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SJC overrules dismissal of Soldiers' Home case

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

HOLYOKE – In a huge ruling, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled 5-2 to throw out the dismissal of the Hampden Superior Court for criminal neglect charges against the former superintendent of the Holyoke Soldiers' Home and its chief physician.

Bennett Walsh and Dr. David Clinton were each charged with criminal neglect by then-Attorney General Maura Healey.

Healey's case against Walsh and Clinton was dismissed in late 2021 by a Hampden Superior Court judge. The motion for dismissal was filed by Walsh's attorney, former Hampden District Attorney William Bennett.

Healey, who is now the governor of Massachusetts, filed an appeal before taking office.

See **SOLDIERS**, page 10

Building partially collapses

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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A drone image of the roof of a 276 High St. building shows a damaged roof. Parts of the roof collapsed Tuesday morning. The Holyoke Fire Department continues to investigate the building, which is located next to City Hall.

Submitted photo

HOLYOKE – Emergency personnel were dispatched to the building next to City Hall on Tuesday morning.

According to a report from the Holyoke Fire Department, firefighters were sent to 276 High St. for a partial collapse. They found pieces of debris on the grounds that came off the building's roof.

The building was constructed in 1906 and is currently vacant. It is eight stories high.

No injuries were reported from the collapse and none of the debris struck anyone.

The sidewalk around the building was closed off and a barrier was set up by the fire department in order to keep the public safe from further collapsing parts.

The fire department utilized a drone to investigate the top of the building, finding the areas where pieces came off.

In a televised interview later Tuesday, Fire Chief David Rex said the initial investigation from his department concludes the building is structurally sound, but the roof and panels are areas of concern. He sur-

See **COLLAPSES**, page 10

SENIOR CENTER HOSTING SHRED DAY



Elaine Pluta, President of Friends of the Holyoke Senior Center, and Tiffany Raines from Easthampton Savings Bank hold a check from ESB for \$500. The Friends of the Holyoke Senior Center are hosting a Community Shred to benefit the Center. It will be held at the Center, 291 Pine St., Holyoke, Saturday, May 13 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, Rain or Shine, suggested donation \$5 per box, the size of a carton of copy paper. Easthampton Savings Bank is sponsoring the Shredding Company on our behalf. Submitted photo

Sullivan School receives grant to be used applied science curriculum

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

HOLYOKE – As the Holyoke Public Schools work toward reconfiguration, a new middle school, and transforming education in the city, one school will be overhauling its science curriculum thanks to a grant.

According to press release from the HPS, Sullivan School has received a \$38,150 grant from the One8 Foundation. The grant allows Sullivan to join the OpenSciEd Equitable Instruction Initiative.

The funds will be used to provided needed professional development and support to activate a new applied-science curriculum to Sullivan students in grades six through eight for the next school year.

The grant was highly competitive and Sullivan was just one of 30 schools in the state selected in this round.

In an effort to curb lowering test scores and increase overall student achievement, investment in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and

Mathematics), is a crucial step for the public schools. It will also aid middle school students to have a foundation of applied sciences as they choose between Holyoke High School's north campus and the vocational offerings at the Dean campus.

According to Eric Levine, who leads the district's science department, the OpenSciEd curriculum is a set of rigorous, research-based instructional materials that is aligned with the Massachusetts State Frameworks and designed for the Next Generation Science Standards. OpenSciEd's science curriculum is designed for equity so that all students are able to build on previous experiences and develop a deep understanding of the world around them and a strengthened identity as a scientist and engineer. Every unit empowers students to ask questions, design investigations, solve problems, and work with their classroom community to make sense of a puzzling phenomenon. See it in action on the OpenSciEd YouTube channel.

"We looked at data success rates as part of an intense study of a wide range of science curriculums that could strengthen instruction at Holyoke Public Schools," Levine said. "OpenSciEd is student centered and offers inquiry-based learning experiences. It is also the only science curriculum that met all the criteria for full approval by EdReports," a nonprofit designed to improve K-12 education through its independent reviews of widely used instructional materials. "EdReports is highly relied upon as a resource for schools when considering curriculums for English language arts, math, and science," he explained.

The grant has some longevity, as it will help pay for three years of training and professional development for science teachers at Sullivan School, as well as the purchase of durable equipment that will be in use for years after the grant period ends.

With this grant win,

See **GRANT**, page 10

HHS Dean Campus plans May 6 car show to raise funds for 'Kids for Wish Kids' initiative

HOLYOKE – Calling all cars. Calling all car enthusiasts, too. And anyone who wants to help make a wish come true for a child with a life-threatening illness.

On Saturday, May 6, the students and staff of HHS Dean Campus will be helping to organize a car show that could feature 100 or more vehicles in the school's main parking lot as part of a Make-A-Wish Massachusetts and Rhode Island fund-raising event. Participating students will help in a variety of ways: Auto Collision and Diesel students will serve as judges, for example, while students involved in Student Government will assist with event registration and welcoming attendees.

Registration runs from 9 a.m. - 12 noon on May 6; the registration fee is \$10 per vehicle. Participants can register any car of their choosing, from vintage automobiles to modern cars that have just



rolled off of a dealer's showroom floor, or anything in between. Organizers are hoping for a wide range of vehicles to pique the interest of people of all ages.

The car show is open to the public from 1-5 p.m. Admission is free. Funds will be raised for Make-A-Wish through car registration fees, donations, raffle tickets, and tabling fees paid by local organizations and businesses to be represented during the event. There will also be fun activities, including face painting by Dean cosmetology students and much more.

Make-A-Wish Massachusetts and Rhode Island believes that the hope, strength, and joy offered by a wish is vital to the treatment process of critical illness and can give a child an edge in their fight. A wish helps to care for the whole child—mind, body, and spirit—and also supports the community of caregivers, family, and friends around them.

HCC and WNE sign joint admission agreement

HOLYOKE – Western New England University and Holyoke Community College signed a joint admissions agreement yesterday intended to strengthen existing academic and student support partnerships and facilitate an easier transfer pathway from HCC to WNE.

Representatives from the two colleges gathered at the Kittredge Center for Business and Workforce Development at HCC, where HCC President Christina Royal and WNE Provost and Sr. Vice President of Academic Affairs Maria Toyoda put pen to paper.

"We're really grateful to be able to expand our partnership with Western New England University and to be able to continue to strengthen the oppor-

tunities for students who want to start at HCC and transfer to Western New England," said HCC President Christina Royal. "Students experience such a nurturing atmosphere here at HCC, and we are so grateful that Western New England recognizes that and helps to create a supportive environment for transfer students as they embark on their next level of education."

The joint admissions program will serve as a guideline to simplify the transfer process for eligible HCC students to WNE after they complete their associate's degrees and meet other conditions.

"I would echo the comments made by President Royal," said Toyoda. "We are so proud to be collaborators and partners with an institution that believes

as strongly as we do in preparing our students for the future of work. I also want to take the opportunity to recognize the faculty of both HCC and Western New England University, as well as the admissions staff and the advisors who make this possible and who put students' success at the center of everything that they do."

According to the agreement, students will be informed about the opportunity to participate in the joint admissions program when they apply to HCC. To qualify, students must earn a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 and at least a C- or better in their major coursework, and complete their associate's degree.

Students who satisfy the require-

ments are then eligible for several benefits, including guaranteed acceptance and junior status at WNE upon matriculation with an associate's degree, 60 transfer credits, and waiver of the WNE general university requirements for students completing their associate's degree and what's called the Mass Transfer General Education Foundation Block. Students seeking joint admission into specialized programs, including but not limited to business, engineering, computer science, chemistry, or biology must satisfy all program requirements and earn the minimum cumulative grade point average established for those programs.

For more details on transfer agreements between HCC and WNE, please go to: hcc.edu/transfer.

First phase of South Holyoke Homes finished

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Housing Authority (HHA) is excited to share that Phase 1 of South Holyoke Homes is complete.

South Holyoke Homes is the culmination of decades of community advocacy to build housing around Carlos Vega Park, in the South Holyoke neighborhood of Holyoke, Massachusetts. The project envisions building new housing, with an emphasis on homeownership, on many long-standing vacant parcels. South Holyoke Homes received funding for Phase 1 from the Department of Housing

and Community Development (DHCD) and MassHousing's Community Scale Housing Initiative (CSHI) to construct a 12-unit rental building on the corner of Hamilton and South East Street. Other funding sources for the project include the City of Holyoke's HOME program, HHA equity and PeoplesBank financing.

The building will serve people in dire need of housing using the HHA's Project-Based Vouchers (PBVs). The 3-story building consists of 4 one-bedroom, 4 two-bedroom and 4 three-bedroom apartments with two accessi-

ble units. The building was designed by Abacus Architects + Planners and Inglewood Development Corporation served as the contractor for the project. The Holyoke Housing Authority received over 1,000 applications for the building and tenants were selected in accordance with state and federal fair housing regulations.

Planning for Phase 2 of the project has begun, and will focus on homeownership opportunities. Please visit www.southholyokeyhomes.com for more information.

Church tag sale to be held on May 20 and 21

HOLYOKE – Our Lady of the Cross Church will hold a tag sale on Saturday, May 20 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sunday, May 21 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. rain or shine. The event will be held at Our Lady of the Cross Parish Hall, 1140 Dwight St., Holyoke. There will be tons of treasures for all ages. For more information, please call 413-532-5661.

Lifeguard classes offered in May

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Parks & Recreation Department is offering a lifeguard Red Cross certification training course at the Holyoke Boys and Girls Club (70 Nick Cosmos Way). The session will take place May 20 and 21 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Applicants must be 16 years of age. Strong swimmers are encouraged to



apply. Participants must pass a pre-skills test at the start of class. The cost \$150 for Holyoke residents and \$250 for non-residents.

A Lifeguard Re-Certification Class will also be offered on May 21. The class will run from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Holyoke Boys and Girls Club (70 Nick Cosmos Way). Update your skills while also extending your certification for another two years. The cost is \$100 for Holyoke residents and \$200 for non-residents.

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

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

HPS receives \$4,000 grant from Project Bread to support summer meal program

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Public Schools has received a \$4,000 grant from Project Bread's "Summer Eats" program to support the district's summer meals program. Grant funds will be used to purchase insulated coolers, mobile tables, chairs, and umbrellas for outside seating at the district's five summer feeding locations. The grant will also help cover the cost of printing and distributing promotional flyers so Holyoke families will be aware of the program.

Project Bread is a statewide organization committed to preventing and ending hunger in Massachusetts. The organization's Summer Eats grants

help ensure that all children in the state remain nourished over the summer months when school is not in session.

While HPS has offered summer meals to students for a number of years, this summer the district will be rolling out its brand new—and very colorful—food truck that was purchased as part of a \$500,000 grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to help address food insecurity issues throughout the City of Holyoke. The mobile food truck will distribute meals throughout the city, starting with summer feeding sites and then expanding to other community and school locations.

MiraVista Behavioral Health Center lights the way

HOLYOKE – MiraVista Behavioral Health Center officially launched Mental Health Awareness Month on May 1 by illuminating the organization’s façade green.

Kimberley Lee, Chief of Creative Strategy and Development for the psychiatric hospital that treats adults and adolescents and offers a continuum of outpatient substance use services, called the month’s annual observance “a reminder that staying mentally healthy is fundamental to how well all of us function in our daily lives.”

“Staying mentally healthy requires self-care ranging from getting enough sleep to eating for good nutrition to having good social connections,” Lee said. “The intent is for folks, seeing our façade in green, to become more aware of their own mental wellness and anything they need to do, including seeking professional help, to improve their emotional happiness and mental well-being.”

Lee added that other events MiraVista plans for the month include a Going Green Campaign during Mental Health Awareness Week that begins May 15 to encourage the wearing of green. Green is the month’s color to symbolize hope and support for individuals living with a mental illness. Other events include a flag raising and partnership with Springfield and Holyoke libraries to encourage residents to seek resources on the topic of mental health.

“MiraVista helps individuals better manage their diagnosis and return to their families and lives in their communi-



MiraVista is lit up green for Mental Health Awareness Month.

Submitted photo

ty,” Lee said. “We obtained state approval to expand our beds recently to meet demand and are in the process of adding outpatient mental health counseling. We see daily the success of treatment and why no one should feel stigmatized in seeking it.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 5 Americans will experience a mental illness in any given year; 1 in 5 children currently or at some point in their life has had a serious debilitating mental illness and 1 in 25 Americans lives with a serious mental illness such as bipolar disorder.

The CDC notes that many factors may contribute to a mental illness including adverse life experiences such as sexual assault or witnessing violence; chemical imbalances in the brain and ongoing feelings of isolation and loneliness that became worse for many Americans during the coronavirus pandemic.

It also notes that anyone can have poor mental health without having a diagnosis of mental illness and people with a mental illness diagnosis that is managed can have a good sense of well-being.

“Well-being is associated with numerous health-, job-, family-, and economically-related benefits,” the CDC says. “Individuals with high levels of well-being are more productive at work and are more likely to contribute to their communities.”

For more information services MiraVista provides, visit <https://www.miravistabhc.care/>.



Fireworks at HCC

HOLYOKE – The City of Holyoke will be hosting the annual 4th of July fireworks on Friday, June 30 (with a rain-date of July 7). The event will take place on the grounds of Holyoke Community College, at 303 Homestead Avenue.

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.

We encourage everyone 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.

If you have any questions, please call the Mayor’s Office at 413-561-1600.

Residents warned of possible water quality change

HOLYOKE – Residents may notice a slight change in the taste, temperature, and odor of their drinking water between April 28 and May 6 due to a scheduled change in source water.

The Holyoke Water Works is currently using its McLean Reservoir for its primary drinking water to do scheduled

maintenance on the transmission main from its primary source. All water quality standards remain the same, but changing to a different source changes the overall aesthetics of your drinking water.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the treatment facility at 413-532-6778.

Preservation Trust holding art contest

HOLYOKE – To celebrate the City of Holyoke’s 150th, Holyoke Preservation Trust in collaboration with Holyoke Heritage State Park is calling all Pioneer Valley artists to show their best artwork inspired by Holyoke’s history and/or vision for the city’s future. Submissions must be delivered to Holyoke Heritage State Park by Aug. 25.

If chosen, it will be publicly displayed at Holyoke City Hall and for the month of September at Holyoke Heritage Park. Selected winners will win cash prizes. Grades K-5 - \$25 - \$100 Grades 6-12 - \$50 - \$150 Adult - \$50 - \$200 Details and Brochure with application form can be found at www.HolyokePreservationTrust.org.

TAG SALE - MOVING SALE
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Housewares, furniture, tools, and more!
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Poetry Corner

Always... All Ways Three

By Thomas J. Kennedy

*Good things in three
Father, Mary, Son Jesus
Holy Ghost, Paul, Peter and Me.
Humble, Truth, highest Honesty
Jesus walked on Water . . .
My Kara, daughter
Called it "Flaughter."
Just keep flowing & knowing . . .
The Best come in Three
Peace, Love and Joy.*



Guest Column

April showers make for great transplanting weather



It was a lot of fun to take advantage of the overcast days this week to get some transplanting done.

Do you wonder why it is advantageous to undertake this task when it is cloudy, or even drizzling out? If your guess has to do with less stress on the plants, you are right on target.

Read on for more about what kept me busy and why!!

I hope I am smarting up some when it comes to homegrown seedlings. This year, instead of growing 300 tomato plants (yes, I was a little kooky last year) I downsized to just under 70.

Still enough for me to share but not so many that we have to have a brigade to get the many trays into the house each night that temperatures dip in my unheated greenhouse.

The tomato seeds were sown in the third week or March and were transplanted into 6 packs the second week of April.

Recently, they started to show signs that they were ready to be potted into bigger containers. Height was one give-away. Secondly, was a root ball that was pretty filled out but not quite root bound (roots swirling in a tight mass).

I lifted each plant from the cell of its 6-pack and positioned the plant on the bottom of a 4" pot and filled in with new potting soil.

Tomatoes are unique in that they will make roots up the stem.

After all the transplanting was done, I gave them a drink or fish emulsion/seaweed

fertilizer to lessen any shock and provide them with a good boost.

Because it was overcast, I was able to do this right in the greenhouse and keep them in there without worry that the sun or heat would be too much for plants that recently had their roots disturbed.

On occasion, when I've been forced to get transplanting done during a sunny stretch, I would immediately water the plants then place the trays of plants in the shade to recover for at least a day or two.

Now, a mention on temperature. Cloudy is one thing, and today with my greenhouse doors closed, 50 degrees outdoors meant a few degrees warmer inside.

I would not keep tomato plants outside if temperatures were colder than fifty or they will start to show signs of distress. They are much happier at 55 to 60 degrees.

So, for the next couple of weeks, (gasp) in and out they will go each day.

Without a greenhouse would mean moving them around your windows to catch the sun, or placing them back under the grow lights until temperatures moderate. At least I am not moving 300 this year.

Overcast skies were also helpful when it came time to re-do one of my perennial borders. I did a soil test on this particular garden last year and followed the recommendations to increase nitrogen (blood meal) and potassium (wood ashes).

It is neat that the wood ashes do double duty to get the pH a little higher as well.

Once the amendments were mixed in, I began lifting plants from the old garden, dividing them up and replanting them in the new garden. Some of the plants were overgrown, hence the need for division.

Using a sharp shovel, I simply sliced them down the middle of the clump and if needed, divided the halves into quarters. Now lots of roots were severed in the process, so cloudy skies and the rain that followed really



helped to settle the plants into their new locale without shock.

The garden is a collection of plants that butterflies love. I have a butterfly bush in the corner that is 3 years old. That one really frigid night we had where temperatures dipped into the negative double digits killed off top growth, but I am hopeful that growth will return from the crown.

Hopefully, I will see that over the next two to three weeks. What did you accomplish over these cloudy days?

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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A Quote

OF NOTE

"Living is the art of getting used to what we didn't expect."

Eleanor C. Wood

Letters to the Editor Policy

Letters to the Editor have a maximum of 350 words. We require writers to include their name, address and phone number in order for our office to authenticate authorship prior to publication. Addresses and phone numbers are not published.

Unsigned or anonymous letters will NOT be published.

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

Deadline for submissions is Wednesday at noon.

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

Will minor children get benefits if father claims at age 62



Dear Rusty: I will be 62 in 2024 and am considering starting benefits at that time. I will have two children under the age of 18. One of them will be 10 and the other 15. Will they be able to draw benefits in addition to my benefits?

Signed: Father of Two

Dear Father of Two:

Yes, if you claim your Social Security retirement benefits at 62, your minor children

will be able to get benefits from you until they are 18 years old or up to 19 if still in high school. You will likely be designated as Representative Payee for those benefits and will be obligated to use them only for your children's behalf, which could include simply saving the money for their future. But there's more to consider.

Normally, a minor child is eligible for 50% of the parent's full retirement age (FRA) entitlement even if you claim at 62, but Social Security's Family Maximum will likely restrict each child's benefit to make it less than 50%. Then, once the 15 year old ages-out of eligibility at 18 or 19, the younger child's benefit will increase to the full 50% of your FRA amount. That is unless you are married and your wife will also be collecting a spousal benefit on your record. In that case

the Family Maximum will limit payments for all of the dependents receiving payments based on your SS record for both your children and your wife. Generally, the Family Maximum is between 150% and 188% of your FRA entitlement, from which your own FRA entitlement is subtracted, leaving 50% to 88% of the Family Maximum for your dependents.

It's important to remember that by claiming your own SS retirement benefit at age 62 your monthly payment will be cut by 30% you'll get 70% of your FRA entitlement and that is a permanent reduction. So, you may wish to evaluate whether the money your children will get until they are 18 will offset the lifetime reduction to your own benefit

See SECURITY, page 5

SECURITY, from page 4

payment. Your life expectancy is important when making that decision, and if you wish to estimate your potential longevity I suggest using this tool: <https://socialsecurityreport.org/tools/life-expectancy-calculator/>.

It's also important to remember that claiming benefits before your full retirement age will mean that, if you work, you'll be subject to Social Security's "earnings test" which limits how much you can earn before some of your benefits are taken away. The earnings limit changes annually (it's \$21,240 for 2023) and, if the limit is exceeded, SS will withhold \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit. They will withhold

future benefits to recover anything you owe for exceeding the earnings limit and, if your benefits are withheld for this reason, your dependents' benefits will also be withheld for those same months. So, your plans for working should be weighed carefully in deciding whether to claim your Social Security benefits early.

To summarize: If you won't work full time after age 62 and you're comfortable with 70% of your FRA benefit entitlement for the rest of your life, then claiming at 62 will also entitle your children and possibly your wife to dependent benefits restricted by the Family Maximum. But, if you continue to work full time, Social Security's earnings test will likely mean neither you nor your dependents can receive full Social Security benefits at this time. And

for clarity, the earnings limit no longer applies after you reach your full retirement age.

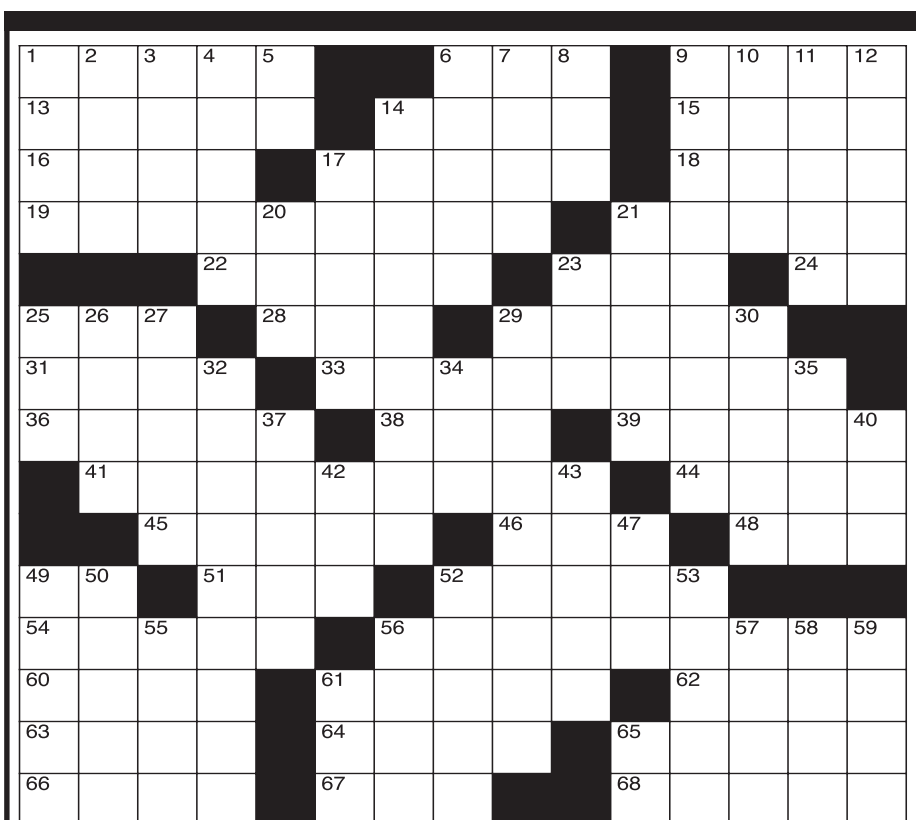
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Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

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Holyoke Sun



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Dull and flat
- 6. Baking measurement (abbr.)
- 9. Education-based groups
- 13. Not behind
- 14. Runners run them
- 15. Japanese ankle sock
- 16. Grave
- 17. Japanese industrial city
- 18. People of southern Ghana
- 19. Particular designs
- 21. Device fitted to something
- 22. Infections
- 23. Pirates' preferred alcohol
- 24. Expression of sympathy
- 25. Rock guitarist's tool
- 28. Neither
- 29. Ancient city of Egypt
- 31. You ___ what you sow
- 33. Ruined
- 36. Narrations

- 38. Body art (slang)
- 39. Fencing sword
- 41. Apartment buildings
- 44. Type of missile
- 45. Fathers
- 46. Extremely high frequency
- 48. Type of school
- 49. Incorrect letters
- 51. Two-year-old sheep
- 52. Nasty manner
- 54. One who accepts a bet
- 56. Indian prince
- 60. Asian country
- 61. Rhythmic patterns in Indian music
- 62. "Uncle Buck" actress
- 63. Detailed criteria
- 64. Son of Shem
- 65. Talked wildly
- 66. Discount
- 67. Not good
- 68. Growing out

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Actor Damon

- 2. A call used to greet someone
- 3. Part-time employee
- 4. Emaciation
- 5. "Westworld" actor
- 6. Gains possession of
- 7. Relaxing spaces
- 8. 23rd star in a constellation
- 9. Northern grouse
- 10. Monetary unit of Bangladesh
- 11. Manila hemp
- 12. Unites muscle to bone
- 14. Makes deep cuts in
- 17. 18-year period between eclipses
- 20. Member of a people inhabiting southern Benin
- 21. Synthetic rubbers
- 23. Unwelcome rodent
- 25. Expression of creative skill
- 26. Some is red
- 27. Seems less in impressive
- 29. Harry Kane's team
- 30. Gland secretion
- 32. Action of feeling sorrow
- 34. Disallow
- 35. Deceptive movement
- 37. More dried-up
- 40. Crimson
- 42. Actress Ryan
- 43. Adherents of a main branch of Islam
- 47. Accomplished American president
- 49. Side of a landform facing an advancing glacier
- 50. Sheep breed
- 52. Appetizer
- 53. Broadway actress
- 55. Influential film critic
- 56. NY Giants ownership family
- 57. Type of script
- 58. Assist
- 59. London park
- 61. Bar bill
- 65. In reply indicator

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 9

Job Connection

HELPING YOU FIND HELP



everyone shines

SUNSHINE VILLAGE

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Sunshine Village, a non-profit organization provides day habilitation and community services to individuals with developmental disabilities.

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www.turley.com

STCC Spring student fine arts exhibition on view

SPRINGFIELD – The Amy H. Carberry Fine Arts Gallery at Springfield Technical Community College presents the Spring Student Fine Arts Exhibition on view through May 10.

Also open concurrently, and celebrating a 10-year anniversary, is the Camera Obscura Room.

Each semester the Fine Arts program faculty at STCC select work to showcase their students' finest work. From colorful paintings to intricate woodblock prints, charcoal drawings and 3D sculptures to traditional gelatin silver photographs, and many other outstanding design projects, all artwork represents the culmination of a semester's work.

"This show is not just a representation of 'art majors,'" said Sondra Peron, associate professor and art gallery coordinator. "To the contrary, regardless of major or career goals, most fine arts courses do not require any pre-requisite, and no art experience is required to register for a fine arts course."

Students said they were proud to display their art on the walls of the gallery at STCC.

"I worked really diligently on try-



The Carberry Fine Arts Gallery will feature art by students through May 10. *Submitted photo*

ing to express my artistic style in each piece in the student art exhibition at the Carberry Gallery. The whimsical ele-

ments of nature and bold colors speak to my personality and creative style," said Enaya Ogletree, STCC fine arts major

and gallery work-study student.

For more information about the Fine Arts program, visit www.stcc.edu/explore/programs/fine.aa.

First conceived and built in 2013 with analog photography students in the former gallery office, the Camera Obscura Room offers a unique viewing experience. The laws of optics dictate that light travels in straight lines and when light reflects off objects outside a darkened room, some of those rays of light travel through a small hole or aperture in a window, reform on the opposite wall, upside down. The Camera Obscura Room at STCC is open to the public when exhibitions are on view.

The gallery and camera obscura, located on the campus of STCC in B28, are open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; Wednesday, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Parking available in K Lot. Use Pearl Street gate for easy access. The gallery and all events are free and to the public.

This exhibition and associated events are supported in part by the School of Liberal and Professional Studies (LAPS) and the Fine Arts (A.A.) program. stcc.io/carberry.

Harmony House moves closer to reopening

CHICOPEE – Harmony House, a home for the terminally ill that will be reopening later this year, welcomed volunteers on April 21 who arrived to help move furniture into the newly renovated home in Chicopee. Volunteers of all types are welcomed by Harmony House. Gina Mazza, President of Harmony House's Board of Directors, said the following. "We are especially grateful and astounded by the generosity and willingness of this team of volunteers, along with some of our own long-term volunteers, to help unload furniture and move it into our beautiful new facility. We give them all our utmost thanks."

Founded by Ruth Willemain, a hospice volunteer for many years, the

goal of Harmony House is to provide a comfortable, compassionate, and loving environment as people enter the final stages of life. The organization previously operated in Chicopee in a house generously donated for use by a city resident. After the purchase of a new property in the Aldenville section of Chicopee, the decision was made to temporarily close the house and generate all efforts to the renovation of the new home. When the Covid-19 pandemic hit, the renovation was put on hold before slowly returning to reconstruction mode. It has been a few years, but with the dedication of many volunteers and



Volunteers who helped at Harmony House include Joanne LaChapelle, John Vaughan, Jean Petit, Tom Fiske, Nina Youmelle, Cheryl Massey, Chris Gloster, John O'Connor, Michelle Tabb, Bryan Zimmerman, Mike Reyor, Patrick Murphy, and Louise Labrie. *Submitted photos*

See REOPENING, page 10

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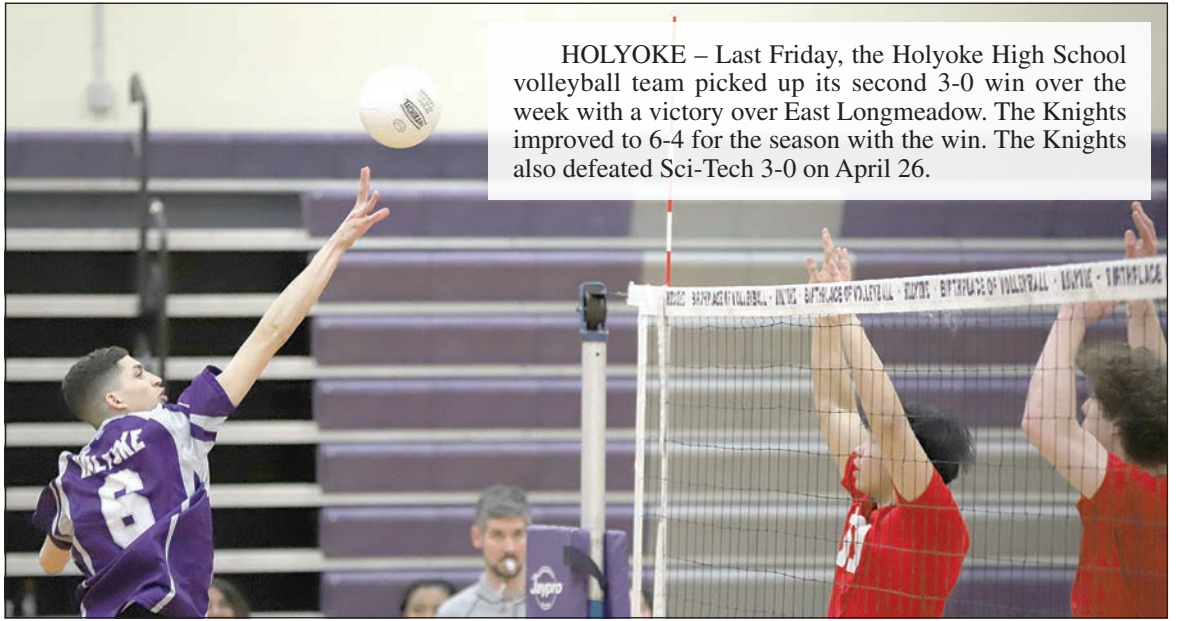
Holyoke beats E. Longmeadow



Nathan Luis Jusino makes a set to keep the ball in play.



Nelson Figueroa serves for the Knights.



Willie Lopez Morales gets a hit.

HOLYOKE – Last Friday, the Holyoke High School volleyball team picked up its second 3-0 win over the week with a victory over East Longmeadow. The Knights improved to 6-4 for the season with the win. The Knights also defeated Sci-Tech 3-0 on April 26.

Photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Michael Melendez reacts to a serve with this bump.



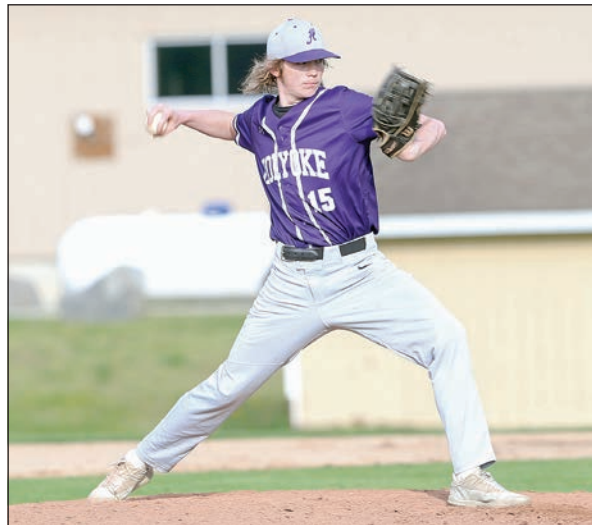
Gedeon Ortiz-Torres goes low for the play.



Adrian Centeno-Feliciano socks a spike over the net.



Nathan Pok fields a grounder.



Theo Marion pitches for Holyoke.



Darwin Jimenez throws to first for an out.

Knights drop four straight

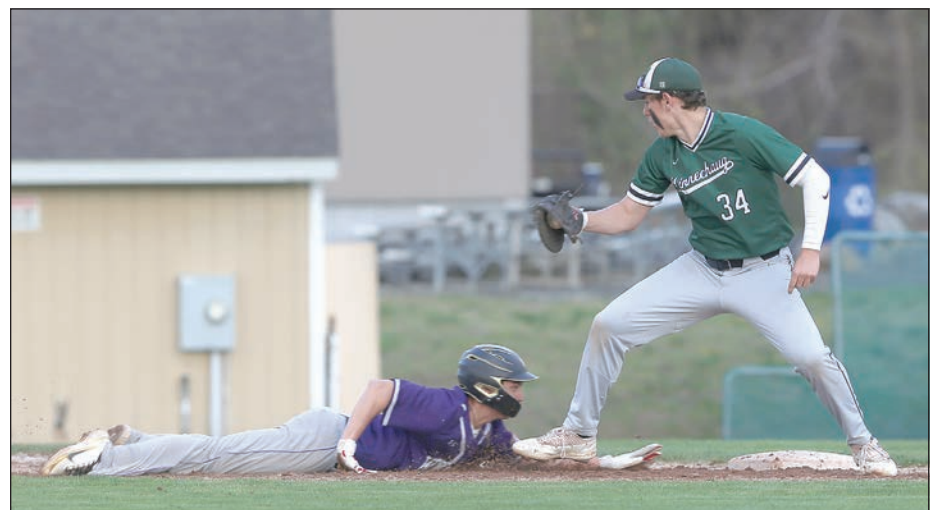
HOLYOKE – After getting in the win column and getting above .500, Holyoke has entered another tough stretch, dropping four straight decisions over eight days.

One of those was a 16-6 loss at Minnechaug last Monday evening.

In the loss, Nathan Pok had a hit and a run scored and Darwin Jimenez had a double and a run scored. Holyoke is now 4-7.



Raul Lopez Ofray makes an off-balance stop.



Justin Rivera tries to get a tag on a pickoff throw.

Photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

NECBL announces full schedule for 2023 season

SOUTH HADLEY – The 2023 New England Collegiate Baseball League (NECBL) first pitch is slated for June 6, as Commissioner Sean McGrath has announced the full schedule for the 29th playing season.

All eyes will be on Dodd Stadium in Norwich, Connecticut on June 6, as the league kicks off its season with the Mystic Schooners hosting the Newport Gulls in the lone matchup of opening day. Ten other teams, including the defending champion Martha's Vineyard Sharks, will get to work on June 7th, with six games on tap, while Sanford is the last team to open their season, part of a seven-game schedule on June 8th that includes the first doubleheader of the year.

In 2022, Martha's Vineyard claimed their first league championship with a 2-0 sweep of the Vermont Mountaineers. That completed a prolific season for the Sharks, who had hosted the 2022 NECBL All Star Game and earned a Wild Card berth in the postseason. On their way to the championship, Martha's Vineyard knocked off both of the top seeds, the Bristol Blues and the Mountaineers, who had each tied an NECBL record with 32 regular season wins.

The anticipated rematches of the championship series will take place on June 27 on the Vineyard and July 12 in Montpelier.

Comprising 13 teams for the 2023 season, the league will once again operate with a three-division alignment. The Coastal Division will feature five teams (Martha's Vineyard, Mystic, Ocean State, North Shore & Newport), while the North Division (Keene, Vermont, Sanford, Upper Valley) and West Division (Bristol, Valley, North Adams, Danbury) will each include four teams.

Once again, all teams will play a 44-game slate in which they will play each of their divisional opponents seven times. Coastal Teams will play each non-division opponent twice, once at home and once on the road, while teams in the North Division and West Division will play non-divisional opponents three times apiece.

The league is grateful to the work of Ben Grannan, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Business Analytics at Queens University (NC) for taking on the complex task of creating the 2023 schedule. Grannan had to balance each team's facility availability, the number of intra- and inter-division matchups, travel considerations, double-headers, off-days, and more.

"The combination of computers and subject matter expertise is the current best practice to create sports schedules," explained Grannan. "Specifically, analytical models are used to track the potential home team, away team, and date

of each baseball game during the season. The best schedule satisfies as many items as possible from the list of submitted NECBL team requests as well as the league requirements. Most importantly, the league office participates in a feedback loop to review the schedule and identify any nuances missed by the computer."

Sunday, June 23rd will see the league's best gather at historic Fraser Field in Lynn, Massachusetts for the 2023 NECBL All-Star Game, presented by Metro Credit Union. The

All-Star Game features the NECBL's top talent, with players from all NECBL organizations showcasing their skills in front of scouts from every Major League Baseball (MLB) organization.

In the final week of the season, each of the league's 13 teams will play solely against division rivals in hopes of qualifying for the 2023 NECBL Postseason, which will feature six teams (the three division winners and three wildcards who have the next three highest winning percentages league-wide after the division winners).

The division winners with the top-two regular season winning percentages will earn first-round byes, while the third division winner will battle the wildcard team with the lowest win percentage, and the wildcard teams with the best and second-best win percentages will also face

off in a single-elimination wildcard round matchup.

The top seed/division winner will then meet the advancing team that is the lowest remaining wildcard team, while the second-highest seed/division winner faces the highest remaining wildcard team in the best-of-three semifinals before the last two teams standing square off in a best-of-three NECBL Championship Series for the right to hoist the Fay Vincent, Sr. Cup.

The final games of the regular season will be held on Saturday, July 29, with the following day (July 30) open for makeup games before the postseason begins with the Wild Card games on Monday, July 31.

The semifinals series will be played from August 1-3, and the final two teams will play for the championship from August 4-6.

All NECBL games will be streamed live on the NECBL Network, powered by BlueFrame Technology. The NECBL Network is available on both your desktop and mobile/tablet devices, as well as Roku, Amazon Fire TV, Android TV and Apple TV 4th Gen.

Rosters are filling up, and you can check out who is coming to play for your favorite team by heading to their team page at www.necbl.com. Make sure to follow these players all spring long as they compete for their colleges and tune up for their summer in the NECBL.

Registration open for 2023 Bay State Summer Games

WOBURN – Registration for the 41st annual Bay State Summer Games is now open. The 2023 Summer Games will include thirty sports with competitions from June 3 to July 29 at venues throughout eastern and central Massachusetts including Game On in Fitchburg, Boston Sports Institute in Wellesley, Union Point Sports Complex in Weymouth, and New England Sports Center in Marlborough. 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.

Eight high school showcase sports will take place for a variety of sports,

including baseball, basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, lacrosse, 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, archery, judo, 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 girls lacrosse, rugby, and 6v6 field hockey.

The 2023 Summer Games will feature Game On in Fitchburg as the host venue for 8 sports. Bay State Games expects 1,500 athletes and their families to attend competitions at Game On during the second week of July. "We are excited to expand the roster of sports being held at Game On this year," said Kevin Cummings, Executive Director of the Bay State Games. "This state-of-the-art facility allows us to enhance the athlete and spectator experience and provide a true Olympic-style multi-sport atmosphere for our participants."

An additional feature in 2023 is that in over a dozen sports, athletes who win a gold, silver, or bronze medal at

the 2023 Bay State Games will qualify to participate in the 2024 State Games of America in San Diego, California. The State Games of America feature more than 8,000 athletes from over 30 different state games programs nationwide. To see the list of qualifying sports, please visit www.stategamesofamerica.com.

In addition to sports programming, Bay State Games offer college scholarships, a sportsmanship initiative, college internship opportunities, and a High School Ambassador program.

For more information on all sports in the 2023 Summer Games, links to online registration, and information on other programs, go to www.baystategames.org.

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

Roster spots remain open in Quabbin Baseball League

More players are needed for the Quabbin Valley Over-28 Baseball League as it seeks to infuse new talent into its league for the 2023 season.

The league recently held its open practice, but still has plenty of open roster spots remaining to fill for the 2023 season.

Registration for the 2023 season remains open and any interested players can go to www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org to get registered, or to seek more information or make inquiries about the league. The league website will also be updated over the next month with information about the upcoming season.

The season is scheduled to begin on Sunday, April 23. The league plays most Sunday from late April through late August with playoffs following that. The league plays a 15-game schedule and typically fields six teams each year. Games are usually played at 10 a.m. with fields in Easthampton and South Hadley normally used.

The Quabbin Valley league is an all abilities league and all are welcome to join. Eligibility is players who are age 28 and over. You must be 30 to be eligible to pitch in the league. Your age for eligibility is whatever age you will turn in 2023.

Annual Run for Rice's 5K Road Race set for June 3

WILBRAHAM – The 11th annual "Run for Rice's 5K Road Race" will be held on Saturday, June 3 at 9 a.m. This popular, family-friendly 5K road race begins at Christ the King – Epiphany Church, 758 Main Street, Wilbraham, and winds through a flat, fast course in surrounding neighborhoods, ending at Rice Fruit Farm across the street from the start.

Pre-registration fee for runners and walkers is \$20, while day-of-race registration is \$25.

Ages 18 and under registration is \$15 including day-of registration. The first 150 registered runners by May

20 will receive our famous race t-shirt featuring the "Running Apple" logo, and all registered runners will receive a free Rice Fruit Farm ice cream with their bib number on day of race only. Cash prizes will be awarded in several categories, and all proceeds benefit the Rice Nature Preserve maintenance fund of the Minnechaug Land Trust.

Race day registration will be open from 7:30 a.m. until 8:45 a.m. On-line registration now available at RunSignUp.com, and paper registration forms can be downloaded at the Minnechaug Land Trust website www.minnechauglandtrust.org.



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Thunderbirds make large donation to Rays of Hope

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds announced a donation of \$30,000 to the Rays of Hope as a result of proceeds from the live jersey auction during the T-Birds’ 6th Annual Pink in the Rink game on March 11.

Thunderbirds President Nathan Costa and Vice President of Sales & Strategy Todd McDonald presented a check to the Rays of Hope earlier this week inside the MassMutual Center. This year’s Pink in the Rink game set new records for total funds generated, and the MassMutual Center came out in full force with a sixth straight “Pink” night sellout crowd of 6,793.

Established in T-Birds’ inaugural season in 2016-17, “Pink in the Rink” serves as a kickoff to the Rays of Hope fundraising efforts each March to shine a light on breast cancer awareness outside of the traditional October awareness month. Each year, the fundraising efforts culminate in the annual Rays of Hope Walk & Run in October. Since the establishment of this staple night, the Thunderbirds have generated more

than \$100,000 for the Rays of Hope Foundation, all of which stays local in Western Massachusetts in hopes of finding the cure.

Proceeds for this donation were raised primarily via the post-game live jersey auction, as every Thunderbirds player had his jersey sold to directly benefit the Rays of Hope. In addition, Chris Hayes, General Manager of Oak View Group Hospitality, the food and beverage partner for the MassMutual Center, contributed toward the donation total through the sales of Pink Whitney beverages throughout the evening.

“Pink in the Rink once again proved to be one of the most special nights of our historic season,” said Costa. “We share in the Rays of Hope Foundation’s pride for our community and our fanbase for their steadfast support year in

and year out. We want to congratulate the Rays of Hope on their 30th anniversary and are proud to continue such a meaningful partnership that celebrates so many brave women and men in Western

Massachusetts who have not only survived breast cancer but also thrived in generating awareness through their Rays of Hope family.”

“We’re sending our signature big pink hug to the Springfield Thunderbirds and their fans for illuminating HOPE in our community,” said Kathy Tobin, Director of Annual Giving and Events for the Baystate Health Foundation. “As we kick off Rays of Hope’s 30th Anniversary, we reflect on those who have helped us get to this moment. We may not have a cure for breast cancer yet, but we have made lifesaving breakthroughs in treatment and the research

continues. Importantly we have a big extended family of support here in western Massachusetts. Thank you to the T-Birds for lifting our survivors up!”

Since its inception in 1994, Rays of Hope has raised over \$16.6 million to support the women and men living in western Massachusetts touched by breast cancer. Funds also support vital research at the Rays of Hope Center for Breast Cancer Research.

The T-Birds Foundation was established in 2018 with a mission of serving the Springfield community and the Pioneer Valley beyond every win and loss through a focus on providing and supporting initiatives in the areas of health and wellness, youth enrichment, and civil service. During the 2022-23 season, the T-Birds Foundation raised more than \$131,000 for charitable causes in Western Massachusetts.

This year’s Rays of Hope Walk & Run Toward the Cure of Breast Cancer will be held on Sunday, October 22. For more information, visit Baystatehealth.org/Raysofhope or call 413-794-8001.



**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. HD23A0078AD
In the matter of:
Landyn Alexander Carino
CITATION
G.L. c. 210, §6**

TO:
any unnamed or unknown parent and persons interested in a petition for the adoption of said child and to the Department of Children and Families of said Commonwealth.

A petition has been presented to said court by:
**Jonathan Hafer of Holyoke, MA
Leticia Hafer of Holyoke, MA**

requesting for leave to adopt said child and that the name of the child be changed to
Landyn Alexander Hafer-Carino
If you object to this adoption you are entitled to the appointment of an attorney if you are an indigent person.

An indigent person is defined by SJC Rule 3.10. The definition includes but is not limited to persons receiving TAFDC, EACDC, poverty related veteran’s benefits, Medicaid, and SSI. The Court will determine if you are indigent. Contact an Assistant Judicial Case Manager or

Adoption Clerk of the Court on or before the date listed below to obtain the necessary forms.

IF YOU DESIRE TO OBJECT THERETO, YOU OR YOUR ATTORNEY MUST FILE A WRITTEN APPEARANCE IN SAID COURT AT Springfield ON OR BEFORE TEN O’CLOCK IN THE MORNING (10:00 AM) ON: 05/19/2023.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: April 27, 2023
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
05/05/2023

City of Holyoke
536 Dwight Street #3
Holyoke, MA 01040-5078
(413) 322-5650

Request for Proposals #2023-32PD Lease Space

The City of Holyoke is seeking sealed proposals for the acquisition by lease of a minimum of 1,700 square feet of mixed-use office and educational space located near the Police Department.

Proposals will be received in the Purchasing Office, Room 3, Holyoke City Hall, Holyoke, MA up until **12:00 PM, EST on 5/26/2023** in which time they will be publicly opened.

Documents are available electronically by email request at: morrowj@holyoke.org.

The City of Holyoke reserves the right to reject any

and/or all bids.
04/28, 05/05, 05/12/2023

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
Docket No. HD20P1221GD**

In the interests of:
Linda Pelc
Of: **Holyoke, 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 **Alison M Bartlett-O’Donald of Holyoke, MA** in the above captioned matter requesting 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 **05/22/2023**. 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. **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: April 24, 2023
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
05/05/2023

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
Docket No. HD23D0161DR
Yaritza Rivera vs.
Wilfredo Rivera
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To the Defendant:
The Plaintiff has filed a Complaint for Divorce requesting that the Court grant a divorce for Irretrievable Breakdown.

The Complaint is on file at the Court.

An Automatic Restraining Order has been entered in this matter preventing you from taking any action which would negatively impact the current financial status of either party. SEE Supplemental Probate Court Rule 411.

You are hereby summoned and required to serve upon:

Yaritza Rivera
868 Carew Street
Springfield, MA 01104

your answer, if any, on or before **07/05/2023**. If you fail to do so, the court will proceed to the hearing and adjudication of this action. You are also required to file a copy of your answer, if any, in the office of the Register of this Court

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: April 4, 2023

Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
05/05/2023



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In The News

REOPENING, from page 6

the generosity of multiple businesses, Harmony House is seeing a potential opening date for the fall of 2023. With that goal in mind, there will be future meetings to attract volunteers and also fundraising events to support the home.

Harmony House is totally privately funded through the generosity of individuals, businesses, and foun-

dations. Contributions are gratefully accepted at all times. "Someday you may need us; right now, we need you." Please visit the website at www.harmonyhousewma.org or send your checks to Harmony House of Western Massachusetts, 66 View Street, Chicopee, MA. Harmony House is a nonprofit. If interested in learning more or becoming a volunteer, please contact Harmony House at 413-315-9784 or by email at harmonyhousewma@gmail.com.



Volunteer muscle helps move in heavy furniture to Harmony House. *Submitted photos*



Pam Quirk, a volunteer at Harmony House, admires the new kitchen table.

COLLAPSES, from page 1

mised it was possible the recent rain and winds could have been to blame for the collapsed pieces.

The past two weeks have each

seen one day of heavy rains and wind. Last weekend, there was rain throughout Saturday and Sunday, and there was even a small amount of rain and wind on Monday. Temperatures have remained cool to close April and start May.

GRANT, from page 1

Sullivan School will be part of the third cohort of 30 schools from 18 districts in Massachusetts to adopt OpenSciEd's middle school core science curricu-

lum. The two prior cohorts included 74 schools from 43 districts that were funded over the past two years.

Levine said HPS will consider expanding the use of the curriculum to other schools, based on results achieved during the grant period.

SOLDIERS, from page 1

According to court documents, Associate Justice Dalila Arguez Wendlandt wrote the ruling for the majority, stating the court's belief Walsh and Clinton did not properly handle the growing number of COVID-19 cases occurring in the home.

An independent attorney's investigation and subsequent report blamed Walsh and Clinton for their handling of the home when the COVID-19 pandemic began, which would eventually result in the deaths of 80 residents of the facility.

Wendlandt wrote the CEO of Holyoke Medical Center, Carl Cameron, expressed concern with the number of patients sent to the hospital. During the second full week of the pandemic, Cameron contacted Walsh twice to offer assistance from the hospital. Walsh did not return those calls.

Cameron eventually spoke to Clinton, who confirmed the home was struggling with staff members getting COVID-19.

Wendlandt presented a grim scene following the deaths of many of the residents and noted how residents with COVID-19 were allowed to be near those

who had not contracted the very contagious disease.

With the ruling, the charges are reinstated and newly-elected Attorney General Andrea Campbell will handle the case from this point.

"The Court's decision today is welcome and important news, and it affirms what we already knew: the leaders and managers of facilities like the Soldiers' Home share responsibility for the health and safety of their residents," Campbell said in a statement. "Today's decision allows us to focus once again on securing accountability for the tragic and preventable deaths at the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke."

The Soldiers' Home has since undergone a full change in management with a new superintendent and new board of trustees members.

In the dissenting statement, Associate Justice David Lowy contended there is insufficient evidence Walsh and Clinton acted wantonly and recklessly. Lowy claims those two factors need to be proven in order for the charges to stick.

The Soldiers' Home tragedy had one of the largest mass deaths from COVID-19 of any care facility in the country.

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Westfield River Watershed Association Fish Ladder open house celebrates World Fish Migration Day

WEST SPRINGFIELD – Hundreds of people are expected to gather along the Westfield River on Sunday, May 21 to watch the American Shad as they migrate upstream to spawn. The Fish Ladder Open House is a free event sponsored each year by the Westfield River Watershed Association (WRWA.) This year's activities coincide with World Fish Migration Day, which is celebrated every two years to recognize the ecological, cultural, economic, and recreational importance of fish migration.

Community members are welcome to stop by and check out the annual migration of our large native fish. From 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. WRWA members will offer short tours along the canal and dam at the former Southworth Paper Company on Front Street in West Springfield.

"This is the most popular of all our activities each year. People are fascinated by these big fish who battle the currents to get upstream. It's easy to watch them from several places along the canal," said Brian Conz, president of the Westfield River Watershed Association (WRWA.) "Our on-site experts can explain and answer questions about the Connecticut River shad and their migration." The WRWA works in cooperation with A&D Hydro, Inc. and the Mass. Division of Fisheries and Wildlife to offer this one-day-a-year event to the public.

Besides the migrating fish, there's more to see while walking along the river path. "We always see water birds



The Westfield River Watershed Association is holding an event to honor fish migration on May 21. *Submitted photo*

such as mallards, other ducks and great blue heron. Many different warblers are migrating north to their summer nesting sites. There are a couple of beaver dams on this section of the Westfield, and sometimes folks are lucky enough to watch the beaver. There are even bald eagles who have been nesting on the lower part of the Westfield River," adds Conz. "Perhaps we'll spot them soaring along the river this year."

This free, family-friendly and teen-friendly activity is open to the public, rain or shine. The walk to the fish ladder is about ten minutes down an accessible dirt path. Participants are encouraged to wear appropriate shoes and to dress for the weather; binoculars are helpful for bird-watching and seeing the wildlife up close.

"Another benefit of visiting the fish ladder is being able to identify the migrating shad in other waters of the area," adds Ann Barone, another WRWA member. "I love feeling the connection over time when the earlier people who lived in our watershed also waited for the shad to run upstream."

Due to the pandemic, the counting of migratory fish on the Westfield River has been automated, according to Caleb Slater of Mass. Fish and Wildlife. "The equipment is located in a below-water-level viewing area. As a result, there is no space in the viewing room for the public this year. People can still see the shad as they rest and gather strength at the bottom of the dam before they head up the fish ladder itself. It's a powerful experience to watch them, knowing how far these fish have travelled from the ocean and where they still need to swim to spawn."

Current COVID precautions allow for outdoor gatherings without masks. Groups are encouraged to maintain social distance. WRWA will take all mandated precautions in effect at the time of the Fish Ladder Open House.

The American Shad (*Alosa sapidissima*), which are typically 20-24" long, can be found along the entire North Atlantic Coast from Labrador to Florida. Cleaner waters, fewer dams, and fish passageways such as the one in West Springfield are continuing to improve shad populations. Shad are anadromous, spending most of their lives at sea in salt water then returning to spawn in freshwater streams. Those native to this area typically survive to spawn repeatedly for up to ten years. This annual fish run has been an integral food source for the Connecticut River Valley since the native people, and later colonists, began fishing and drying them. Local fishermen today continue catching shad during the year-round open season.

For more information about the Westfield River Watershed Association and its activities, visit www.westfieldriver.org.

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