of \$65,000 will be used to repair and replace rotten, toxic, and damaged flooring in the pantry and linen closet. The project will also involve restoring the cabinets, and replacing outdated lighting and electrical.

The sub floor will be replaced and asbestos tile will be removed from the area. Period-appropriate tile will be replaced.

The City of Holyoke requested \$100,000 for the restoration of the granite steps at City Hall, which is also a historic building. The city already received \$30,000 for the scoping work and the

new funding will enable the city to complete a detailed conditions assessment, get permitting, and prepare bid-level drawings and cost estimates.

All of the projects must go in front of the city council for final approval. The funding will likely be referred to the Finance Committee for a recommendation.

**DUFFY**, from page 1

the Affordable Homes Act. Now Holyoke has four housing projects developing under that program and more in the pipeline.

**A Champion for Local Control and Education**

Duffy helped lead the advocacy for returning public schools to local control, achieved July 1, 2025. Duffy believes that empowerment starts in the classroom, a belief backed by a proven track record of securing:

- Mass Mentoring funding and Farm to School fresh grants to support student health and mentorship.

- Direct funding for Homework House, providing critical after-school support for Holyoke's youth.

- Significant investment in Holyoke Community College (HCC) workforce development to bridge the gap between education and high-quality employment.

**Economic Innovation and Community Strength**

Representative Duffy has also spearheaded legislative efforts to modernize the region's economy and governance. This includes the establishment of the Bridge to Prosperity pilot program and the facilitation of Home Rule petitions to assist Holyoke in modernizing its city government.

She also is ready to act in emergencies. In the late summer of 2025, a fire severely damaged a levy on Holyoke's third-level canal. Duffy immediately convened administration and local experts. Shortly

thereafter, Holyoke was awarded \$750,000 in emergency funds to prevent serious flooding.

Duffy's commitment to the district's cultural fabric remains equally strong, having successfully secured funding for the Fiestas Patronales, local Veterans' lunches, the St. Patrick's Day parade, and other community-building initiatives that celebrate the diverse spirit of the region.

"We have built incredible momentum," Duffy continued. "But there is more to be done to ensure our economy grows, our schools thrive, and our veterans receive the dignity they earned. I am asking for your vote to continue this vital work."

As of press time, no one has announced a campaign to challenge Duffy.

**Public Notices**

ing that the court:

Expand the powers of a Guardian of the Respondent.

The petition asks the court to make a determination that the powers of the Guardian and/or Conservator should be expanded, modified, or limited since the time of the appointment. The original petition is on file with the court.

**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 05/21/2026. 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  
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.  
HD19P0300GD  
In the interests of:  
Rebekah Burt  
formerly of Holyoke, MA,  
now of Northampton, MA  
RESPONDENT  
Incapacitated Person/  
Protected Person  
CITATION GIVING NOTICE  
OF PETITION TO EXPAND  
THE POWERS OF  
A GUARDIAN**

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by Department of Mental Health of Northampton, MA in the above captioned matter request-

*The Holyoke Sun*  
**OBITUARY  
POLICY**

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place. The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph.

**Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

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Jamie Joslyn  
24 Water Street  
Palmer, MA 01069  
Email:jamie@turley.com

**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 \*Be sure to indicate "Summer Event" in the subject line of your email.**

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**Class of 2026**

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**2x3 Black & White Grad Ad**

Congratulations Karly Smith! We are so very proud of you and your accomplishments. Good luck at Springfield College!

**Love, Mom & Dad**

**VOTING**, from page 1

women the right to vote, as well as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which outlawed literacy tests, poll taxes, and established federal oversight to regulate discriminatory practices during public elections. The Senator called attention to the SAVE act being debated in Congress, calling the measure a “fee and a violation of the 24th Amendment.”

Gomez took the stand after, detailing his history as a Puerto Rican and his father’s reluctance to teach him English. “He didn’t want me, my sister, and my brother to come to the mainland because of his life experience,” Gomez expressed during his address. He stated that his father felt isolated on the mainland, unable to integrate with greater society due to segregation laws. “My dad is Puerto Rican. So he was not allowed to go to the white clubs or he wasn’t allowed to go to the African-American clubs either because he was Puerto Rican, right?”

Gomez echoed many of his companion’s statements and advocated same-day voting registration. He brought attention to polling locations, a logistic controlled by local government, and motivated citizens to engage in both regional and national elections. One major bullet point of his speech was the concept of polling locations, a measure controlled by the city counselors. Gomez expressed concern that some towns didn’t have enough locations.

“It’s your local elected officials who establish where you’re going to vote,” said Gomez as he encouraged attendees to reach out to ensure their area had proper coverage. “That’s why it’s really important for you to be in touch with your local elected officials, because they make so many decisions that can change your life.”

Tara Jacobs, the Massachusetts Governor’s Council, brought attention to her own position as well as

the responsibilities that come with it. Jacobs mentioned that most citizens had no idea that her position even exists, let alone what she does in the position. Throughout her speech she enumerated her responsibilities, which include “judicial nominations,” “to provide advice and consent to the governor,” and to “give advice and consent on the parole board members when they’re nominated.”

Jacobs also mentioned that she was a key member in the Truth campaign prior to her current role, a \$5 billion advertising campaign designed to “shift teen attitudes towards tobacco and smoking.” She finds that much of her public outreach revolves around informing the public about the existence of her position, educating them on its impact and importance within the state. Jacobs stated that her position is important because it “matters who are judges are.”

“It matters the kinds of people who are serving on our parole board,” Jacobs said during her speech. “Who those people are directly affects the kinds of results we get from our courts, the kinds of sentences that happen, whether people get diverted or incarcerated or a creative solution that affects them and the root causes of why they’re in court.”

South Hadley Select Board member Rene Sweeney was the last speaker for the event. Sweeney reflected on the other speak-

ers’ comments and emphasized getting involved with the local community. They stated the importance of local government work and mentioned the role doesn’t always involve what the populous expects.

“People are surprisingly passionate about trash pick-up,” Sweeney commented. “But I’m proud every time I’m able to help a resident see and connect with the infrastructure of the community.”

Sweeney concluded their time by encouraging interested citizens to run for local positions so that they can be the person that upholds the values they want to see in the community. They mentioned that location positions were the “nuts and bolts of government” and that such service is “a great experience.”

Community questions fielded by representatives concerned mail-in voting rights and state funding initiatives given recent funding deficits. The event is hoped to be the first of many public forum offerings by MHC Votes, as reported by organization senator Bailey Dillon.

“I really hope to continue having conversations with the community and the school,” said Dillon. “I think putting direct energy towards bringing the students off campus into our communities to have these conversations, to have those discussions with our local community members is really, really important.”



MHC Votes! organizational members pose with local and state government officials after the event.



League of Women Voters representatives greet government officials and interested citizens.



Jake Oliveira, and Governor's Council Tara Jacobs prepare for their speeches on the Village Green.

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USDA INSP. SLICED FROM OUR DELI VIRGINIA HAM.....	<b>\$3.99</b> lb				
USDA INSP. STOREMADE BONELESS CAROLINA GOLD MARINATED CHICKEN THIGHS.....	<b>\$3.69</b> lb				
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