

FY25 budget set to be evaluated this month

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – It is nearly time for the city council to vote on the proposed Holyoke operating and capital needs budgets for fiscal year 2025.

While dates are not finalized for the hearings and final votes for the budgets, Mayor Joshua Gacia has been working for the past several months on developing the operating budget and the capital needs budget.

Garcia plans to give his State of the City Address on Thursday, May 9 at 6 p.m. During this address he will present his preliminary operating budget and the capital needs to the city council.

Additionally, as the budget gets closer to being finalized, Garcia plans to write a narrative detailing the process of this year's budget.

From there the council will send the budget to the finance committee, where they will discuss it further.

During the meeting with the finance committee, Garcia and department heads will be requested as needed to come forward and clarify their budget needs and capital requests.

The finance committee will then recommend the budget to the city council, where it will go to the city auditor to update revenue and expenditure projections.

Finally, the council will review the budget and make any additional cuts needed and then take a vote on the capital and operating budget.

The school committee budget hearing will also take place at this time, so that their budget needs can be incorporated into the overarching city budget.

This process will take place over the course of the months of May and June. The final vote must be taken before the beginning of July.

Thus far, City Auditor Tanya Wdowiak has been pleased with this year's budget process.

"The Mayor may say differently but for me this year's budget process has been the one of the best I have experienced since I came here in 2018," Wdowiak said. "The Mayor gave clear objectives in his budget planning process while still being empathetic to departmental needs and wants. He also deals well with realistic economic conditions and con-

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PROFESSOR BUGMAN brings entomology adventures to library



Bryan "Professor Bugman" Man came to Holyoke Public Library to give the arthropod petting zoo.

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The public library hosted Bryan "Professor Bugman" Man for his arthropod petting zoo.

The event was a big hit, with dozens of children and their families crowding into the community room at the library in order to learn about bugs, or more specifically, arthropods.

"This is designed to be an interactive taste into the world and to realize that there are such strange things and to get an idea about vocabulary and scientific thinking, how scientists classify different things and what kind of questions do scientists ask when they're examining something," Man said.

During his presentation, Man described how bugs are not actually a scientific category. Arthropods, however, are.

"Bug is actually a word where our brain knows the patterns of how we use the word, it's gotten it through context clues" Man said. "But because of that it doesn't actually have a hard scientific definition, each one of us comes to the table with a different idea of what a bug is."

Arthropods are animals that have a hard exoskeleton. There are over a million species of arthropods that have been discovered and scientists imagine that there may be millions more.

Throughout the event, Man described the different categories of arthropods: insects, crustaceans, arachnids and myriapods.



Bryan "Professor Bugman" Man had different insect samples on display at his arthropod petting zoo to admire.



Bryan "Professor Bugman" Man allowed the children in attendance to pet the various insects he had brought in for the arthropod petting zoo.

Turley photos by Quinn Suomala

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School renaming discussed

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – At their meeting on Apr. 23, the school committee discussed the process they would like to undergo for the potential renaming of Peck Middle School.

Their largest priority in this process will be ensuring that all stakeholders have the chance to have their voices heard. They know this is a decision that will impact the whole community and therefore want to ensure everyone has their say.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, as well as Superintendent/Receiver Anthony Soto and Chief of Strategy and Turnaround Erin Linville all worked to develop a draft plan for how to go about the renaming.

"We, together, came up with a plan for renaming in order to include community voices, parent's voices, everybody's voices, especially those who are going to be in the building," School Committee Member Yadillette Rivera-Colón said.

They want to focus on gathering feedback from Metcalf and Holyoke STEM, as those are the schools that will merge into the new Peck, as well as from Donahue, Lawrence and Morgan, as those are the feeder schools.

While any community input is welcome, they want to prioritize those who will be most directly affected by this change.

They hope to send out a survey asking families if they think Peck should be renamed and if so, what suggestions they have for new names and why.

Additionally, school committee members representing the wards of the new school will likely host meetings to solicit input.

Following all of this, they plan to narrow down naming suggestions to three to five names and then develop a survey for stakeholders to vote on their name preference. The meaning behind each proposed name will be included.

This plan also includes time for students to vote on the survey, by setting aside specific class time for the students to take it.

They also discussed if they wanted to focus this plan on just renaming the school or if they should include deciding on the school mascot and colors.

See PECK, page 11

HCC signs workforce training pact

HOLYOKE – Representatives from Holyoke Community College and the Springfield-based nonprofit I Found the Light Against All Odds Foundation met today, Tuesday, April 30, to sign a memorandum of understanding to work together to increase educational and workforce training opportunities for young women at risk for homelessness.

The signing ceremony will begin at 2 p.m. in the third floor lobby of the Frost Building at Holyoke Community College. HCC President George Timmons and Stefan B. Davis, CEO, president, and founder of the I Found the Light Against All Odds Foundation will sign the agreement and offer brief remarks.

I Found the Light Against All Odds Foundation provides support services

for young women to help address social and economic issues that can lead to poverty and homelessness. Specifically, by signing this MOU, HCC and the foundation will agree to work together to develop support services for area women, age 18-20, to attain safe housing and career opportunities through education and training.

According to the MOU, Hampden County demonstrates a poverty rate of 16.9 percent, which is higher than the national average of 11.5 percent. Meanwhile, the poverty rates in Springfield and Holyoke are even higher at 25.5 percent and 26 percent, respectively.

“At the same time, research shows that many community college students in Massachusetts experience hunger

and/or homelessness, as well as other types of basic needs insecurity that can serve as barriers to degree completion and thereby limit economic sustainability and mobility,” the MOU states.

“From HCC, the foundation is looking to connect with our existing support services on the academic side,” said Jeff Hayden, HCC vice president of Business and Community Services. “So, admissions, financial aid counseling, career advising, and guidance on transferring from HCC to a four-year institution and just learning what kind of education and training is required for specific career pathways. It’s a real natural fit between an agency that works to support young women and a college, HCC, which is known for its wrap-around support model.”

City announces fireworks

HOLYOKE – The City of Holyoke will be hosting the annual 4th of July fireworks on Friday, June 28 (with a rain-date of June 30). The event will take place on the grounds of Holyoke Community College, at 303 Homestead Ave.

Vendors interested in taking part in the event should contact the Parks and Recreation Department before June 16, for a permit application at 413-322-5620.

Everyone is encouraged to come early to enjoy the music and food from a variety of vendors as well as many children’s activities. The event begins at 6 p.m. with the fireworks display scheduled to start at dusk. For any questions, please call the Mayor’s Office at 413-561-1600.

New exhibit at Children’s Museum

HOLYOKE – The Children’s Museum at Holyoke announces their new groundbreaking exhibit: The Automotive Technician Center, presented by Marcotte Ford is now open to all Museum guests.

This eagerly anticipated addition marks the museum’s first new exhibit since 2018, bringing innovation and hands-on learning to children of all ages. This exhibit was made possible through the generous support of Marcotte Ford. Their dedication to Holyoke and its young residents has been instrumental in bringing this project to fruition.

This project, the result of over two years of planning and collaboration, was opened with not one, but two, very deserving celebrations. The first was a private event for Marcotte family, friends, and community stakeholders. Attended by approximately 150 guests who enjoyed food and fun, including champagne with blue cotton candy which when swirled in, turned the drink Marcotte blue. The highlight of the evening was the big reveal when the curtain was drawn and the culmination of lots of hard work and dedication by many was seen for the first time.

The exhibit features a fully functional Ford Fiesta donated by Marcotte and locally fabricated to ensure an authentic experience. Children can immerse themselves in the world of automotive technology, changing tires, diagnosing issues, and even put together a puzzle of the engine (under the hood). A tool wall, equipped with modified real tools for safety, enhances the interactive learning experience.

The second event was a Community Celebration, where, like the name states, everyone in the community was invited, with free admission, to the Museum. Not only did hundreds of area children get to



check out this amazing new installation, they also were treated to popcorn, cotton candy, face painting, a photobooth, and kids Zumba.

In addition to the new exhibit, the museum will continue to offer their classic exhibits including many interactive exhibits, such as the Curvy Climber, World of Motion, Shop & Scan Grocery Store, Art Studio, and more. Each exhibit is carefully crafted by education professionals to be hands-on and engaging, designed to stimulate learning and exploration in a fun and dynamic environment. Through interactive experiences, children explore, discover, and learn by doing, fostering curiosity and creativity.

The community is invited to celebrate the power of hands-on learning and exploration and see the Automotive Technician, Center at The Children’s Museum at Holyoke, open Tuesday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sunday noon to 4 p.m.; and closed Mondays.

Mayoral bike ride on May 13

HOLYOKE – Mayor Joshua A. Garcia will lead the annual Mayoral Bike Ride on Monday, May 13, at 5 p.m. The 45-minute ride will start at City Hall and finish at the Fame

Lounge, 386 Dwight St. The bike ride, sponsored by the Holyoke Biking and Pedestrian Committee, is held each year in observance of Bike Month. Participation in the ride is open to all.

MiraVista celebrates Mental Health Awareness Month

HOLYOKE – MiraVista Behavioral Health Center will mark Mental Health Awareness Month with a variety of activities planned including a flag raising on May 9 at 11 a.m., the lighting of its façade green, and the unveiling of a new ice cream flavor in partnership with Rice Fruit Farm in Wilbraham. This annual observance is a critical reminder of the importance of prioritizing mental well-being and fostering a culture of understanding, support, and acceptance.

“Green is used for the month to symbolize hope and support for individuals living with a mental illness,” said Kimberley Lee, Chief of Creative Strategy and Development at the psychiatric hospital that provides inpatient care to adults and adolescents and a range of outpatient substance use recovery services. “Our clinicians work across populations to help patients successfully manage their mental health challenges and lead fulfilling lives in their communities.”

Lee said that in conjunction with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s observance of the month, MiraVista will highlight on its social media the diverse mental health needs of various populations, as well as

encourage people to wear green.

“These 31 days are about advancing better understanding of mental health as a component of overall health and the importance of seeking evidence-based treatment when needed,” Lee said. “Whether someone is navigating personal challenges or extending empathy to others, this month holds significance for us all in showing support for mental health care. Mental health, is health.”

Lee said MiraVista will follow SAMHSA’s suggested weekly themes in highlighting the mental health needs of older adults, children and teens, racial and ethnic marginalized groups, and those who identify LGBTQIA+ and, as a result of bullying and discrimination, are at high risk for mental health conditions.

“We are amplifying our efforts during May to destigmatize mental health, enhance understanding, and cultivate a supportive environment,” Lee said. “Promoting mental health and treatment for it benefits everyone – from the individual managing it, to the family and friends who love them, to the community in which they live and contribute. Throughout the month we encourage everyone to be seen in their green!”

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<p style="color: green; font-weight: bold;">Friday, May 3</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Paul Pender</p>	<p style="color: green; font-weight: bold;">Friday, May 10</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Jim McArdle & Jerry Murphy</p>
<p style="color: green; font-weight: bold;">Saturday, May 4</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Dee Reilly</p>	<p style="color: green; font-weight: bold;">Saturday, May 11</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Kilashandra</p>

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Registration open for summer youth programs

HOLYOKE – Registration is open for 2024 Summer Youth Programs at Holyoke Community College.

Starting July 8 and running through August 16, HCC will offer 16 week-long summer programs in person on campus and many more online, for youth aged 8 to 17 interested in baking, cooking, computers, and sports.

For more than 40 years, HCC has offered challenging, summer education activities for youth, providing early opportunities for students to experience a college environment guided and encouraged by experienced professionals.

HCC's 2024 on-campus summer youth programs run Monday through Friday for one week, some for a full day, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and others for a half day, either 9 a.m. to noon, or 1 to 4 p.m.

All in-person programs will be held on the main HCC campus, 303 Homestead Ave., except for cooking and baking classes, which are held at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, 164 Race St.

July 8-12:

Bake With Me (ages 11-14). Students will learn the art of creating tasty baked goods, pastries, and confections, from traditional bread baking to

beautiful showpieces, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (\$399)

Summer Fun in the Kitchen with Chef Birchall (ages 11-14): Iconic summer dishes and an eclectic variety of seasonal meals will be featured as students prepare lunch for themselves and their fellow students, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (\$399)

July 15-19:

Bake With Me (ages 11-14), 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (\$399)

Summer Fun in the Kitchen with Chef Birchall (ages 11-14), 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (\$399)

July 22-26:

All Spiced Up, Cooking with Anjula (ages 9-14). Join Anjula Kanouja from India House restaurant in Northampton and learn how to play with Indian spices while creating some of her favorite summer dishes, all with a Desi twist, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (\$399)

Culinary Summer Fun with Chef Tracy (ages 9-14). Learn new kitchen skills from Chef Tracy Carter as she creates some amazing culinary delights this summer, with a different focus each day: Pizza Party, Baking Basics, Breakfast for Champions, Tastes of Summer, Chopped

Junior, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (\$399)

ROBLOX Coders: Learn how to build 3D models and create an adventure in your ROBLOX world. Bring characters to life with unique animations you design, 9 a.m. to noon for ages 8-10; 1 to 4 p.m. for ages 11-14, (\$199)

July 29-Aug. 2:

Youth Soccer Clinic (ages 8-17): A comprehensive soccer clinic for young athletes taught by Rob Galazka, head coach of the HCC women's soccer team with assistance from top college soccer players, stressing basic and advanced skills with plenty of one-on-one instruction, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (\$299)

Make Your First Video Game: Go beyond the limitations of the traditional 2D game design and create an immersive 3D world. Students will learn the physics behind 3D games, explore beginner event scripting, level design, controlling the flow of gameplay, and storytelling, 9 a.m. to noon for ages 8-10; 1 to 4 p.m. for ages 11-14, (\$199)

Aug. 5-9:

Youth Baseball Clinic (ages 8-17): This fun-filled, challenging program emphasizes fundamental skills and base-

ball knowledge while building self-confidence and developing every player's ability to play more competitively, taught by head HCC baseball coach Ryan Magni, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., (\$299)

Minecraft Modders: Customize your own Minecraft world: Learn scripting and logic statements to create a wide variety of new elements, gameplay mechanics, and world-generating mods to change the way you play Minecraft, 9 a.m. to noon for ages 8-10; 1 to 4 p.m. for ages 11-14, (\$299)

Aug. 12-16:

Code Breakers: Learn the basics of coding languages like HTML, JavaScript, and CSS through a series of web projects and design challenges each day and be on your way to becoming the next tech star, 9 a.m. to noon for ages 8-10, 1 to 4 p.m. for ages 11-14 (\$199)

HCC also offers additional online-only versions of ROBLOX Coders, Video Game design, Minecraft Modders, and Code Breakers, and many other technology-based classes through its partner, Black Rocket.

To register for in person or online Summer Youth Program classes, please go to: hcc.edu/summer-youth.

Dakin welcomes new transport delivery for southern dogs

SPRINGFIELD – On Thursday, April 25, Dakin Humane Society welcomed a transport delivery of five dogs from Friends of the Animal Shelter (FOTAS) in South Carolina. The dogs include four eight-month-old siblings and a two-year-old female hound who will become available after a mandatory 48-hour quarantine period and after passing a subsequent medical evaluation for adoption.

Pet overpopulation has become a significant nationwide problem in animal shelters. According to Shelter Animals Count, an animal advocacy group based in Atlanta, shelter and rescue populations in the United States have spiked by 900,000 overall since January 2021, resulting in an increase in the number of dogs and cats being euthanized.

"We are fortunate to be able to help FOTAS by bringing these dogs here to western Massachusetts," stated Meg Talbert, executive director at Dakin. "Shelters around the country are experiencing overcrowding due to slowed adoption rates and increasing animal intake. It's because of our wonderful community of adopters, foster homes and donors that Dakin can step up and help."

Talbert continued, "These five young dogs will make great additions to families in our community. We encourage people who are interested in adopting a dog now or in the coming months to look at our website frequently, or visit Dakin during

our open hours to find a good match. When you adopt a pet from a shelter, you're helping two animals, the one joining your family, and the one who will then be able to enter our shelter to await their new person or family."

"We live in a large county, roughly the size of Rhode Island," stated Kathy Cagle, programs coordinator at FOTAS. "So many people are kind and good, they take in strays and do what they can. However their ability to get their pets spayed and neutered, and receive proper veterinary care, is limited. Some days there are lines to the parking lot with people who found dogs and cats on the road. We see people leaving dogs at gas stations, tying them to our fence, or leaving them with bags of food on the road. These are pets that come to us through no fault of their own. You are getting homes for our neglected and unwanted."



Head Start campaign begins

SPRINGFIELD – It is often true that some of the most outstanding contributions made in the area are also done so in the most unboastful of ways. That is certainly true for the Holyoke, Chicopee, Springfield Head Start, an organization committed to providing a beacon of hope and source of support to thousands of young children and their families in the greater Springfield area, yet often that hard work happens quietly in the classroom.

That is why HCS Head Start is thrilled to once again be hitting the streets with their message about the importance of early learning in promoting school readiness for children ages birth to five. At the start of each preschool enrollment season the team heads out for their Door-to-Door Recruitment Campaign, this year planned for Wednesday, May 8, from 9 a.m. to noon. Teachers and support staff will walk through neighborhoods, knock on doors, and spread the word about free preschool programs available.

"I always love this time of year," shared Nicole Blais, HCS Head Start chief executive officer. "Our team gets so excited to get out in the neighborhoods and share about Head Start and the work we do. To me, the Door-to-Door Recruitment Campaign is a testament to the unwavering commitment of HCS Head Start team members to reach those most in need of services."

The afternoon event, which falls

during Teacher Appreciation Week (May 6 - 10), provides HCS HS leaders the opportunity to recognize all of the amazing work done throughout the school year in support of children and families. The festivities include a special performance by Bomba de Aquí of Holyoke who will not only entertain, but also educate on Afro-Puerto Rican music and traditions. In addition, the HCS Head Start Volunteer of the Year award and HCS Head Start Hero Award will be given out.

The Head Start promise is simple: every child, regardless of circumstances at birth, has the ability to reach their full potential. For decades HCS Head Start programs have been offering services to meet the needs of children and families, many from some of the most vulnerable situations, in an effort to enhance cognitive, social, and emotional development and bolster school readiness. The comprehensive Head Start model focuses on a family's overall well-being which includes medical, dental, hearing, vision, and behavioral screenings for those enrolled in Head Start. Partnering with the family is at the heart of the Head Start approach to early learning and childhood development, and thus they also assist the family reach their financial, career, and educational goals.

For more information including joining onsite for the Teacher Appreciation Week Celebration, please contact Meghan Rothschild at (413) 218-4994 or meghan@chikmedia.us.



Museum plant sale to be held May 11

HOLYOKE – Wistariahurst Mother's Day plant sale is on May 11, 10 a.m. to 12 noon

Planning on gifting the motherly figure in your life flowers for Mother's Day? Support a local garden by purchasing your blossoms from Wistariahurst Museum. The plants are perfectly adapted to the unique climate and soil, making them ideal for a New England garden. With a variety of flora, including roses, day-lilies, American wisteria, and kousa dogwood trees, there's something for everyone. A purchase also supports the maintenance of the historical museum and gardens.

"This is such a great gift for your

mom or your garden that helps support our community space and we hope to see you there," raves Megan Seiler, Wistariahurst's Museum director.

Celebrate Mother's Day by bringing mom or motherly figure to Wistariahurst Museum during our Mother's Day Plant Sale. Take a stroll through the enchanted garden and find the perfect gift to spruce up mom's garden. Show mom some floral love by snagging her a selection of plants from our site. Don't miss this chance to shower your awesome mom with blooming affection.

There are some plants that can be pre-purchase online here: <https://wistariahurstgiftshop.square.site/>.

BikePed looking for volunteers

HOLYOKE – As the warm weather approaches, the Holyoke BikePed is looking for motivated individuals looking to participate in efforts to improve biking and walking within the city of Holyoke.

The committee works closely on city infrastructure projects, Safe routes to School initiatives, and fun events including the Bike Ride with the Mayor and Bike Night at the Armor Yard.

Join BikePed every first Monday of the month at 6 p.m. via zoom or in person in the City Hall Annex 4th floor.

Guest Column



Minister wants to maximize Social Security benefit

Dear Rusty

I want to apply for Social Security, but I want to make sure I get all the benefits I have earned. I am a veteran with a 10% disability rating (not sure if that matters). I am 68 years old. I am a minister and have been exempt from Social Security taxes for most of my income since I was about 30, but I still have the 40 quarters needed. I have also worked off and on in the secular workplace and continued paying Social Security taxes.

One hears a great deal about those who want to “help” us apply for Social Security, but which turn out to be a scam or want a fee. How do I apply and maximize my benefits with my unique situation?

Signed: Seeking Answers

Dear Seeking

Don't worry about fees here at the AMAC Foundation – there is never a fee for the services we provide as we are non-profit. And I want to thank you for your military service, you may find the “For Veterans” section at our AMAC Foundation website interesting at www.amacfoundation.org.

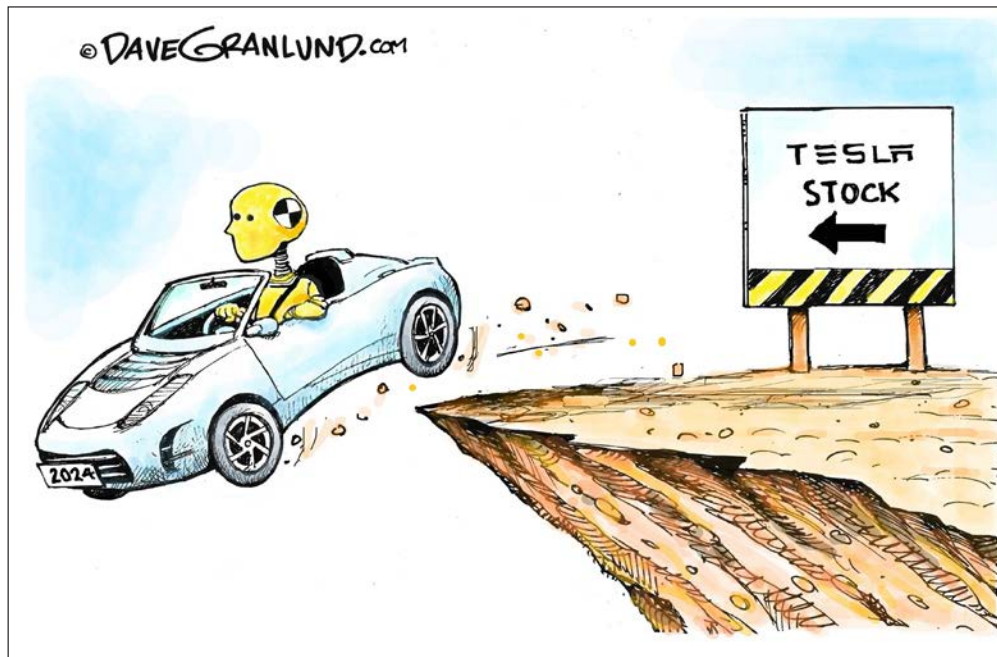
Your VA disability rating does not affect your Social Security benefit. At 68 years old, your Social Security benefit payment has been earning Delayed Retirement Credits since you reached your Full Retirement Age of 66 years and 4 months in July 2022. That means that your benefit, if you claim now, will be about 13% more than it would have been had you claimed at your FRA. FYI, if you continue to delay, your SS benefit will continue to grow by 8% per additional year you delay, up to the month you turn 70. At that time, your SS benefit will be 29% higher than it would have been at your FRA. Nevertheless, if you wish to claim a smaller amount now, you can do so in a couple of ways:

You can call Social Security at 1-800-77-1213 or your local SS office to request an appointment to apply. They will most likely set a date/time to call you to take your application over the phone, they discourage office visits these days.

Once you have applied, it typically takes a month or two to process your application, but they will pay your benefits effective with the month you say you want them to begin. Note, they will likely also offer you six months of retroactive benefits but be aware that if you accept that offer your monthly payment will be permanently reduced by 4%.

You can apply for your SS retirement benefit online at www.ssa.gov/apply. Applying online is, by far, the most efficient method, as shown in this short video: www.ssa.gov/hlp/video/iclaim_r01.htm. However, to apply online you will need to first create your personal “my Social Security” online account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. Once you have your

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Guest Column

What to do when and how to do it



The last few gorgeous days got us all outside and into our home landscape. Maybe you looked at this or that and said “Now what do I do?” Here is a column straight from the archives to best guide you through the next oh so fun (and busy) weeks in the garden.

DO remove spent blooms from spring flowering bulbs. Once “deadheaded” the bulb won't expend energy making seeds, instead, it will store it and delight you with an even healthier stand of flowers next year.

DO NOT cut, braid or otherwise alter bulb foliage. It may not be the prettiest, but as long as it is green, (and to some degree even when it is yellowish) it is photosynthesizing, making a storehouse for next spring's blooms.

DO turn under your covercrop of winter rye now, a few weeks prior to planting your vegetable garden. Plant residues will have a chance to break down without stealing valuable nutrients from newly transplanted seedlings.

DO NOT add fresh manure to garden plots as it will burn plants. Be sure to compost it for at least six months prior to use. Make your compost pile “hot” by balancing the amount of green and brown ingredients and by turning it regularly. The result is a near neutral weed-free source of organic matter.

DO prune spring flowering shrubs soon after blooming. Forsythia and lilac for example, bloom on the previous season's wood. By pruning once their blooming period is complete you will allow enough time for regrowth without sacrificing next year's blooms.

DO NOT prune fruit trees now. Better to wait until the trees are dormant. You can, however, rid apple trees of pencil sized or smaller water sprouts in mid summer. Simply grab one with your hand and

give it a quick jerk. Removing a small portion of the branch from which it grows will likely prevent future sprouts in this area.

DO begin to harden off homegrown seedlings and garden-bound indoor plants over the course of the next few weeks. By gradually acclimatizing plants to the outdoors you will likely prevent transplant shock and other maladies such as sunscald and windburn. Start off with a few hours outside each day, working up to all day and overnight. Then, as long as the threat of frost has passed the plants can successfully be planted in the ground.

DO NOT plant pepper seedlings until the soil has sufficiently warmed (usually by the first week in June). Research indicates that planting peppers in cold soil will stunt plants and reduce yields. You can warm the soil where peppers (and other heat lovers) are to grow by laying down sheets of IRT mulch a couple of weeks prior to planting. Then simply cut holes in the plastic and plant as normal.

DO cut asparagus with a knife just under the surface of the soil. In established plantings you can harvest spears for about six weeks. Leave those that are thinner than a pencil. Although we wish the season could go on forever, allowing foliage to form will only return energy to the roots, making for tasty shoots next spring!

DO NOT allow weeds to take over the strawberry patch! Applying a mulch of shredded leaves, composted sawdust or pine needles will not only keep the weeds at bay, but it will feed the plants and keep developing berries clean at the same time!

DO sow grass seed soon, before crabgrass has a chance to take hold. Or better yet, sow seed in late August, or early September, when this dreaded weed is near done its life cycle. Water sown areas daily to promote timely germination.

DO NOT rototill patches of perennial weeds; you are merely spreading them about the garden! Better to hand weed, digging out the roots completely. After planting is complete mulch around plants to cut down on future weeds, conserve moisture, and add organic matter to the soil. When applying mulch around trees

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The Holyoke Sun is published every Friday by Turley Publications, Inc., 24 Water St., Palmer, Mass. 01069. Telephone (413) 283-8393, Fax (413) 289-1977.



@ The Holyoke Sun



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Unsigned or anonymous letters will NOT be published.

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

Deadline for submissions is Wednesday at noon.

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

Election letters to the editor welcome

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

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

For more information, call 413-283-8393.

Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the news-

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

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



The great blue heron returned to its nest last week. Last week, I finally saw a great blue heron on a nest located in a dead tree on the beaver pond, which abuts my hayfield. It built the nest two years ago and this year will be its third season on the well built stick nest. At first, I saw it perched on a branch near the nest. For the last few days, it has been in the nest.

The great blue heron is 50 inches tall and is the largest and most widespread heron. The body is grayish-blue, has a white head and a black stripe over the eye. The immature heron is similar to the adult except its head has a solid black cap, which turns to white after two years. There is also a rare white morph of this heron, but it is limited to Southern Florida. Its legs and bill are orange yellow rather than dark like the more com-

mon dark morph.

Fortunately, I can see the bird in the nest from the road so I do not disturb it when I watch it. I hope it is successful in rearing its young. It takes 28 days to incubate the eggs and 55 days for them to fledge. The female lays three to seven eggs in a large, platform nest of sticks lined with finer twigs and vegetation. The nest is placed in a tree 30 to 70 feet above ground. Herons raise their young in either small colonies in isolated areas or singly like this pair.

Great blue herons feed in shallow water by standing or walking slowly, then grabbing mall fish, frogs, birds and aquatic insect with its bill. They can feed in deeper water by plunging or swimming. They also hunt on land for small animals.

They inhabit marshes, swamps, river and lake edges, tidal flats, mangroves and other water areas. They make a guttural "frahnk" or short "rok, rok" given during aggression. Both sexes do bill clacking.

Mass. Audubon sightings

Berkshire County sightings included a sandhill crane in New Marlborough, nine long-tailed ducks at Lake Pontoosuc in Pittsfield and 11 at Stockbridge Bowl in Stockbridge, a northern goshawk at Bridges Pond in Williamstown and 20 American pipits at Ashley Falls.

Franklin County hosted small flocks of red crossbills including 24 at the Montague Sandplains Wildlife Management Area in Montague, nine at gate 29 at Quabbin Reservoir in New Salem and eight at Satan's Kingdom WMA in Northfield.

Hampshire County had a Say's phoebe at the Quabbin Reservoir Visitor's Center in Belchertown, four common goldeneyes at the Windsor Dam in Belchertown, 22 glossy ibises on Old Ferry Road in Northampton, an American bittern on Moody Bridge Road in Hadley, 21 red crossbills at the Podick and Cole Conservation Area in Amherst, a Lapland longspur in the Northampton East Meadows and an American coot at Great Pond in Hatfield.

Hampden County spotting were five upland sandpipers at Westover Air Base in Ludlow, nine red-necked Grebes at the Congamond Lakes in Southwick, 15 chimney swifts at the Stebbins Wildlife Refuge in Longmeadow and a green heron in Holyoke.

Worcester County included a black-headed gull, two glossy ibises, a solitary sandpiper and 20 red crossbills at the Bolton Flats WMA in Bolton, two sandhill cranes at the Winimuset Meadows WMA in New Braintree, two black vultures at Adams Farm in Athol and an orchard oriole at Crane Swamp Conservation Area in Northboro.

The most unusual sighting on Friday, April 19 was a black-capped petrel in Cape Cod Bay spotted from a whale research vessel. This species is everywhere quite rare and in relatively inshore waters it is even more unusual.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100, emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com.

SECURITY, from page 4

personal online account set up, you will be able to see what your SS retirement benefit will be now and at future ages should you plan to wait longer to claim.

Your SS retirement benefit will be based on your lifetime record of earnings from which Social Security FICA taxes were withheld or self-employment earnings on which SS payroll taxes were levied. In any case, your SS benefit will be based on your lifetime earnings record contributing to Social Security, as well as your age when you claim. You'll get your maximum benefit based

on those factors.

Although your situation is somewhat uncommon, it is not exceptionally unique. Your VA disability rating does not affect your Social Security benefit and, because you are a member of the clergy, you are not subject to Social Security's Windfall Elimination Provision, a rule which reduces SS benefits for those with a pension earned while not contributing to Social Security. In other words, your SS benefit will be based entirely on your lifetime record of earnings from which Social Security payroll taxes were withheld and your age when your benefit starts.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

GARDEN, from page 4

and shrubs remember to pull it back, away from the trunk to prevent girdling.

DO have fun in the garden this spring!

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

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Lions do it
 5. In favor of
 8. Rest here please (abbr.)
 11. Pulpits
 13. Leisure activity
 14. Fertility god
 15. Financial obligations
 16. When you anticipate getting somewhere
 17. Spanish river
 18. Sporting events
 20. Type of tree
 21. Ceased to be
 22. Persons
 25. Synthetic resin
 30. Relates to photochemical reactions
 31. Father
 32. Former Cowboys coach
 33. City in Finland
 38. Run batted in

41. Got through
 43. They darken skin
 45. In a harmful way
 48. Form of weaving
 49. City of Angels
 50. Caucasian language
 55. Syngman _____, Korean president
 56. Sun up in New York
 57. Paddled
 59. Fishes
 60. Affirmative
 61. Nimble
 62. Doctor of Education
 63. Soviet Socialist Republic
 64. A small island

CLUES DOWN

1. Cool!
 2. Hebrew unit of measure
 3. Swedish rock group
 4. College army
 5. Favor over another
 6. Called it a career
 7. Egg-shaped wind instrument
 8. Israeli statesman
 9. Hurries
 10. Slog
 12. Midway between south and southeast
 14. Benedictine monk
 19. Self-immolation by fire ritual
 23. Family of regulator genes
 24. Surrendering
 25. Political action committee
 26. S. American plant
 27. Long-term memory
 28. Bark
 29. Breathes in
 34. Take hold of
 35. Everyone has one

36. Valentine's Day color
 37. Drivers' licenses and passports
 39. Outer walls of castles
 40. Enters with force
 41. One thousandth of an inch
 42. Deceased Chinese politician
 44. Sugary secretion of plants
 45. Expressed pleasure
 46. Shelter
 47. Utilizes
 48. Forest resident
 51. Fashion accessory
 52. A sharply directional antenna
 53. _____ Kristofferson, actor
 54. A bad place to end up
 58. MLBer Gordon

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 9

Advertising Club to hold 'Backstage Pass' networking event

WEST SPRINGFIELD – The Advertising Club of Western Massachusetts announces their new 2024 networking event, Backstage Pass, to spotlight members' work and foster closer connections within the creative community. Backstage Pass will be on Wednesday, May 1, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. The event will take place at Nadim's Downtown Mediterranean Grill, 1390 Main St.

Backstage Pass is designed as a unique networking event, open to both members and non-members of the Ad Club of Western Massachusetts, the premier organization for all marketing and communications professionals in western Massachusetts and northern Connecticut. Ad Club members are

encouraged to bring 1-2 non-members to the event.

The event will revolve around providing an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at the creative processes behind successful campaigns or projects undertaken by our members for their clients, serve as a recruitment tool, and highlight local businesses. Round-table, forum-style discussions will be held, allowing for an intimate and detailed exploration of the creative work. This setting will not only elevate the event's exclusivity but also provide tangible insights into the real-world application and impact of their members' creative endeavors.

Guests can register for the event here or contact the Ad Club at (413) 342-0533, or info@adclubwm.org.

"Backstage Pass represents a pivotal moment for the Advertising Club of Western Massachusetts. It's not just an event; it's a movement towards fostering a more integrated and collaborative creative community. This is our invitation to professionals and enthusiasts alike to join us behind the scenes, to dive deep into the creative processes that drive our industry forward," said Mychal Connolly, president of the Advertising Club of Western Massachusetts. "We're not only showcasing the exceptional talent within our ranks but also opening doors for future collaborations and innovations. Our aim is to celebrate the spirit of creativity and ingenuity that defines our members and the broader community. Together, we're not just networking;

we're building the future of creativity in Western Massachusetts and beyond."

Ad Club aims to promote a tradition of excellence in future generations of communications professionals and look forward to making this important contribution as they believe this collaborative endeavor will reflect the collective spirit and creativity of the Ad Club of Western MA. Backstage Pass is the perfect opportunity to showcase remarkable talent, provide a platform for individuals to engage with the local business community, and inspire potential new members to join their ranks.

If interested, or have questions please contact Meghan Rothschild at (413) 218-4994 or meghan@chikmedia.us.

Registration open for 36th Annual Boston Marathon Jimmy Fund Walk

BOSTON – Registration is now open for the 2024 Boston Marathon Jimmy Fund Walk presented by Hyundai. Scheduled for Sunday, October 6, funds raised from the Jimmy Fund Walk support all forms of adult and pediatric patient care and cancer research at the nation's premier cancer center, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Due to ongoing construction in Copley Square, the Jimmy Fund Walk Finish Line location has been moved to the Boston Common for 2024.

The Jimmy Fund Walk is the only organized walk permitted on the famed Boston Marathon course, and participants have the flexibility to choose from four distance options: 5K Walk (from Dana-Farber Cancer Institute's Longwood Medical Campus); 10K Walk (from Newton); Half Marathon Walk (from Wellesley); and Marathon Walk (from Hopkinton).

Whatever route walkers choose, participants will be treated to refueling stations with refreshments throughout the course. Poster-sized photographs of patients, Jimmy Fund Walk Heroes, are displayed along the course as inspiration. Walkers can participate virtually, as well.

All routes will conclude at the Jimmy Fund Walk Finish Line Powered by Schneider Electric at Boston Common, by the corner of Charles and Beacon Street. The finish line will include a celebration with food, entertainment, and more. Public transportation is encouraged.

The Jimmy Fund Walk has raised more than \$176 million for Dana-Farber in its 35-year history, raising a record-breaking \$9.4 million in 2023. Funds raised from the Jimmy Fund Walk support all forms of adult and pediatric patient care and cancer research at the nation's premier cancer center, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. The Boston Athletic Association has supported the Jimmy Fund Walk since 1989, and Hyundai has been the presenting sponsor for more than 20 years.

Register as an individual walker, team member, or start a team. Take advantage of this unique opportunity and lead a group of family, friends, or colleagues to the finish line. The Jimmy Fund can help you start a team, grow your fundraising, and defy cancer, together.

Volunteers are needed to cheer on participants, serve snacks, distribute T-shirts, and more, at the four start locations, along the course, and at the 2024 Jimmy Fund Walk Finish Line Powered by Schneider Electric, located in the Boston Common. The Jimmy Fund Walk would not be possible without the hundreds of dedicated volunteers who donate their time, talent, and energy. Register to volunteer today.

To register for the Walk (#JimmyFundWalk) or to support a walker, visit www.JimmyFundWalk.org or call (866) 531-9255. Registrants can enter the promo code NEWS for \$5 off the registration fee. All registered walkers will receive a bib, medal, and a Jimmy Fund Walk T-shirt.



Homeward Vets donation drive

AGAWAM – Stanley Park will be hosting a donation drive for the Homeward Vets Organization on

May 4, from 8 a.m. to noon. Homeward Vets, Inc. is a non-profit organization that helps to provide home furnishings to previously homeless veterans who are transitioning into permanent housing and they rely solely on contributions and donations.

Homeward Vets is looking to collect small household items for veterans to set up their permanent homes. They are looking for dinnerware, cookware, and small appliances such as toasters, microwaves, toaster ovens and coffee makers

just to name a few. Cash donations will also be accepted and will be used to purchase gift cards for Big Y and Stop & Shop for groceries.

Please join at the Asian Garden parking lot on Margaret Lane across from the Veterans' Memorial at Stanley Park with donated items. For more information, please contact the Development Office at 413-568-9312 ext. 108, or Dave Felty, President of Homeward Vets at 413-875-2134 or email at info@homewardvets.org. For more information on Homeward Vets please visit their website at www.homewardvets.org.

Habitat for Humanity collecting cans

WEST SPRINGFIELD – Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity is again taking part in the Novelis Affiliate Recycling Program, but this time, there's a catch. A new challenge, so to speak. In previous years there was no minimum amount of how many empty, clean aluminum cans were recycled to receive the grant. This time, Greater Springfield Habitat needs to collect a minimum of 500 pounds (or 16,000 cans) to qualify.

That's a lot of cans and far more than anything GSHFH has collected in the past.

"It probably doesn't seem like much on the surface, for those who donate trash bags of cans and bottles to our recycling events," said Aimee Giroux, GSHFH executive director. "Over the past year, those donated items along with the grant funds have brought our organization enough to cover the cost of one repair project for a disabled veteran."

The Novelis Affiliate Recycling

Program began in May 2021 when Habitat for Humanity International and Novelis teamed up and introduced their collaboration. Habitat affiliates were invited to participate. To date, GSHFH has earned roughly \$6,000 and kept many cans out of the landfill.

In addition to bringing in large plastic bags of aluminum cans, the public can further help by allowing a collection bin in their places of business and donating the contents to GSHFH. Since 2021, several businesses have done so, including All States Transport, SR Commercial Realty, Reminder Publications, Lock and Key Realty; Shatz, Schwartz, and Fentin; PSRB, Dalton & Finegold, Wilbraham Monson Academy and Romeo Athletics in Enfield, CT, among others.

For more information, contact Brandy O'Brien, Marketing and Communications manager, at obrien@habitatspringfield.org or (413) 739-5503 x1005.

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Jayshalee Santos hits second base.



Above, Alanna Bonilla picks up a bloop hit in the shallow outfield. Left, Kylie Blaha pitches for the Knights.
Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Jade Maldonado fields a throw to the plate.

Knights win slugfest with Ware

HOLYOKE – Despite falling behind by several runs in the first inning, Holyoke softball was able to come back and eventually take a lead, and a win against Ware 20-19 last Thursday afternoon at home. The Knights have won three of their last four games to improve to 3-7 on the season. The Knights had started out 0-6.

Samantha Rodriguez looks to flip the ball to second.

Belchertown overwhelms Holyoke baseball

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

HOLYOKE – Before the start of the 2024 regular season, the Belchertown varsity baseball team was moved from the Suburban East Division to the Valley Central Division. The Orioles didn't have very much trouble winning their first two league games in a span of 48 hours last week.

The Orioles snapped a five game losing streak by scoring 14 runs in the top of the first inning en route to a 27-4 victory over the Holyoke Purple Knights at historic Mackenzie Stadium, last Tuesday afternoon.

The first meeting between the two high schools on the baseball diamond in nine years ended after five innings due to the ten-run mercy rule.

"We've been struggling during our past couple of

games, and it was nice to get everyone into today's game," said Belchertown head coach Evan Berneche. "Almost everyone had a base hit. We really like our new league."

Berneche is very glad that his team won't be making any more long bus rides to the Berkshires. Three of the Orioles former league opponents were Monument Mountain, Wahconah, and Mount Greylock.

"We changed leagues because we wanted to reduce our travel," Berneche added. "All of the teams in our new league are local and we don't have to travel as far. It's also a competitive league."

The other members of the Valley Central Division are Chicopee High School, Chicopee Comp, Agawam, and Holyoke.

The Orioles (3-5, 2-0) added another league win after

defeating Agawam, 18-8, in a home game, last Friday afternoon. They also defeated Northampton, 12-1, in the season opener.

It was the first time that the Orioles defeated the Purple Knights (0-8,0-2) since 2011 when they posted a 6-0 victory.

They scored 27 runs on 23 base hits in last Tuesday's contest.

Junior shortstop Ian McDonald led the way offensively with four base hits and three RBIs. He also scored three runs. He had two hits and two RBIs in the first inning alone.

Junior first baseman Jake Waller also had two hits and two RBIs in the opening frame, as the Orioles sent a total of 18 batters to the plate. Junior Evan Ferguson, who was the Orioles starting pitcher, knocked home a run in the first inning when he

See BASEBALL, page 8

Valley Blue Sox players in need of host families

HOLYOKE – The Valley Blue Sox is still searching for a few host families for the 2024 season.

To be a host family, all you need is a private room for the player to stay in, food options, and access to a kitchen.

In return, 2024 volunteer host families will receive:

- Free general admission to all Valley Blue Sox home and away games
- Food vouchers for every home game
- Free trip to Fenway Park to a Boston Red Sox game

Free clinics for any household member ages 6-13
Special Host Family recognition event
40% discount on all merchandise



Season-long access to our live-game radio

Access to our fan bus to an away game to be determined

If you are interested in being a host family, please contact matt d@valleybluesox.com for more information.

Thunderbirds put bow on successful season

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds completed a historic season in style on Saturday, hosting a 14th consecutive sellout crowd inside the MassMutual Center. The capacity crowd for the finale also marked the 20th time during the 2023-24 season that “the Thunderdome” hit its maximum occupancy.

Both the 14-game sellout streak and the 20 total sellout crowds set Springfield AHL hockey records, and those were merely two statistics from a year full of shattered records and overwhelming support from the fanbase. The Thunderbirds’ ticket sales department saw distinct growth in numerous categories, including group ticket revenue (up 30% from 2022-23), season ticket revenue (up 15%), and total full-season tickets sold (up 5%).

“The support this franchise has received from day one has been indescribable,” said Thunderbirds President Nathan Costa. “It takes so many factors for an American Hockey League franchise to succeed, and our front office staff is right up there with the best in the business. Their tireless efforts, coupled with the passion and energy of the Thunderdome crowd, made this historic season a reality. We have no intention of

slowing down either, which should make our fans so excited for what will come.”

Of the 6,321 fans who attended Thunderbirds games on average last season, about 25% were members of various groups participating in a wide variety of in-game experiences, from Premium Suite and Executive Perch parties to on-ice activities like national anthem performances and high-five tunnel teams. Springfield’s front office staff efforts helped the club generate the eighth most group tickets sold in the league.

“We have long worked at making Thunderbirds games a lifelong memory for fans of all ages,” said Costa. “In the process of doing that, we have been able to showcase members of our community, which has led to amazing opportunities for these groups to have a huge audience and grow their followings. Performing at Thunderbirds games has become a checklist item for thousands in this area, and we take great pride in that.”

This season, the T-Birds saw an average of 93.1% of all seats filled

inside the MassMutual Center, the highest average attendance to capacity in the AHL’s Eastern Conference and second-highest in the league. Such successes in filling the arena directly led to the Thunderbirds’ corporate sales department reaching new heights.

In the 2023-24 season, the T-Birds saw a 15% growth in corporate revenue while sitting atop the league rankings in total sponsorship deals. Integrations with sponsors have continued to be showcased across various mediums, from in-arena and in-ice signage to social media post sponsorships and elements of the in-game broadcast production.

“Having widespread support from our business partners is also paramount to success in the American Hockey League,” Costa added. “Our corporate team has fostered meaningful relationships beyond return on investment and emphasized Springfield’s pride for the city. Their accomplishments are remarkable when compared to markets of exponentially greater size.”

Supplementing the Thunderbirds’ success in tickets and corporate business, the franchise experienced a seventh consecutive season of brand development and merchandise growth as the club rose to the top 10 in the AHL in-game night merchandise sales, with an emphasis on creating high-quality product lines across not just the T-Birds brand, but specialty nights as well.

“We are aware of how impactful merchandise can be from a grassroots marketing perspective,” said Costa. “Giving our fans the ability to show their pride for specialty evenings like Pink in the Rink, Ice-O-Topes, and Military Appreciation further bolsters our connection between our team and the community.”

The Thunderbirds will look to build upon their record-breaking success when the 2024-25 season, the eighth Thunderbirds hockey campaign, gets underway this October. Schedules and single-game tickets will go on sale later this summer. Fans can reserve their seats for Thunderbirds’ hockey action in the 2024-25 season with a ticket membership by calling (413)-739-GOAL (4625) or visiting www.SpringfieldThunderbirds.com.



Registration now open to take part in Bay State Games

WOBURN – Registration for the 42nd annual Bay State Summer Games is now open. The 2024 Summer Games will include thirty sports with competitions from May 11 – July 27 at venues throughout eastern and central Massachusetts including Game On in Fitchburg, Boston Sports Institute in Wellesley, Union Point Sports Complex in Weymouth, and North Star Ice Sports in Westborough. Bay State Games participants range in age from 5 to over age 75 and represent more than 300 Massachusetts communities as well as surrounding New England States in some sports. From grassroots participants to accomplished amateur athletes, the Bay State Games provide opportunities for the athlete in all of us.

Seven high school showcase sports will take place for a variety of sports, including baseball, basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, soccer, softball, and volleyball. Athletes currently in grade 8-11 who live or go to school in Massachusetts are eligible to attend regional tryouts during the month of June. These tryouts will determine teams representing the various regions of the Commonwealth that will compete against each other in July. Check

each sport page for specific eligibility requirements.

The Summer Games include a wide variety of individual sports including swimming, track & field, figure skating, pickleball, wrestling, weightlifting, badminton, and more. These sports are open to a wide range of ages and skill levels from youth participants to masters-aged athletes. Adaptive sport divisions in archery, swimming, and track & field are offered, as well. Bay State Games also organizes tournaments for pre-existing teams in rugby, and 6v6 field hockey.

Returning in 2024, Table Tennis will take place on June 1 at PingPod in Boston after a 5-year hiatus from the Summer Games sport lineup. New venues include Babson College, which will host the Girls Basketball Showcase, and NorthStar Ice Sports, which will host Figure Skating and the Girls Ice Hockey Showcase. Game On in Fitchburg will serve as a hub venue for eight sports. Bay State Games expects 1,500 athletes and their families to attend competitions at Game On during the second week of July.

For questions, email info@baystategames.org or call 781-932-6555.

BASEBALL, from page 7

was hit by a pitch with the bases loaded. He also drove home a run with a ground-out in his next at-bat. Sophomore second baseman Ryan Gould added two hits and had an RBI in the big inning. He wound up scoring four runs in the game. Senior right fielder CJ Rivers had one base hit and scored three runs.

The Orioles, who had a total of nine hits in the first inning, scored an unearned run in the second inning.

With two outs in the bottom of the second inning, Holyoke freshman right-fielder Nolan Judd batted for the first time in a varsity game. It was a memorable plate appearance, as Judd, who had a loud cheering section sitting behind the backstop, lined a single into right field.

The Orioles increased their lead to 20-0 after scoring five more runs in the top of the third.

Junior Daniel Hulmes and sopho-

more third baseman Canyon Charron had two-run singles. Freshman Carsten Matthews, who was a pinch hitter, drew a bases loaded walk scoring the other run in that inning.

Matthews also made his first appearance on the mound in a varsity baseball game during the fifth inning.

The Purple Knights scored four runs in the bottom half of the third inning.

A flair single into right field by junior shortstop Darwin Jimenez-Ventura scored Holyoke’s first run. Then junior DH Jovaughn Rivera blasted a ground rule double over the left field fence bringing home two more runs. He also scored a run on the back end of a double steal play.

The Orioles plated five more runs in the fourth and added two more in their final at-bats.

The second meeting of the regular season between the two squads is scheduled to take place at Belchertown High School on May 7.

Quabbin League wants to fill remaining roster spots

Rosters spots are dwindling, but there are still some spots available as the Quabbin Valley Over-28 Baseball has begun its season. There are still several open spots to get filled despite the season being underway.

Registration for the 2024 season is now open and any interested players can go to www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org to get registered, or to seek more information or make inquiries about the league.

The league plays most Sunday from late April through late August with playoffs following that. The league plays a 15-game schedule and typically fields six teams each year. Games are usually played at 10 a.m. with fields in Easthampton and South

Hadley used as well some expansion to the surrounding area this season. The league does not play on Mother’s Day or Memorial Day weekends.

The Quabbin Valley league is an all-abilities league and all are welcome to join. Eligibility is players who are age 28 and over. You must be 30 to be eligible to pitch in the league. Your age for eligibility is whatever age you will turn in 2024. The league is also able to entertaining taking in an entire group as a team to add to the league. Please email the league board for to inquire about entering a team. The league can also pro-rate registration at this point. Simply contact a league board member. Contact information is located at the registration link.

Olympics lead to major change in Basketball Hall of Fame induction

SPRINGFIELD – The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame has announced it will move its Enshrinement Ceremonies from Aug. 16-17 to Oct. 12-13 to accommodate requests of the vast global basketball community amid an extensive and expanding summer schedule, highlighted by the 2024 Summer Olympics. The date change will continue to position the Hall of Fame event as a successful, well-produced standalone event not compromised by potential production conflicts.

“The Hall of Fame appreciates the input from friends across the basketball community and the recommendations of our production partners regarding a schedule adjustment for our Enshrinement Ceremonies,” said John L. Doleva, President & CEO of the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame. “We understand the importance of the burgeoning Olympic basketball events to our broader constituencies and regret any inconvenience caused by the change. This one-time move to October assures that we are best positioned to once again create a great experience for our

guests and deliver viewers a first-class presentation to celebrate our esteemed Class.”

Enshrinement Weekend will begin at Mohegan Sun on Saturday, Oct. 12, with the Tip-Off Celebration and Awards Gala. The Class of 2024 and returning Hall of Famers will then assemble in Springfield, for the annual events taking place at the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame and Springfield’s Symphony Hall on Sunday, Oct. 13.

The updated schedule of events for Enshrinement 2024:

- Saturday, Oct. 12, at Mohegan Sun (Uncasville, Conn.)
- Enshrinement 2024 Autograph Session
- Enshrinement 2024 Press Conference
- Enshrinement Tip-Off Celebration and Awards Gala
- Sunday, Oct. 13, in Springfield
- Enshrinement Ceremony VIP Reception at Springfield Marriott
- Enshrinement Ceremony Red Carpet Show at Symphony Hall
- Enshrinement Ceremony at Symphony Hall



NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION

Swinging Bridges Auction Company, Lic #2755 will hold a Public Auction on **May 25, 2024. Unclaimed items to be sold at 9 a.m.** at **Pawn Depot Inc., 448 Appleton St., Holyoke, MA 01040.**

20% buyers fee, 6.25% MA sales tax.
05/03, 05/10/2024

CITY OF HOLYOKE PURCHASING DEPARTMENT INVITATION FOR BIDS 2024-47SD

Basketball Pavilion Roof: Sullivan School, Holyoke MA SEALED BIDS ARE DUE BY 2:00 PM ON 5/21/2024. EMAIL SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

The City of Holyoke is seeking sealed bids from qualified General Contractors to procure, provide and install a pre manufactured and code compliant steel canopy 70' wide by 120' long with a 18'9" high eave at a 3:12 pitch to cover a basketball court at the Lt. Clayre P. Sullivan School, 400 Jarvis Ave Holyoke, MA 01040 including all materials and labor necessary to complete the work.

Documents will be available from the City of Holyoke's Purchasing Office, 536 Dwight Street, Room 3, Holyoke, MA 01040 beginning at 12:00PM on Wednesday April 25, 2024. Bid documents may be requested via email to sweeney@holyoke.org or in person at the City of Holyoke's Purchasing Office. The deadline to submit bid proposals is May 21, 2024, by 2:00PM, at which time all bids received will be publicly opened in compliance with M.G.L. Chapter 149, Sections 44A-44J and the City of Holyoke's Ordinances. No electronic Submissions will be accepted. This project is being funded with Federal Funds. Respondents will be verified for eligibility to receive Federal Funds. **THE CITY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS.**
05/03/2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD20P1148EA Estate of: Patricia Kay Bennett Also known as: Patricia Bennett, Patricia K Bennett Date of Death: 01/27/2020 CITATION ON PETITION FOR

ORDER OF COMPLETE SETTLEMENT

A Petition for **Order of Complete Settlement** has been filed by **Sandra Dias** of Holyoke, MA requesting that the court enter a formal Decree of Complete Settlement including the allowance of a final account and other such relief as may be requested in the Petition.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 05/29/2024.**

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

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: April 26, 2024

Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
05/03/2024

Office of Purchasing 536 Dwight Street, Room 3 Holyoke, MA 01040 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS RFP 2024-48PD ERASE II Community Space for Police Department

The Purchasing Department on behalf of the Holyoke Police Department seeks Proposals for the acquisition by lease of a minimum of 1700 square feet of mixed-use office and community space for it's Holyoke Police ERASE II Community Program for a move-in date on or before August 1, 2024. Documents can be requested electronically from morrowj@holyoke.org or sweeney@holyoke.org or in person at the Purchasing Office. **Proposals are due on May 23, 2024, by 2PM.** Technical Proposals and Price Proposal must be submitted in separate envelopes. No electronic submissions will be accepted. The city reserves the right to reject any and all submissions. This project may be paid for using Federal Funds. Respondents will be verified for eligibility to receive Federal Funds.
05/03, 05/10, 05/17/2024

Trial Court of the Commonwealth Hampden County

Superior Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01102 (413) 735-6016 Docket No. 2379CV00619 JULIE MAGRI

THE HEIRS, SUCCESSORS, ASSIGNS AND DEVISEES OF LOUIS MAGRI, SUCH OTHER PERSONS, IF ANY, UNASCERTAINED NOT IN BEING, UNKNOWN WITHIN OR WITHOUT THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS ORDER OF NOTICE BY PUBLICATION

It appearing from the Motion for Order of Service by Publication, in the above-captioned matter, which is sworn to that the Defendants cannot be personally served through process, IT IS ORDERED that this order be published for three (3) successive weeks, the last publication to be at least twenty (20) days before said return day, in The Holyoke Sun, a newspaper published in Holyoke, Hampden County, Massachusetts and that all parties claiming any right, title, or interest to the real property located at 66 King Street, Holyoke, MA, Massachusetts, commonly known as 66 King Street, Holyoke, Hampden County, Massachusetts, identified in the Complaint in Hampden County Superior Court entitled Julie Magri v. The Heirs, Successors, Assigns and Devisees of Louis Magri, et. al., Hampden County Superior Court, Civil Action No. 2379CV00619, file a response to said complaint within thirty (30) days after the last publication date in this Order, and if the parties fail to do so, a Judgment for Plaintiff will be so Ordered.

It appearing from the Motion for Order of Service by Publication, in the above-captioned matter, which is sworn to that the Defendants cannot be personally served through process, IT IS ORDERED that this order be published for three (3) successive weeks, the last publication to be at least twenty (20) days before said return day, in The Holyoke Sun, a newspaper published in Holyoke, Hampden County, Massachusetts and that all parties claiming any right, title, or interest to the real property located at 66 King Street, Holyoke, MA, Massachusetts, commonly known as 66 King Street, Holyoke, Hampden County, Massachusetts, identified in the Complaint in Hampden County Superior Court entitled Julie Magri v. The Heirs, Successors, Assigns and Devisees of Louis Magri, et. al., Hampden County

Superior Court, Civil Action No. 2379CV00619, file a response to said complaint within thirty (30) days after the last publication date in this Order, and if the parties fail to do so, a Judgment for Plaintiff will be so Ordered.

WITNESS, Hon. Jeremy C. Bucci, First Justice of this Court

Attest: **William Walsh**
Assistant Clerk
04/26, 05/03, 05/10/2024

Notice to Contractors City of Holyoke 536 Dwight Street, Room 3 Holyoke, MA 01040 Invitation to Bid 2024-51SB VFR Conversion GENERAL BID DEADLINE: 6/6/2024 at 2PM FILED SUB BIDS DUE: 5/23/2024 at 2PM

The City of Holyoke invites sealed bids from Contractors for the VRF Conversion - McMahon School project converting the existing building's mechanical system to a variable refrigerant flow (VRF) system., in accordance with the documents prepared by ARCHITECTURE EL, INC. Work includes new HVAC equipment, electrical upgrades, structural steel and roof modifications, hazardous materials abatement, and miscellaneous architectural ceiling and soff it work to the Lt. Elmer J. McMahon School constructed in 1961, and encompassing approx. 56,552 SF. This project is being managed by our OPM Anser Advisory. Documents will be available electronically through biddocs.com on 5/1/2024. **GENERAL BID DEADLINE DUE 06/06/2024 at 2PM. SUBIDS DUE ON 05/23/2024 at 2PM in the following categories, Misc and Ornamental Metals, Roofing and Flashing, Painting, Electrical and Plumbing.** Project will be posted on biddocs.com under BDO Project #B24-5GQ6. Pre-bid walkthrough (optional) is scheduled for Wednesday, 05/08/2024 at 10:00AM at 75 Kane Road, Holyoke, MA 01040. This project is being funded with Federal Funds. Respondents will be verified for their eligibility to receive Federal Funds. The City reserves the right to reject any and all bids. City of Holyoke follows MGL CH. 30B, CH. 149, CH. 30 & 39M, CFR 200 and all applicable purchasing laws.
05/03/2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street

Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD86P1084EA Estate of: Martin H Zanger Date of Death: 06/11/1986 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL APPOINTMENT OF SUCCESSOR PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

To all interested persons: A Petition has been filed by: **Sally R Zanger** of New Haven, CT requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order that **Sally R Zanger** of New Haven, CT be appointed as Successor Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond and for such other relief as requested 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 **05/20/2024.**

This is NOT a hear-

ing 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.

The estate is being administered under formal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but recipients are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: April 22, 2024
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
05/03/2024

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The Holyoke Sun
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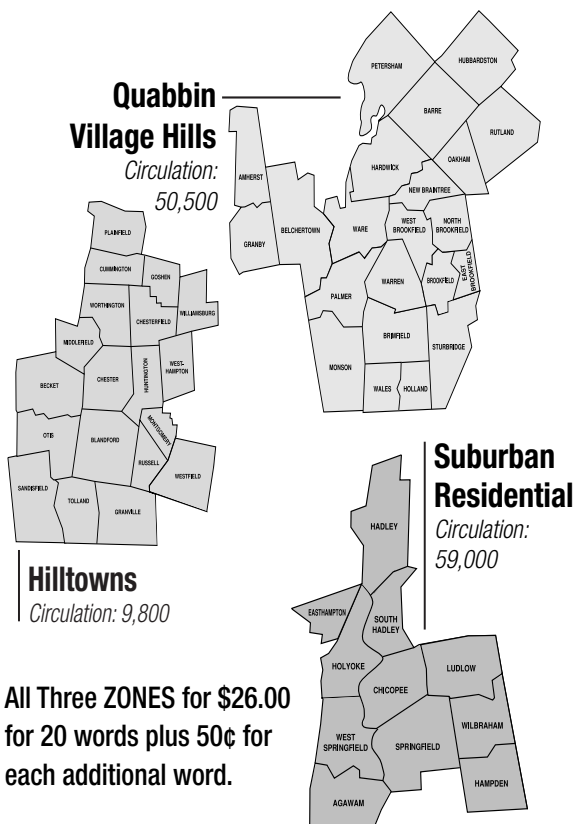
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In The News

BUDGET, from page 1

straints while still taking into account every aspect of the constituency of the City of Holyoke"

Back in January, Garcia sent out an email to all departments to begin the budget process.

This year each department head entered their budget into the budget book electronically.

He also requested that each department stay within a 2% budget increase for this year in order to prevent budget costs from rising too significantly.

Also in this email was a clear time-

line of how Garcia hoped the budget process would proceed. He asked that all department heads have the sheets and forms detailing their budget needs turned in by Feb. 23, 2024, in the hopes that that would allow for the completed proposed budgets to be handed to the city council by the end of April.

After each department head submitted their proposed budget, Garcia met with each of them in order to go over the budget.

Using this information, and the proposed State budget for the year, Garcia was able to compile Holyoke's proposed FY'25 budget.

PECK, from page 1

Many felt that the decision on the school mascot and colors should be left up to the school community after the school had been completed.

"The colors and things like that, you've got to leave it up to the parents', you've got to leave it up to the principal, the superintendent, let them have their discussion pertaining to all those other things," Collamore said. "Let's leave it just for the naming of this school."

During this meeting, Soto also clarified that even if Peck isn't renamed, it will still count as a new school when it comes to testing history and evaluations.

"For accountability purposes it

will definitely be a new school, even if it retains the name Peck," he said. "Whenever a new school is built the accountability process starts over."

Students have to be in attendance at a new school for a few years before they can collect metrics that the state uses to evaluate it.

The school committee approved the drafted plan and they and various subcommittees will work to develop it further so the vote may be sent out to families as soon as possible.

To see the draft plan in more detail, go to <https://www.holyoke.org/meetings/holyoke-school-committee-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-sub-committee-meeting-march-13-2024/#/tab-agenda>.

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 We are so very proud of you and your accomplishments.
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Love Dad. Mom & John

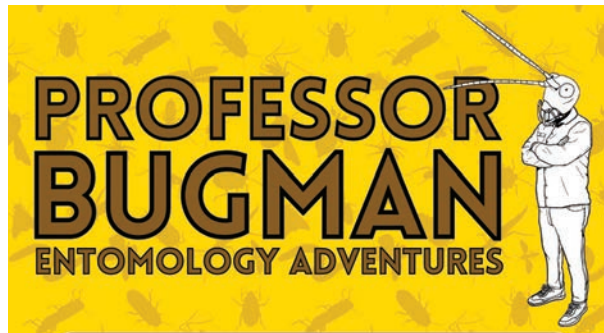
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During his arthropod petting zoo, Bryan "Professor Bugman" Man described what an exoskeleton is.



In his presentation, Bryan "Professor Bugman" Man described the differences between crustaceans and insects.



During his presentation, Bryan "Professor Bugman" Man demonstrated how wings can allow insects to escape from predators.



Following Bryan "Professor Bugman" Man's presentation, children lined up to get a chance to handle some of the different insects in Man's petting zoo.



Bryan "Professor Bugman" Man demonstrated how some animals will play dead in order to avoid being eaten by predators.

Turley photos by Quinn Suomala

BUGMAN, from page 1

He broke down the differences between each group of arthropods, as he wanted those in attendance to be able to tell the difference between each one.

Insects, for example, always have six legs and three different parts of their bodies (head, thorax and abdomen). In contrast, arachnids have two parts of their bodies, a cephalothorax and an abdomen, and they always have eight legs. Arachnids also do not have antennae.

Man also walked through some of the defense mechanisms of the different

arthropods he showed in his presentation, including camouflage, playing dead and scent secretion.

Man's main goal throughout this event was to try to get the children in attendance more interested in science, specifically entomology.

"The point is to get them excited about science and learning and to get them to realize that there's this really wild world of things out there where you can ask just about any weird and bizarre question you want and you can fill an entire scientific career just doing that," Man said.

Man truly enjoys going to these different kinds of events.

"I love going to different places and seeing different groups of kids," Man said. "I really enjoy guiding them into expanding upon what they already know and getting to discover something new."

In the future, Man hopes to partner with public schools.

"My big thing is to help schools to address these topics and really engage students with affordable and fun hands-on in-school programming and field trips," he said.

Man offers the arthropod petting

zoo and "Hide a Bug" where kids think about shelter and survival needs of certain insects and even get to craft some shelters for the insects.

He also offers the fall program "Spooky Bones and Creepy Crawlies".

"It is a Halloween themed show where we bring in a smaller selection of our bugs, usually the ones that give people the most creeps and then we also bring in a large assortment of animal bones and skeletons," Man said.

To learn more about the work Man does and the programs he offers, go to <https://www.theprofessorbugman.com/>.



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