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Mayor opposes state income tax reduction

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

HOLYOKE – Mayor Joshua Garcia was among a contingent of Massachusetts municipal leadership, which recently spoke out against a ballot initiative that would cut the state income tax rate.

There is currently an initiative to reduce the income tax rate, and Garcia, among the leaders opposing the ballot question, say the reduction in income tax collected in the Commonwealth would adversely affect communities like Holyoke.

Garcia, who earlier this year was named president of the Massachusetts Mayor's Association, said in a press event that "mayors and municipal officials 'immediately understand' the implications when a reduction of state revenue is proposed.

According to the press release from Garcia, a reduction in state-collected revenue would create a lot of anxiety among officials because there may not



Mayor Joshua A. Garcia, speaking on the State House steps Tuesday, May 12, expresses his opposition to a ballot initiative that he says will reduce state aid to cities and towns.

be enough funding to cover needed programs throughout the state.

"It means uncertainty," Garcia said. "It means jeopardizing or reversing progress that residents already see in their neighborhoods. And for gateway cities and communities with significant needs, the impact can be even more severe.

"We cannot afford to pull resources away from education, transportation, public safety, and local government at a time when residents are asking us to do more, not less," he said.

Garcia spoke at the State House on the front steps on Tuesday, May 12 to represent the mayor's association on Beacon Hills

His press release states the proposed cut in the state income tax rate "would result in a projected \$5 billion reduction of revenue collections which cities and towns would feel in reduced state aid." Garcia emphasized that every dollar that goes to a city like Holyoke is not

bonus funding or surplus, but is part of the bare bottom line the city needs to function.

"It means uncertainty, It means jeopardizing or reversing progress that residents already see in their neighborhoods."

– Mayor Joshua A. Garcia

"State funding is not 'extra' for communities like ours," Garcia said. "It is foundational support that allows us to deliver core services and make long-term improvements as prudently as possible."

"For residents," he said, "this debate is ultimately about what kind of communities we want to live in. Do we want communities with strong schools? Safe neigh-

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Stalemate ends as teachers agree to new contract

By Brendan Rooney
Correspondent

HOLYOKE — The Holyoke Teachers Administration have ratified its latest contract this past Tuesday night; the latest deal was approved with 97% of teachers voting yes, by an official margin of 311 to 10, an achievement that all parties celebrated.

The contract will now include retro pay, 13 days of upfront leave, seven days of

parental leave, yearly COLA, a compensation system ensuring retention, a shorter workday and work year, protected prep five days a week, and health and safety language to protect staff and students, according to an official post from the union. In addition, the agreement also includes more than a 20% pay increase over three years, with an average raise of about \$12,750, and starting teachers' pay will be \$55,000, making the district

one of the highest pay scales in the region.

Reflecting on the latest deal was HTA President Nick Cream, who revealed that it was a record turnout from the union, with many feeling that the deal offers great value.

"It was a historic vote with 321 members voting, which is 68% of our membership," Cream revealed. "We are so thankful to all of our members because we couldn't have done it without them, and we view this

latest contract as a win for our members, students, and families in Holyoke, as well as the entire community." He also added, "We believe the salary increase, lanes for educational experience, humane parental leave, district-wide oversight committee for health and safety, as well as a much stronger grievance procedure to enforce the contract, will have positive impacts on current and future educators and students," Cream shared.

In addition, echoing the achievement being solidified among the two parties was Holyoke Mayor Joshua Garcia, who took to social media to share a statement that same evening.

"Members of the Holyoke Teachers Association voted today, overwhelmingly, to ratify their agreement with Holyoke Public Schools by a tally of 310 votes in favor

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HG&E's LNG project gets green light

HOLYOKE — After three years of deliberation, the Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board has approved, with conditions, HG&E's Liquefied Natural Gas Infrastructure and Resiliency Project.

A new LNG tank is tentatively scheduled to be installed and operational by the end of 2027, or the first quarter of 2028, pending final delivery commitment from the manufacturer.

Holyoke's natural gas moratorium remains in effect for new service requests for which there is an economically viable alternative. Customers interested in new or expanded natural gas service are encouraged to complete HG&E's natural gas interest form. HG&E will review all requests for gas service and will approve those that it has the capacity to serve and for which no economically viable alternative exists, or where service is determined to be in the best interest of the City, including supporting critical economic development initiatives.

According to its website, HG&E's natural gas supply relies on the Tennessee Gas Pipeline and liquefied natural gas stored at HG&E's West Holyoke facility. During peak periods (typically the coldest days of the year when customers are consuming elevated levels of energy), the West Holyoke LNG facility supplies approximately 40% of HG&E's natural gas supply to customers. The facility enhances the reliability and flexibility of HG&E's natural gas supply, reducing dependence on a single pipeline source. With increasing

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Submitted photo

Holyoke resident Tara Armstrong was recently presented the Albert E. Trieschman Direct Service Award, acknowledging superior direct service contributions to students by a clinician, specialist or child care worker.

Armstrong receives Service Award

HOLYOKE – The Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools (MAAPS) celebrated exceptional dedication to special education at its recent annual meeting and awards ceremony, recognizing two outstanding professionals for their profound impact on students and school communities.

Richmond resident Ronald Rutstein, a special education teacher at Helix Human Services-Mill Pond School of Richmond, was

presented the Excellence in Teaching Award. The award acknowledges superior teaching contributions to special needs students by a classroom teacher whose performance and achievement reflect the high principles of the profession. Over his 20-year career, Rutstein's trauma-informed approach and integration of hands-on STEM experiences have been instrumental in supporting students with com-

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Dean Tech unveils new apprenticeship program

Wall to highlight opportunities

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

HOLYOKE – There was a celebration held at Dean Technical High School on Wednesday morning, as a ribbon-cutting took place for the campus' new "Apprenticeship Program Wall."

The wall is a new instal-

lation designed to help students explore long-term career opportunities in union trades, according to a press release from the Holyoke Public Schools.

A part of Holyoke's turnaround plan, which was created during the receivership period over the past decade, the Holyoke Public Schools seeks to create "a pathway for every student" once they enter high school.

Dean Tech, which operates a sister campus to

Holyoke High School North rather than be its own separate school, provides vocational opportunities for students in Holyoke and in some surrounding communities.

The new program wall is supposed to highlight skilled trades and apprenticeship connected to career pathways available to students through vocational education, the press release states.

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Submitted photo

Mayor Joshua A. Garcia (right), and Holyoke Interim School Superintendent Anthony Soto cut the ribbon to unveil Dean Tech's Apprenticeship Program Wall.

Holyoke fireworks display date announced

HOLYOKE — Holyoke's July 4th Fireworks Celebration will take place on Friday, June 26 with the rain date of Saturday, June 27 on the beautiful grounds of Holyoke Community College, located on Homestead Avenue.

"First, I'd like to thank Holyoke Gas & Electric, Holyoke Community College, and the city's departments for continuing this tradition," says Mayor Joshua Garcia. "Not only do we have the fireworks in

honor of our nation's history, but it also allows us to come together as a community and celebrate. As Mayor, it fills me with deep pride to see so many families and friends come out and enjoy a nice summer evening in Holyoke. We want this city to be welcoming and vibrant and the fireworks contribute to this."

"I'd like to thank Holyoke Gas & Electric, Holyoke Community College, and our city departments for making sure that every year the families in

Holyoke have a chance to spend a fun filled evening with their loved ones and celebrate Independence Day."

The City of Holyoke Fireworks are sponsored each year by Holyoke Gas & Electric and the event is hosted by Holyoke Community College. Mayor Garcia encourages everyone to come early to enjoy the music and food. There will also be many activities for children. The event begins at 6 p.m., with the fireworks

display scheduled to start at dusk.

Vendors interested in taking part in the event should contact the Parks & Recreation Department to obtain a permit application at (413) 322-5620. No alcoholic beverages or bottles are allowed on the premises. Only vendors will be permitted on site at 3 p.m.

For additional information contact the Holyoke Parks & Recreation at 413-322-5620



Plant Sale at the Holyoke Senior Center



HOLYOKE— The Holyoke Senior Center Garden Club will hold its second annual plant sale on Saturday, June 6, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Senior Center, 291 Pine St., Holyoke. Shoppers will find a selection of sun or shade loving perennials, plus herbs and annuals that do well in

our local gardens. Members will be available to answer questions about the plants they enjoy. The sale will be held rain or shine.

Proceeds from the sale are used for projects that beautify and support the Senior Center's gardens. Come and visit our beautiful life-enhancing gardens.

Grace Notes

Enjoy an evening of inspirational music

SOUTH HADLEY - Join Music Director and Chicopee Native, Ania Binczewski along with her music students for an afternoon of piano music.

The event is free to the public.

A free-will offering will benefit the South Hadley food pantry: Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Inc.

There will be a brief intermission with refreshments. Parking on-site is free and plentiful.

When: May 17 2 to 4 p.m.

Where: Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 319 Granby Road, South Hadley

To learn more, call 413-533-1925 or visit www.oursaviorssouthhadley.org.

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and 11 opposed," the mayor shared. "Congratulations! I especially want to thank the more than 200 teachers who showed up to the last bargaining meeting where a tentative agreement was reached and made their voices heard clearly and passionately to their HTA leadership. Our teachers demanded movement toward a resolution and ratification. I am thankful that HTA leadership listened to the voices of the educators they represent and worked to finalize the agreement."

Garcia then bestowed ample praise to the district and the bargaining team he appointed, citing that this is the first contract bargained between the union and city officials since the district exited state receivership last July.

"Throughout this process, they remained patient, thoughtful, disciplined, and committed to reaching an agreement that is both fair to educators, fiscally responsible to taxpayers, and keeps

the focus on our students," said Garcia. "These negotiations were not easy, but their representation of the Holyoke people, professionalism, and care helped keep the process moving forward productively despite challenges along the way. This moment reminds us that when we work together, stay grounded in reality, and remain focused on the students we serve, we can achieve meaningful outcomes for Holyoke."

As of this moment, the union continues to advocate and offers support for the HPA (Holyoke Paraprofessionals Association, who are still seeking a contract, as their latest is set to expire June 1st. Providing an update on where negotiations stand, the aides' union shared via social media earlier this week that progress is being made, citing, "We got a first compensation offer - it's a stepping stone, but we have a lot of work to do!" before revealing the next bargaining session for the HPA and the district is Tuesday, May 19 at 4:30 p.m. from inside Sullivan School.

First Holyoke Lupus Awareness Walk set for Sunday, May 31

HOLYOKE — Community members, families, advocates, and local organizations will come together on Sunday, May 31, at 2 p.m. for the first Holyoke Lupus Awareness Walk at Holyoke's Heritage State Park.

The event was created to raise awareness about lupus, support individuals and families affected by the disease, and promote education around an often-misunderstood autoimmune illness that affects an estimated 1.5 million people in the United States.

The walk will feature educational displays, lupus awareness materials, and personal stories from local individuals living with lupus, creating an opportunity for the community to learn, connect, and show support for those impacted



support of lupus awareness.

The event will also support the mission of the Lupus Foundation of America through awareness and fundraising efforts dedicated to improving quality of life, advocacy, education, and research for those affected by lupus.

Additional event information and registration can be found here: [Holyoke Lupus Walk Registration Page](http://HolyokeLupusWalkRegistrationPage)

For additional information, media inquiries, or community partnership opportunities, please contact:

Stefany Garcia, Lead Organizer, Holyoke Lupus Awareness Walk, Stef.garcia@gmail.com or Lianexis Charles, Event Organizer, Holyoke Lupus Awareness Walk, lianexis-charles@yahoo.com.

by the disease.

Organizers hope the event will not only raise awareness but also help reduce stigma surrounding invisible illnesses while building stronger community understanding and support.

Community members of all ages are encouraged to attend and wear purple in

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diverse learners. Holyoke resident Tara Armstrong, a speech and language pathologist at White Oak School of Westfield, was presented the Albert E. Trieschman Direct Service Award, acknowledging superior direct service contributions to students by a clinician, specialist or child care worker. Armstrong brings over 13 years as a direct service practitioner, and in her six years at White Oak, Armstrong has embedded

herself into the White Oak

community, co-teaching alongside faculty and supporting students in natural environments such as hallways and lunch periods. In addition to her clinical role, Armstrong leads neurodiversity-affirming practices, serves as a go-to resource for the use of assistive technology, and actively engages with students beyond the school day, including by leading the after-school fishing club.

herself into the White Oak community, co-teaching alongside faculty and supporting students in natural environments such as hallways and lunch periods. In addition to her clinical role, Armstrong leads neurodiversity-affirming practices, serves as a go-to resource for the use of assistive technology, and actively engages with students beyond the school day, including by leading the after-school fishing club.

Kelli Vey

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

Love, Mom & Dad

Joslyn Fox to headline PrideFest 2026



More Pride Month events are scheduled

HOLYOKE — Holyoke Pride is proud to announce that Massachusetts drag performer Joslyn Fox will headline Holyoke PrideFest 2026, taking place on Saturday, June 27, 2026, at Veterans Park in downtown Holyoke.

Known for her humor, heart, and unforgettable personality from Season 6 of RuPaul's Drag Race, Joslyn Fox brings hometown New England energy to what organizers say will be the biggest Holyoke Pride celebration yet.

Holyoke Pride has grown from a grassroots community gathering into a month-long citywide celebration of LGBTQIA+ visibili-

ty, culture, and joy, drawing thousands of attendees from across Western Massachusetts and beyond. PrideFest itself has become one of the region's fastest-growing Pride events, featuring live performances, local artists, food vendors, community organizations, family activities, and nightlife events throughout the city.

The 2026 celebration begins with the annual Pride Flag Raising Ceremony at Holyoke City Hall on Monday, June 1, followed by a full calendar of events throughout the month, including:

- **June 1** – Pride Flag Raising 5 p.m. at Holyoke City Hall
- **June 5** – House of Colors Youth Queer Prom

- **June 7** – Buen Provecho Drag Brunch
- **June 13** – Holyoke Pride Rainbow Run 5K & 1-Mile Walk at Ashley Reservoir
- **June 25** – Drag Story Hour at Holyoke Public Library
- **June 27** – Holyoke PrideFest 12 to 6 p.m. at Veterans Park
- **June 27** – Holyoke Pride After Party 6 to 11 p.m. at The Wauregan

Organizers say the expanded lineup reflects Holyoke's continued commitment to building visible, welcoming, and inclusive spaces for LGBTQIA+ residents and visitors alike.

"Now more than at any

point in recent memory, it is important that LGBTQIA+ people know they are not alone," said Holyoke City Councilor and longtime Holyoke Pride organizer Juan Anderson-Burgos. "Pride is more than a celebration — it is visibility, solidarity, and a public declaration that every person deserves the right to exist openly, safely, and without fear. When communities come together in support and love, especially during difficult moments in our country's history, that visibility becomes powerful. Holyoke continues to show that our city stands proudly with the LGBTQIA+ community."

Holyoke Pride organizers are also inviting local businesses, organizations, and community members to

become sponsors, volunteers, and partners for the 2026 season. According to organizers, sponsorship support helps keep many Pride events free and accessible to the public.

"What began as a one-day event has become a city-wide movement centered on community, creativity, and connection. Every sponsor, volunteer, performer, and attendee helps make Holyoke Pride possible," said Anderson-Burgos.

Additional announcements regarding performances, entertainment, vendors, and special guests will be released throughout the spring. Holyoke Pride orga-

nizers also wish to thank lead sponsor Holyoke Community College and the Holyoke Local Cultural Council for their continued support over the years, helping expand LGBTQIA+ programming, visibility, and community celebration throughout the City of Holyoke.

For event information, sponsorship opportunities, volunteer signups, and updates, visit www.holyokepride.org.

Struggle for public housing program

HOLYOKE — On Monday, May 18 at 5:30 p.m. at Holyoke Public Library, Jeremy Smith explores the contentious history of federally-funded housing and renewal in Holyoke, including the construction of

Lyman Terrace in the 1930s, Jackson Parkway in the 1940s, and the demolition of the old Ward 4 in the 1960s.

Smith is a long-time local resident with deep roots in Holyoke. His great-grandfather was Frank

Feather, one-time Alderman and the proprietor of Feather & France, Tinsmiths. Smith is also an archivist at UMass/Amherst Special Collection and Archives and a Holyoke Public Library board member.

Graves restoration event this Saturday

HOLYOKE — The Veterans Services is honored to host a graves restoration event on Saturday, May 16, at the Elmwood Cemetery located at 2190 Northampton Street. The event will begin at 10 a.m. Rain date will be May 30.

This event is to restore and preserve our deceased veterans' markers so that they are kept in a presentable form for posterity.

Tools and supplies will be provided. There are no hazardous chemicals (to humans, animals or environ-

ment) used in the process of restoration.

If you have any questions, please contact Wayne Klinge at klingew@holyoke.org or 413-322-5630. All are welcome.

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The installation is a collaboration among school administration, Career and Technical Education staff, and Dean Technical High School programs to connect students with opportunities available after graduation.

"I'm proud of Dean Tech for affirming the role of unions in guiding students to rewarding careers in the skilled trades," said Mayor Joshua Garcia.

Many of the manufacturing trades that are taught at Dean Tech have careers where

workers are part of strong, well-established unions. Several of those unions have opted to be represented on the wall, which will be able to help connect students with apprenticeships, which can lead to sustained and meaningful employment where the trades can be put into full practice.

Unions represented on the Program Wall are Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters, Local 336, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 7, Ironworkers Local 7, Bricklayers and Allied

Craftsmen Local 3, LIUNA Local 596 Laborers, Operating Engineers Local 98, Painters and Allied Trades, Roofers and Waterproofers, Sheet Metal Workers Local 63, and Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 104.

The unions represented many high-demand trades such as plumbing, carpentry, metal working and manufacturing, roofing, painting, and electrical work. Electrical and plumbing work, among them, are both high-paying professional once an individual has become fully licensed to practice.

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borhoods? Reliable emergency services? Maintained roads? A responsive local government?

"If we do, then we must strongly oppose this ballot question," Garcia said.

Also gathered on the State House steps to voice opposition were Massachusetts Municipal Association Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine. "When municipal-

ities lose state support," Chapdelaine said, "there are only a few options available: significantly reduce services, delay investments, or shift more pressure onto local property taxpayers."

Amesbury Mayor Kassandra Gove, president of the Massachusetts Municipal Association, said a significant reduction in state income tax revenues "deeply jeopardizes progress" in her city and across the state — threatening critical services

and adding to the burden on local property taxpayers.

"This adds insult to injury at a time when communities are already facing inflationary pressures, rising construction costs, health insurance increases, workforce challenges, and so much more," she said. "Municipal leaders are not asking for luxuries. We are asking for stability, predictability, and the ability to continue providing the services our residents depend on."

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peak loads, due to severe weather and other impacts, HG&E sought to increase capacity at the LNG facility in order to ensure natural gas service is available when customers need it most.

The website notes that the West Holyoke LNG facility was designed for five storage tanks but only four were installed when the site was developed. HG&E's plan is to install the fifth storage tank on the site, as well as an additional vaporization system, all within the existing facility footprint. The facility has been operating safely and reliably for over fifty years.

No new pipelines or infrastructure will be required outside of the boundaries of the existing site. HG&E states, "There will be very limited construction and operational impacts related to this project."

Holyoke Mayor Joshua A. Garcia applauded the Siting Board's approval and expressed his appreciation for the cooperation of Gov. Healey's Administration.

"We're grateful to Governor Healey's office for supporting this necessary and forward-looking reliability improvement and storage expansion of HG&E's natural gas resource," Garcia said. "Approval of this additional storage tank is in the best interests of Holyoke's resi-

dential and commercial customers."

Holyoke Planning and Economic Development Director Eric Nakajima noted that the Siting Board's approval will support the city's economic competitiveness.

"Energy supply bottlenecks are a barrier to new investment and growth in Holyoke," Nakajima said. "This decision will support jobs and businesses in the city in the coming decade."

HGE will continue to update the website and outreach materials as additional information becomes available. Natural Gas Interest Form: <https://www.hged.com/services/gas-service/ng-interest.aspx>

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I'm still working; why didn't I get a higher SSI benefit?

Dear Rusty:

I began collecting benefits at age 72 and am now 78.

Since that time, I have continued to work and have contributed over \$40,000 to Social Security over the last six years. At the time of my retirement, I was informed that the Social Security Administration would review my contributions annually and replace lower-earning years from my 35-year record with my current higher-earning years.

Despite my current annual income exceeding \$100,000, I have not seen an increase in my benefit amount over the past six years. I recently met with an SSA representative, who confirmed that my benefits are being reviewed annually but did not provide specific details or evidence of these adjustments. Could you please advise me on how to formally verify that my benefits are being accurately reviewed and updated to reflect my continued contributions?

Signed: Collecting and Still Working

Dear Collecting:

For information, your contributions from Federal Insurance Contributions Act payroll taxes to Social Security over the last six years are not what determines if you get an increase to your monthly SS benefit.

Although you contributed to SS since you started receiving SS benefits, those contributions do not affect your monthly SS benefit. Your monthly SS benefit is based only the highest inflation-adjusted 35 years of earnings over your lifetime. And for your monthly benefit to change, your current earnings each year would need to replace at least one of those 35 historical, inflation-adjusted year earnings.

We regularly hear from those who do benefit from SSA's regular review of work earnings after they start receiving monthly SS benefits, and our Advisory staff includes two individuals with a combined 70 years of service with the Social Security Administration. Thus, we are comfortable saying that SSA does, in fact, review your earnings annually to see if your monthly SS payment should be higher.

From a process standpoint, SSA receives your annual earnings information from the IRS (i.e., directly from your annual tax return) by mid-year annually, after which SSA evaluates your recent earnings to see if an increase in your monthly SS benefit is warranted. If so, that increase is automatically applied, usually around October each year and you are paid the extra amount retroactively to the begin-

ning of the year.

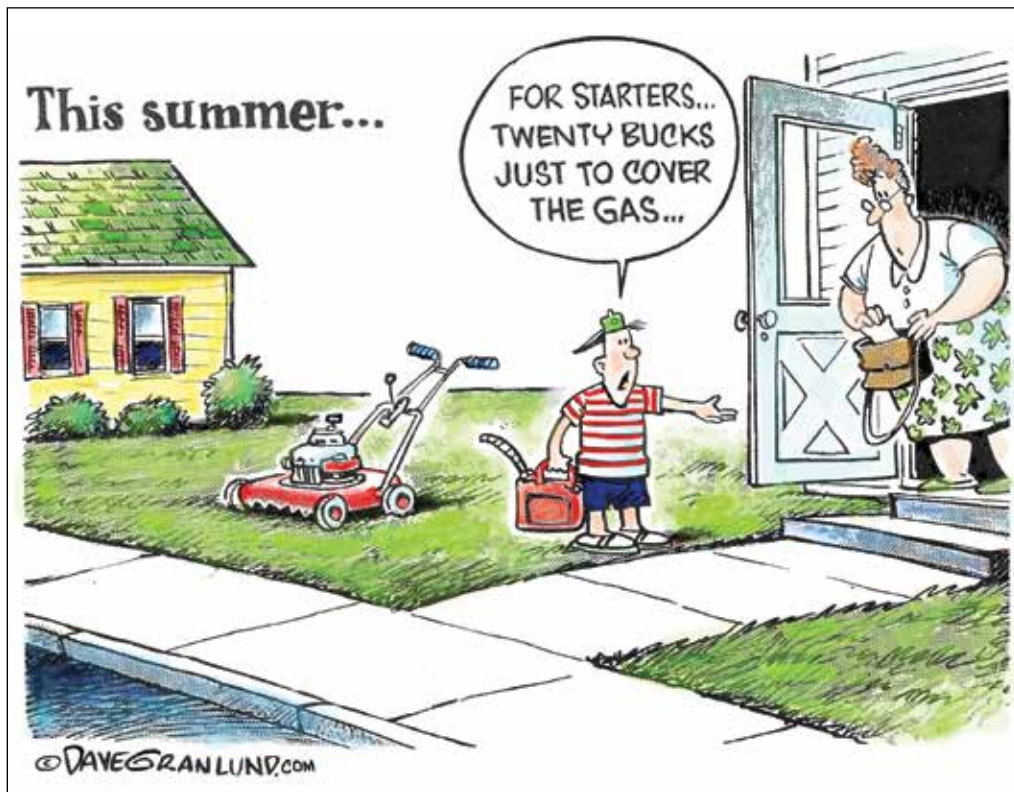
What you may not realize is that your lifetime earnings (your historical earnings) are adjusted for inflation. This is a good thing, because that means your current monthly SS benefit is calculated using today's dollar values for your past earnings, rather than the actual money amounts you originally earned and received.

For example, \$50,000 of 1990 earnings would be worth about \$125,000 today. Which also means that those 1990 earnings would only yield a higher current Social Security benefit if your recent earnings were more than \$125,000. And this is true for all 35 years of lifetime earnings used to calculate your current monthly Social Security benefit.

The best way for you to ensure that you are getting the right monthly benefit amount is to first obtain your lifetime earnings history from Social Security. This is most easily obtained through your online "my Social Security" account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. If you don't have an online account set up, you can also request an "Earnings Statement" by calling Social Security at 1.800.772.1213 (or call your local SS field office to request it). Next, I suggest you use Social Security's "Online Benefits Calculator" explained and available at this link: <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/planner/AnypiaApplet.html>

If, after this, you believe you should be getting a higher monthly SS benefit because of your recent earnings, you can again contact SSA and tell them you believe they did not properly adjust your current SS benefit for your most recent earnings. Following that, you can submit a "Request for Reconsideration" (form SSA-561) which will result in a full separate review of your case by an independent SSA person, followed (some months later) by a formal written determination on your assertion. If you received a letter from SSA because of your previous meeting with them, include a copy of that letter with your "Request for Reconsideration."

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 ssadviser@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.



Guest Column

Rhubarb, a perennial fruit worth growing

Recently I was chatting with a coworker who has a dozen varieties of rhubarb.

Yes, rhubarb. He asked if I wanted a division or two.

Although I love all things old, and this fruit (yes, fruit) is considered about as old-fashioned as they come, I politely declined. Rhubarb and I don't particularly get along.

But, that doesn't mean I'll knock anyone who can eat it and not visit the bathroom. All the more power to them.

Read on for some rhubarb trivia that just may earn you a prize on your next cruise.

Back in the day when everyone made time for baking, or baked out of necessity, rhubarb was indispensable in the garden. Today, most folks figure they can buy what they need when they long to make a strawberry-rhubarb pie or some preserves.

I say, "Why buy it, when it is so easy to grow?" And, as an added bonus, it may just out live you!

Rhubarb was featured on a cooking show and a lengthy discussion evolved between the celebrity cooks about whether it was a fruit or a vegetable. I never did hear the resolution, but did a little research of my own.

Apparently, rhubarb is a vegetable but after a court decision in 1947 it is legally a fruit and was not subject to taxation of the time.

The best time for planting rhubarb is early through mid-spring. If you are lucky enough to know someone with an established patch, it is very likely they will give you all of the divisions you need and then some.

You can also purchase roots or small potted plants from local nurseries. For an average family of four, plan

on two or three divisions.

Rhubarb will do best in a spot in the yard that is in full sun or light shade. Most gardeners locate it separately from or at one end of the main vegetable garden.

attentively.

When it's time for your plants to make their way to a permanent spot, dig holes two to three feet apart. The depth of the holes will depend on the size of the divisions you have and how big their roots are.

Plant them at the same depth they were growing in your friend's garden or in the pot you bought them in. If you are planting roots, go by the buds – they should be planted about two inches below the soil surface.

During the first growing season our emphasis should be on root building. For that reason be sure that you water well and keep weeds at bay.

Do not pick stalks until the following spring, but do break off any flower buds that form. Once your patch has established itself there is no stopping it! All you'll need to do to maintain it is provide a topdressing of compost or rotted manure each spring and weed as needed.

Of course, you will also want to pick as much as you can! No knife is needed: simply hold the stem near the base and give it a quick pull along with a gentle twist.

Use only the stem since the foliage is known to be toxic.

The patch will need dividing every 5-10 years; the perfect time to offer up divisions to your friends!

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



We Want to Hear From You

EDITOR/SPORTS
Greg Scibelli
aan@turley.com
sports@turley.com

ADVERTISING SALES
Wendy Delcamp
wdelcamp@turley.com

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WEB
sun.turley.com



PHONE
(413) 283-8393



ADDRESS
24 Water Street
Palmer, MA 01069

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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.

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The Holyoke Sun welcomes election letters to the editor

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

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

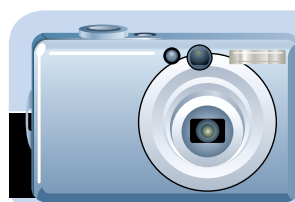
For more information, call 413-283-8393.

Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the newspa-

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

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



Send Us Your Photos!
TheSun@turley.com

Celebrate Juneteenth at Wistariahurst

HOLYOKE — On June 19, Wistariahurst Museum and Genuine Culture welcome guests to the Wistariahurst gardens for our annual Juneteenth event, Celebrate Juneteenth! This event commemorates freedom and the country's second Independence Day through community and celebration. Wistariahurst and Genuine Culture are collaborating for the fourth year to bring back this celebration for the Holyoke community and beyond. Enjoy activities throughout Wistariahurst's grounds. Play games in the gardens, get creative with hands-on art projects, and more! There's something for everyone, with activities for people of all ages.



performers and food vendors are to be announced.

Black-owned businesses, makers, and artists will be selling a variety of locally made items. Local organizations will also have tables at the event, sharing information on their initiatives and what work they're doing in the community.

Juneteenth serves as a poignant reminder of the remarkable resilience of Black lives, symbolizing the challenges and victories of formerly enslaved individuals striving for unity, education, and political engagement during the Reconstruction period. So mark your calendars and bring your friends and family to Wistariahurst Museum on June 19 from 12 to 3 p.m. It's going to be a day of joy, making memories, honoring history, and uplifting the voices of the Black community in Holyoke. Best of all, admission to this celebration is completely free and open to the public! We can't wait to see you there.

This event is sponsored by the Adam's Foundation of South Hadley.



Holyoke earns 'Tree City USA' recognition from foundation

HOLYOKE — The Arbor Day Foundation has named Holyoke a 2025 Tree City USA in recognition of the city's "commitment to plant, grow, and maintain trees to benefit the community."

The Arbor Day Foundation is a global non-profit whose mission is to "inspire people to plant, nurture, and celebrate trees."

"Tree champions like Holyoke are leading the way in a growing movement to shape a better future with trees and action," said Michelle Saulnier, Vice President of Programs at the Arbor Day Foundation.

"Trees are critical infrastructure, building resiliency and fostering good health in our nation's cities. We're proud Holyoke is among the Arbor Day Foundation's

growing network of communities dedicated to creating positive impact through trees."

To earn Tree City USA recognition, a city must uphold four core standards, including maintaining a tree board or department, having a community tree ordinance, spending at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry, and participating in an Arbor Day celebration.

HCC celebrates Phi Theta Kappa inductees

HOLYOKE — Holyoke Community College is proud to announce that 169 HCC students have been accepted for membership into the Alpha Xi Omega chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa national honor society for 2026. Students are invited to join Phi Theta

Kappa when they have completed 15 college credits while maintaining a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

HCC's 2026 inductees were recognized during a campus celebration on Thursday, May 7.

Holyoke: Thomas Flavell, Elliott

Anthony, Ruth Arzuaga Rodriguez, Zoe Bickford, Zoe Bisbing, Ivy Wrenne Demetriou, Michelina Granger, Jemima Kitsa, Josiah Mastromonaco, Rose Michaud, Misteny Montano, Jose Perez, Rafael Rivera, Kevin Rodgers, Angel Romero, Abigail Roy.

City announces Memorial Day parade and program

HOLYOKE — The city's annual Memorial Day observance will be held on Monday, May 25, at 10 a.m. at the Veterans Memorial Park located at Hampden and Maple Streets.

Prior to the formal program, the War Memorial Building at 310 Appleton Street will be open from 8:30 to 9:15 for refreshments and setup for a procession that will start at 9:30. The proces-

sion will head to the Korean War Memorial and the Gold Star Memorial before arriving at Veterans Memorial Park for the ceremony.

Separately, American Legion Post 351 at 50 St. Kolbe Drive is hosting breakfast on Memorial Day from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. American Legion Post 325 at 22 Sycamore Street is hosting lunch from 12 noon to 2.

Visit us at www.turley.com

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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59					60					61			

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Notable casino destination
- 6. Current units
- 10. Roman military unit
- 14. American lizard
- 15. Fates
- 17. The Yankees have lots of these
- 19. Unhappy
- 20. Mimic
- 21. Remove from the record
- 22. Where cargo ships dock (abbr.)
- 23. A way to fight
- 24. Turfs
- 26. Contract
- 29. Country along the Arabian peninsula
- 31. Tree species
- 32. Pituitary gland secretion (abbr.)
- 34. Perfect
- 35. "Partner" to groans
- 37. Jewish calendar
- month
- 38. Where wrestlers work
- 39. Egotistical
- 40. Potted plants
- 41. Containers
- 43. Large, flightless birds
- 45. Part of a book
- 46. American spies
- 47. Pancakes made of buckwheat flour
- 49. Swiss river
- 50. Disfigure
- 53. Have surgery
- 57. Formal withdrawal
- 58. Early English council
- 59. Area units
- 60. 2,000 lbs.
- 61. Siskel and ___

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Animal jaws
- 2. Small water buffalo
- 3. An appliance has
- one
- 4. Every
- 5. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
- 6. Very skilled
- 7. No more than what is specified
- 8. Tire measurement
- 9. Towers
- 10. Forward
- 11. Jacob ___, American journalist
- 12. Vale
- 13. Former CIA
- 16. Middle Eastern nation
- 18. Exhausts
- 22. South Dakota
- 23. The complete duration of something
- 24. Kids love him
- 25. Singular
- 27. Cod genus
- 28. Mild yellow Dutch cheese
- 29. Resistance unit
- 30. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
- 31. Cast out
- 33. 60-minute periods
- 35. Most worn
- 36. European river
- 37. Atomic mass unit
- 39. Items of food
- 42. Body parts
- 43. Ireland
- 44. Partner to Pa
- 46. Sammy ___, songwriter
- 47. Dutch settler
- 48. Full-grown pike fish
- 49. Sun or solar disk
- 50. Minute arachnid
- 51. From a distance
- 52. A monthly expense
- 53. Young women's association
- 54. Brazilian state
- 55. Air freight provider
- 56. Pointed end of a pen

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 Sunday 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
DAILY MASS AND ROSARY
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 Monday - Friday: MASS 6:45 a.m.
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 firstbaptistchurchholyokey@comcast.net
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HOURS: Sunday worship service (winter hours) at 10:30 a.m. (summer hours) at 10 a.m.
 Wednesday Bible Studies, one at 11 a.m. and one at 5:30 p.m.

Our Lady of the Cross Catholic Parish
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 Email: pastor@ourladyofthecross.com
 Holy Cross Ave., Holyoke
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 parish@ourladyofthecross.com
OFFICE HOURS:
 Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
WEEKEND MASSES:
 Saturday 4 p.m.
 Sunday 7:30 a.m., 9 a.m. (Polish), and 10:30 a.m.
DAILY MASS:
 Monday - Saturday 8:30 a.m.
 Legal Holidays Mass 9 a.m.
 Reconciliation (Confession) Monday - Saturday 8 a.m.
 Saturday 3:15pm
 Anytime by Appointment
DEVOTIONS
 Monday - Saturday
 Divine Mercy Chaplet - 7:50 a.m.
 ROSARY 8:05 a.m.
 www.ourladyofthecross.com

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 8

Fish Ladder Open House set for Sunday on Westfield River

WESTFIELD – Hundreds of people are expected to gather along the Westfield River on Sunday, May 17 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 celebrate World Fish Migration Day which recognizes 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 9 a.m. to 2 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.

"Come and witness this spectacular migration event!" exclaims Joseph Boulia, the newest member of the WRWA Board. "Our anadromous fish swim hundreds of miles through open ocean, the Connecticut River, and into our very own watershed just to spawn at the very place they were born. This mass migration has been happening for thousands of years and plays an important part in our ecosystem health." Boulia, a scientist with a specialty in native fish loves to share his excitement with

the public. "It's a great way for all families to enjoy the beautiful Westfield River and all of the natural wonders that inhabit it.

"This is the most popular of all our activities each year. These big fish battle the currents to get upstream all the way from Long Island Sound. It's fascinating to watch them from several places along the canal," said Mark Damon, 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 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 catch the beaver working on their dam. There are even bald eagles who have been nesting along the Westfield River," adds Damon.

This free, family-friend-



Submitted photo
Stephen Mattocks of Mass Fish & Wildlife, Todd Provost of West Springfield, and Jim Driscoll of Westfield at the Fish Ladder along the Westfield River in 2024.

ly 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. There is little shade along the open canal, so umbrellas, para-

sols and big hats are a good choice on warm, sunny days.

"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 people who lived in our watershed also waited for the shad to run upstream. For thousands

of years, these fish were a major source of food for local people."

According to Caleb Slater of Mass. Fish & Wildlife, people can 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."

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. The Westfield River Watershed Association was established in 1953 to protect and improve the natural resources of the watershed, as well as to expand recreational and other land use opportunities for people's enjoyment and for sound ecology.

Holyoke History Room hosting pair of lectures

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke History Room will be hosting two public lectures in the Holyoke Library's Community Room in May. On Monday, May 18 at 5:30 p.m., Jeremy Smith will explore the contentious history of federally-funded housing and renewal in Holyoke with a talk entitled: Conflict & Conservatism: Holyoke's Struggle for Public Housing. Topics will include the construction of Lyman Terrace in the 1930s, Jackson Parkway in the 1940s, and the demolition of the old Ward 4 in the 1960s. A discussion will follow the talk. Smith is a long-time local resident with deep roots in Holyoke. His great-great grandfather was Frank Feather, one-time Alderman and a co-proprietor of Feather & France, sheet-

metal manufacturers. Smith is also an archivist at UMass/Amherst Special Collections & Archives and a Holyoke Public Library Board member.

On Thursday, May 28 at 5:30 p.m., the History Room is pleased to be hosting Dr. Marge Bruchac, who will present: Recovering Histories of Indigenous Presence in the Kwinitekw (Connecticut River Valley). For many millennia, Native people lived along the Connecticut River in western Massachusetts, sustained by local flora and fauna. During the 1600s, Native leaders in Agawam (now Springfield), Woronoco (now Westfield), Nonotuck (now Northampton and Hadley) and Pocumtuck (now Deerfield and Greenfield) invited English colonists to

establish trading posts and small settlements. Sachems negotiated diplomatic and trade relations with colonial settlers and attempted to preserve, in written deeds, Indigenous rights to hunt, fish, gather, plant, and live here in perpetuity. During the late 1600s and into the 1700s, colonial conflict and warfare violated these agreements and fractured these relations. Countering the myth of an Indigenous population that vanished, Bruchac's talk will offer glimpses into colonial relations, reflecting on the lives of Native families who remained highly visible – literally "hiding in plain sight"—utilizing long-standing Indigenous skills, kinship networks, and ecological knowledges to make a comfortable living, while

supplying their white neighbors with medicinal, material, and practical assistance. Dr. Bruchac (Nulhegan Abenaki) is an historian, ethnographer, performer, and museum consultant well-known for her publications and other work on this topic. Her talk for the History Room is made possible by a grant from the Holyoke Local Cultural Council, a local agency funded by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Both talks are free and open to the public. The History Room is open for research Tuesdays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 3 to 6 p.m. and Wednesdays and Thursdays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, contact Eileen Crosby at historyroom@holyokeylibrary.org or (413) 420-8107.

Learn to grow edible mushrooms



BELCHERTOWN – The New England Small Farm Institute, located at 275 Jackson Rd. in Belchertown, will host a workshop teaching people how to grow edible mushrooms on Saturday, May 30 from 2 to 5 p.m. Hosted by NEFSI and Forestopia, come enjoy a hands-on workshop that explores all dimensions of shiitake mushroom cultivation on home and commercial levels. The workshop will provide an introduction to the agroforestry practice Forest Farming, cover the fundamentals of mushroom

cultivations, and review basic considerations of those interested in growing commercially. Participants will also have the opportunity to take home an inoculated shiitake log. The event has a suggested donation of \$20 to \$30 (add \$15 for participants wishing to take home one inoculated shiitake log). All are welcome. To register, please contact Sara Weil at info@smallfarm.org or call 413-323-4531.

Historic Inshaw Rifle Exhibit to take place on May 20

CHICOPEE - The Chicopee Historical Society will present the installation and unveiling of our Inshaw Rifle in its new exhibit case on permanent loan to the Chicopee Public Library. Ms. Laura Bovee, Director of the Chicopee Public Library, will also speak at the event.

The funds for purchasing this case came in part from the sale of the Society's book, "Richard B. Inshaw: A Craftsman's Life and Work in Chicopee, Massachusetts" and the sponsor ads that appear in the book, but the

chief source of funding came from a generous grant from the American Society of Arms Collectors. The Chicopee Historical Society thanks them most sincerely for helping to achieve this long-anticipated goal.

The Inshaw Rifle installation event will take place Wednesday, May 20, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. in the Bazan Community Room at the Chicopee Public Library, 449 Front Street. The Inshaw Rifle will be displayed in the local history room. The event is free and open to the public.

Agawam Community Artists and Artisans 'Call for Art'

AGAWAM – Agawam Community Artists and Artisans (ACAA) is inviting artists and artisans to participate in its Sixth Annual Pioneer Valley Art Festival.

The Art Festival will be held on Friday, Aug. 21, and Saturday, Aug. 22 at the Polish American Club in Feeding Hills. Show hours are from 2 to 8 p.m. on Friday, and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday.

The ACAA is encour-

aging artists, artisans, and writers to submit their work for review. Among the artistic mediums included are watercolor, acrylic, oil, mixed media, sculpture, photography, ceramic, stained glass, wood, fashion, textile, and jewelry.

All work must be original and handmade by the artist or artisan, of professional quality. Prints and giclees will be accepted. No kits, food, soap, candles, or

AI-generated work will be accepted.

Tent space is available on the paved parking lot for \$50.

Students from any area high school are accepted free of charge, and must have a tent set up.

The Pioneer Valley Art Festival is highly promoted through local TV stations; Agawam Media Channel 15 and 1074HD; Agawam Cultural Council website;

newspapers; town forums; Mailchimp; the ACAA website, www.agawamarts.com; and the ACAA Facebook page, that has over 850 followers.

The week before the festival, there will be over 20 street signs placed around Agawam.

Further information, including registration forms, can be obtained by contacting Ceil Rossi at email: tocarefree2@hotmail.com.

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Holyoke softball not able to stop Palmer

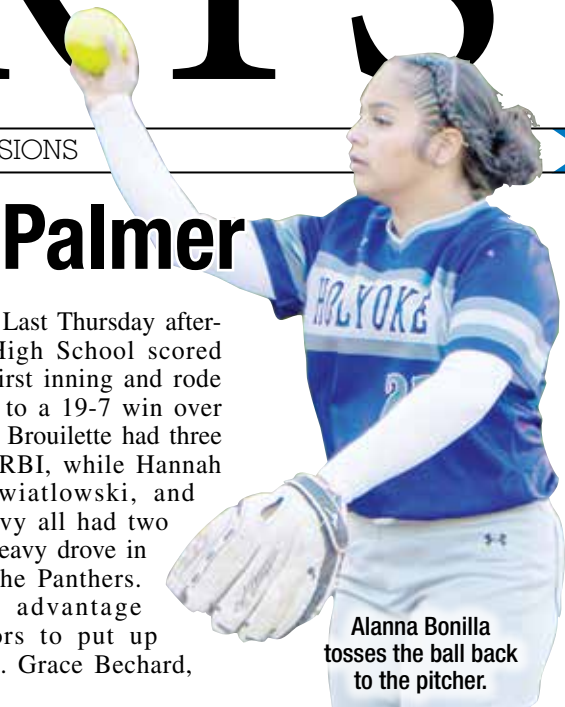


Alliana DeJesus throws an out at first.



Grace Bechard sets up for the catch at first.

PALMER – Last Thursday afternoon, Palmer High School scored 10 runs in the first inning and rode that momentum to a 19-7 win over Holyoke. Harper Brouillette had three hits with three RBI, while Hannah Roy, Jaclyn Swiatlowski, and Amhia McElreavy all had two hits each. McElreavy drove in three runs for the Panthers. Holyoke took advantage of several errors to put up their seven runs. Grace Bechard, Z o m a r i s R o b l e s , and Lily DeJesus had the hits for the Knights. Palmer is 4-9 this season while Holyoke is now 8-8, needing one more win to qualify for tournament this year.



Alanna Bonilla tosses the ball back to the pitcher.



Samantha Rodriguez slides into second base.



Lily Tapion releases the pitch.

Women's Basketball award honorees announced

HOLYOKE – Four members of the 2025-26 Lady Cougars basketball team have been honored with awards. Coming off of the program's most successful season in nearly 20 years, three freshman athletes were chosen to the All-Region (All-New England) team, one of whom was additionally named the HCC team's Most Valuable Player. A sophomore was selected as Holyoke's Player Award

recipient. **Johansy Andrades** – Freshman – Guard - #1 2025-26 – 1st Team All- New England, Lady Cougars' Most Valuable Player Andrades was the Lady Cougars' most dynamic offensive player, possessing exceptional ball-handling skills and tremendous speed. The guard led the Cougars in assists with 108 and points per game, averaging

14.8. She was second on the team in steals with 67 and third in rebounds with 165 and total points with 281. Andrades was Holyoke's ball controlling guard, carrying the ball and dictating the pace and flow of play for the team. A player who could drive to the hoop and pass and shoot exceptionally well, the Cougars' Most Valuable Player made life extremely difficult for opposing defenses. Andrades registered a

rare triple-double this season during a February home game. **Anastacia Dixon** – Freshman – Forward - #25 2025-26 – 2nd Team All- New England Dixon was a dominant force for Holyoke this year, owning the boards and robbing her opponents of possession while racking up points. Dixon led the Lady Cougars in rebounds, grabbing 241, and in steals, notching 67.

She ranked second in Region XXI (New England) in total rebounds with her 241 and was third in rebounds per game, averaging 10.5. Dixon led Holyoke in free throws made and free throw percentage (players who shot at least ten), sinking 54 of 78 for a 69.2 percentage. She was second on the Cougars in total points, scoring 297 on the year. **Vivian Timmons** – Freshman – Forward - #11

2025-26 – 3rd Team All- New England Timmons was the Lady Cougars' leading scorer this season and their most dangerous threat from long range, leading the team in three-pointers made. Timmons scored 309 points, 108 of which came from the 36 three-pointers she sank. She had the highest single-game point total of

See AWARD, page 10



Xavier Mattos goes low.



Yeriel Velazquez Rodriguez goes for a block.



Natra Kuon sends a hit over the net.



Nathaniel Gomes sets the ball right over the net.



Jaxon Pok fires a spike away.

Holyoke falls to B-Town in four-set matchup

BELCHERTOWN – Last Monday night, Belchertown High School boys volleyball defeated Holyoke 3-1, losing the first set of the match, then going on to sweep the next three for the victory. Arda Cayan had a huge match with

42 assists. Gavin Couchon was also strong with 20 kills and 10 digs. Brian Burns turned in 10 kills. Belchertown is 8-9 and looking for a .500 record to make the state tournament while Holyoke fell to just 1-14 on the season.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

WSU softball wins title

WESTFIELD – After 10 trips to the Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference softball championship game, the top-seeded Westfield State University Owls finally cashed in when first year RF Lyla Dwyer pulled a ball through the hole on the left side infield and sophomore 3B Allysa Slack scored with a headfirst dive across the plate in the bottom of the ninth inning as the Owls scored a 1-0 extra innings win over #2 seed Worcester State on Sunday.

With the win, the Owls improve to 38-1 on the season, and the Owls earn the league's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament. Westfield will be making it's third-ever appearance in the big dance, but first since 1983. Westfield will learn their destination and opponent in the NCAA's in a live selection show on NCAA.com slated for Monday at 11.

Worcester's season comes to a close at 25-15.

The two teams duelled through seven innings scoreless at 0-0, See TITLE, page 8

Newest inductees to WMass Baseball Hall announced

HOLYOKE – The Western Massachusetts Baseball Hall of Fame Committee proudly announces members of its 2026 induction class.

This year's inductees include:

Chad Paronto – Former UMass Amherst, and Major League pitcher with 177 MLB appearances.

Bill L'Heureux – Honored for his legendary umpiring career spanning decades in Western Massachusetts and across America.

Bob Bohl – A longtime figure in the baseball community in Ludlow and across the region, recognized for his influence and service to the sport.

2010 Amherst High School State Championship

Team – Celebrated for their remarkable Division 1 State Championship season.

Steve McKelvey – MLB agent and UMass Amherst Professor, honored for his longtime service to the baseball community and contribution to the sports management profession.

Howard Her- man (Gary Brown Award for Sports Media) – A respected voice in sports

journalism in Western Massachusetts, whose coverage has elevated local baseball for decades.

Follow Valley Blue Sox on social media for more class of 2026 announcements and more information on each of the 2026 inductees in the coming weeks.

The induction banquet will take place on Friday, June 5 at Wyckoff Country Club in Holyoke, beginning

at 6 p.m. The evening will feature dinner, recognition ceremonies, and reflections on the careers and accomplishments of this year's honorees.

The evening is presented by the Valley Blue Sox and its presenting sponsor Westfield Bank.

Tickets for the event are available now and can be purchased online at www.valley-bluesox.com.

The Western Massachusetts Baseball Hall of Fame continues its mission to preserve and celebrate the rich baseball heritage of the region by honoring those who have made significant contributions both on and off the field.

For additional information, please visit the ticket website or contact info@valleybluesox.com.

TITLE, from page 7

an old-fashioned pitchers duel between the Owls Angelina Vartuli, who was named the tournament MVP, and Worcester's Peyton Maloney.

Worcester put one runner aboard in the top of the eighth on a single by Emma LaPoint, but Vartuli invoked a pair of pop ups to Slack at third to end the threat.

Westfield appeared to catch a break in the bottom of the eighth as Hannah Wodecki singled to left with one out, and the ball slipped past the fielder to put Wodecki at second base, but

Mia Alfonso popped to second and Latour lined to center to go to the ninth scoreless.

Vartuli sent the Lancers down in order in the top of the ninth, with a pair of ground outs to Slack sandwiched around one to Sarah Hough at short.

Slack doubled to right center leading off the bottom half of the inning when the ball dropped between the center and right fielder after an apparent miscommunication, and after Caroline O'Donnell popped to right, Dwyer stepped in with one out, and slashed one pitch just foul down the third base

line, before finding the hole for a base hit on the game winner.

Vartuli (W, 13-0) allowed six hits over nine innings, walking just one and fanning six for her 13th win of the season.

Worcester's Maloney (L, 10-6) matched her nearly pitch for pitch, working 8.1 innings, scattering 10 hits, and walking and striking out one against an Owls lineup that entered the weekend ranked third in the country in scoring offense at almost nine runs per game.

LaTour was 2-4 with a double and O'Donnell finished 2-3 with a walk to

lead the Owl bats. Carisa Andrews was the lone repeat hitter for the Lancers, finished 2-4 with a stolen base. Bailey Tammara's double in the fifth was the lone extra base hit for the Lancers.

Worcester put two runners aboard in the second before Vartuli got a pop up to end the inning. Andrews made it as far as third in the seventh, but again Vartuli got a pop out to short to end the threat.

The Owls first true scoring chance came in the second inning after a one-out single by Cassidy LaTour followed by a Lancers error put two in scoring position.

O'Donnell followed and stung a line drive back up the middle, hitting Slack who had no way to avoid the ball, causing a dead ball and sending LaTour back to third base instead of scoring the first run of the game. Maloney then escaped the threat by getting a pop up in foul territory.

In the fifth inning, the Owls put two aboard with two outs after a single into left by Rylie Camacho. Hough stepped in and laced a liner back up the middle forcing pinch runner Kalisa Pomfret to duck as she narrowly avoided getting drilled. She could only advance up to

third base causing Camacho to overrun the bag at second in expecting the runner to be sent, but the Lancers were able to tag her out in a rundown before Pomfret could cross home.

Westfield wins the MASCAC tournament title for the first time since the league began a post-season tournament in 2001, though the Owls had played in 10 previous finals. Westfield lost as the #1 seed in 2024 and 2025, dropping two games in the championship round to Framingham at home in 2024, and falling to Worcester in the elimination semifinal in 2025.

Public Notices

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. HD26P1028EA Estate of: Christine A Daisy Date of Death: 01/29/2026 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons: A Petition for Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Daniel M Daisy of Holyoke, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

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

IMPORTANT NOTICE You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this

proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 06/09/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

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

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

Court. Date: May 12, 2026 **Rosemary A Saccomani,** Register of Probate 05/15/2026

City of Holyoke Public Hearing Notice

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, May 26, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.com ID: 836 3939 8493; CALL IN *67 646 558 8656 to hear, pursuant to the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance, Section 6.4.6.4, a Special Permit for an Increase in Sign Size for Florence Bank, at 1490-1504 Northampton Street, Holyoke MA 01040 (105-00-059).

The complete application may be viewed through the Holyoke Planning Dept M-F, 8:30-4 p.m.

Applicant: Holyoke Retail, LLC Planning Board: Lauren Niles, Chairperson 05/08, 05/15/2026

City of Holyoke PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Holyoke Stormwater Authority will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, June 1, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. to hear, pursuant to Section 38.0 of the Holyoke Ordinance, an application for a modified Stormwater Permit requested by the Holyoke Retail, LLC for proposed redevelopment at 1504 Northampton St (parcels 105-00-059 and 105-00-012) to include additional repaving done at the site in conjunction with the construction of a new bank.

The hearing will be held in person at the Holyoke Department of Public Works, 63 N. Canal St, Holyoke, MA 01040 and remotely via video conference. Meeting location and zoom link will be posted on the City's meeting website in advance of the meeting at: <https://www.holyoke.org/departments/public-meetings/>

A copy of the application and site plan may be obtained electronically by sending an email to the Holyoke City Engineer at

houlv@holyoke.org or by appointment requested through this same email address. Holyoke Stormwater Authority 05/15/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD26P0959EA Estate of: Barbara Palmer Also known as: Barbara Bartusewich Date of Death: 01/18/2026 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons: A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Kimberly Palmer of Holyoke, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that Kimberly Palmer of Holyoke, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 06/02/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day,

action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

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

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

Date: May 05, 2026 **Rosemary A Saccomani,** Register of Probate 05/15/2026

Office of Purchasing 536 Dwight Street, Room 3 Holyoke, MA 01040 **Request for Proposals Professional Services for Wastewater Facility Master Plan RFP 2026-43DPW**

The City of Holyoke seeks qualifications and technical proposals from firms to assist the City in developing a Wastewater Facility Master Plan (WW Master Plan) for the City's Wastewater Treatment, Collection, Stormwater, CSO, and Flood Control System, and Industrial Pretreatment Program (Facilities), including assistance with the project design development of priority actions identified through the WW Master Plan development.

This project will be funded in whole or part with Federal Funds. Respondents will be verified for eligibility to receive Federal Funds and must comply with all Federal Requirements including CFR Part 200. Request for

Proposals Procedures and award of the Contract shall be in accordance with Massachusetts General Law, plus all applicable Federal, State and Local laws and regulations. This project may be funded in part or whole with use of Federal funds and all services and construction procured under this grant must comply with Federal procurement requirements.

Starting on May 11, 2026, RFP documents may be obtained electronically through the City of Holyoke's Purchasing Department by submitting an email request to Jaime Morrow, Chief Procurement Officer, at morrowj@holyoke.org. Responses will also be submitted by email.

A mandatory pre-submission meeting be held on May 21, 2026 at 10 AM at the Wastewater Treatment Facility, 1 Berkshire St, Holyoke, MA 01040. Attendees should bring their own personal protective equipment.

Responses shall be submitted electronically to Jaime Morrow, Chief Procurement Officer, at morrowj@holyoke.org and are due on **June 11, 2026 at 2:00 PM (local time)**, based on the digital time stamp when received. Late applications will not be accepted. Responses submitted through any other means, such as mail or hand delivery, will not be accepted and will be rejected by the City as non-responsive.

The City intends to conduct interviews as early as the week of June 15, 2026 and select a consultant within 60 days of receipt of the RFQ responses. Work on the project must commence within 30 days of contract execution. The City reserves the right to reject any and all submissions, to waive any minor informalities and technicalities, or to cancel the solicitation if it is in the public interest to do so.

The City of Holyoke is an EEO/AA/MBE employer. Women and minority owned businesses are encouraged to apply. 05/15/2026

PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to notices@turley.com
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

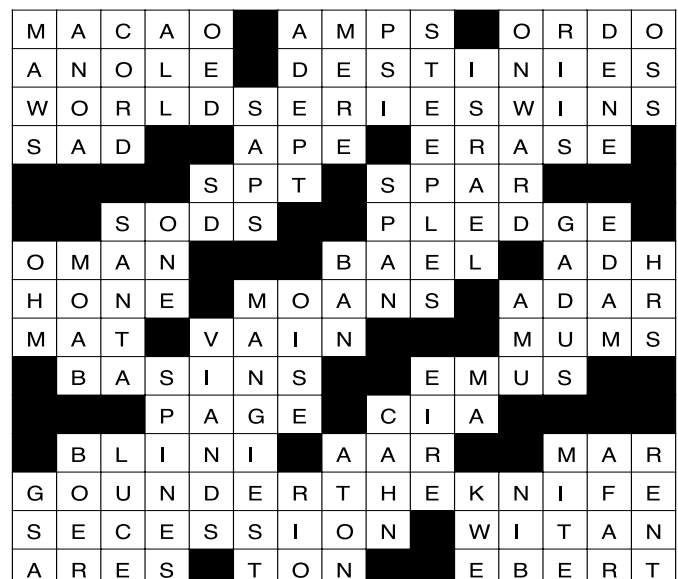
The Holyoke Sun
OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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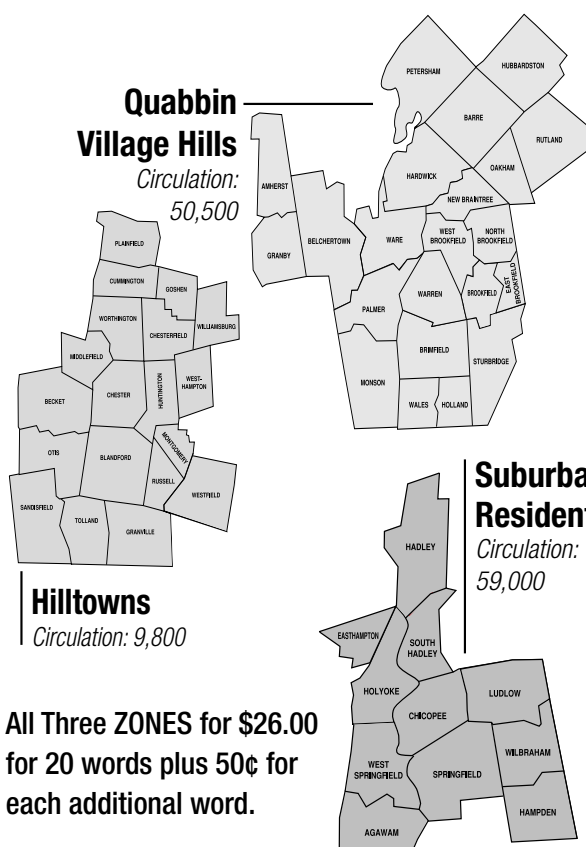
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Win a trip to Italy while supporting hospice patients

CHICOPEE - Local nonprofit Harmony House of Western Massachusetts invites the community to take a chance on winning a trip to Italy for two while supporting its mission and residents.

The nonprofit is selling tickets for \$100 per chance to win a guided trip for two to Italy, with several destinations, including Rome, Capri, and the Amalfi Coast, from October 10-20, 2026.

Only 250 chances will be sold and the prize package-valued at \$9,900-includes airfare, accommodations, transportation, meals, and a curated travel experience, making it a unique opportunity for community members to help care for their neighbors facing terminal illness. Profits from the raffle will directly support Harmony House's mission of providing a home with compassionate end-of-life care and companionship to hospice patients in need, regardless of their financial status or

any other circumstances.

This is the second year Harmony House has hosted the fundraiser. Last year's winners, Jerry and Marilyn, reflected on their experience, sharing, "You buy something like this and assume that it would just be a donation, but this was the trip of a lifetime! Great trip, brand new buses, guides were very knowledgeable, and the information session at Figaro's Restaurant before the trip was very informative."

Tickets are available for purchase now through Thursday, June 4, and the drawing will take place via Facebook Live on Friday, June 5. Visit HarmonyHouseWMA.org/ItalyRaffle for purchase options, trip itinerary, and terms and conditions. Tickets are also available for purchase at Figaro's Restaurant in Enfield, Pizza Lino in Chicopee, and the office of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Parish in Westfield.

Photo Group to host Malcolm-Brown on May 18

BELCHERTOWN - The Quabbin Photo Group (QuabbinPhotoGroup.com) will host a presentation by Western Massachusetts landscape photographer Jamie Malcolm-Brown on Monday, May 18 at 7 p.m. at the Belchertown Recreation Department, 66 State Street, located behind the Belchertown Police Station.

His presentation, "Weather, Light, and Luck: The Reality Behind the Shot," will offer an in-depth look at the decision-making process behind his images. Attendees will gain insight into how he scouts locations, uses tools such as PhotoPills, tracks weather patterns, and adapts when conditions change unexpectedly.

Rather than focusing solely on technical settings, Malcolm-Brown will emphasize the realities of fieldwork that include missed opportunities, shifting plans, and the importance of flexibility. The program will highlight how learning to pivot can lead to stronger, more compelling photographs that convey a sense of place and story.

"We're really looking forward to learning how Jamie puts together his incredible images," said QPG President Mark Lindhult. "He has an impressive ability to capture absolutely stellar images."



Submitted photo

A frost covered tree stump sits in the foreground as the sun began to rise on a cold November morning. It is one of many photos to be featured when Jamie Malcolm-Brown presents to the Quabbin Photo Group May 18.

You can see his photographs at www.jamiemalcolmbrown.com or on Instagram at @jamiemalcolmbrown.

Malcolm-Brown, a self-taught photographer with more than two decades of experience, works primarily throughout the Pioneer Valley, focusing on capturing wild places shaped by fog, storms, night skies, and other fleeting natural conditions. His professional work with Cultural

Survival, an Indigenous rights organization, informs his approach to land conservation and visual storytelling.

The event is open to photographers of all skill levels, as well as anyone interested in landscape photography and the natural beauty of the Quabbin region.

The Quabbin Photo Group (QuabbinPhotoGroup.com) is a community of photographers based in

Belchertown with a shared interest in nature, wildlife, and landscape photography, particularly within the Quabbin Reservoir region. The group hosts regular meetings, guest speakers, workshops, and field outings designed to help photographers of all experience levels improve their skills, share their work, and connect with others who appreciate the natural environment.

AWARD, from page 7

any player on the team this year, tallying 36 during a December away game, and shot a perfect 6 for 6 from three-point range during a February away game. Timmons was second on Holyoke in rebounds, bringing down 169, and was second in points per game, averaging 13.4.

Emily McGrail - Sophomore - Center / Forward - #17 2025-26 - Lady Cougars' Player Award 2024-25 - Honorable Mention All-New England, Lady Cougars' Most Valuable Player McGrail had an outstanding second year and career as a Lady Cougar, racking up blocks and rebounds throughout her two seasons.

McGrail was chosen as this year's Player Award recipient which is an award that goes to a player who truly exemplifies how a Cougar athlete should carry themselves both on and off the court. A classy young lady and an exceptional student, she was a tremendous teammate and leader. A remarkable defensive player, McGrail was an absolute

blocking machine, forcing opposing players to fear taking the ball to the paint to take shots. McGrail led the Cougars in blocks this season with 64 and last season with 80. She was fourth in NJCAA Division III this year in blocks per game, averaging 3.4 and far and away led the category last year, averaging 6.2 per game.



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