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Debate ongoing after mayor vetoes ballot question

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – On Tuesday, May 16, the city council made the decision to table the vote on whether or not the mayor has the ability to veto a ballot question for the November 2023 election.

The city council had initially voted in November 2022 to put a question on the November 2023 ballot asking voters whether the Community Preservation Act surcharge should be reduced from 1.5% to 1% or keep the surcharge the same.

Mayor Joshua Garcia then vetoed this decision in the hopes of getting the question on the 2024 presidential election ballot. Garcia believed that pushing the question until the 2024 election would allow for a higher voter turnout as it is a presidential/state election.

The city council then debated on whether or not the

See DEBATE, page 11

Holyoke Farmers' Market is open for the season



The Holyoke Farmers' Market is open Saturdays from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. from now until Oct. 28.

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Farmers' Market is back and open for residents who want to get some local fruits and vegetables, as well as supporting upcoming local businesses. The market is open from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. every Saturday until Oct. 28, and is located at Heritage State Park.

The market this year will have local farmers, local entrepreneurs, and fun activities for families to come and enjoy

including musical performances, a cardio class, and raffles.

"This season we expect a lot of fun activities to do outside with your family," Market Manager John Rivera said. "I know that the hip-hop cardio class is supposed to come back and give a zumba class outside. There will be live music, some food trucks, and little activities for kids to play."

The market will also have a variety of different local vendors present, including MJ's Donuts, D&R Farms, Autistic Azy, and Barra Native Skin Care.



The Farmers' Market is held at Heritage State Park.

Submitted photos

"There will be a few local farms, local entrepreneurs that are starting their journey in making products, and also some organizations that want to represent themselves and help people find help," Rivera said.

Holyoke Farmers' Market is one of the oldest farmers'

markets around, and Rivera looks forward to continuing this legacy.

"I'm working towards growing [the market] in every aspect," Rivera said. "I want it to have longevity and impor-

See MARKET, page 11

MOTHER GOOSE



A goose takes her young family for a swim at Ashley Reservoir.

Submitted photos

Fiscal 2024 budget heads for city council

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

HOLYOKE – The fiscal 2024 budget has been submitted to Holyoke City Council following his State of City speech last Tuesday evening.

The mayor has submitted a sizeable increase in the city's budget from fiscal 2023, a \$186,850,327. The submission is a 3.7% increase, or \$6,378,421 more than last year's spending.

The Holyoke Public Schools are the main reason for the large increase in the overall budget while Mayor Joshua Garcia reduced spending in some areas.

The school budget is increasing by nearly \$8 million, going from \$83.6 million to about \$91.6 million.

The mayor is increasing public safety and general government spending, while there are reductions in public works, employee benefits, and debt

service, according to the general budget worksheet Garcia submitted.

The worksheet shows "other financing uses" of about \$2.3 million coming off the books. According to Garcia, his budget is balanced despite lower expectations for local receipts. Garcia is projecting a \$7.16 million increase in state aid, which includes Chapter 70 school funding and Chapter 90 highway funding.

He plans to increase the overall property tax levy by about \$2.8 million, a nearly 5% increase.

Garcia says his budget shows moderate local growth, but has conservative estimates. He also said his budget will not require a Proposition 2 1/2 override.

"The proposed budget includes moderate revenue increases in net local revenue growth however these estimates remain conservative to help continue to mitigate any circumstances that

contribute toward uncertainty," Garcia said. "In addition to this, it's important to note we are using ARPA revenue replacement funds as a maneuvering tactic while our financial team continues to work toward leveraging new sources of revenue and getting a grasp of our full revenue potential. The budget does not propose a Proposition 2 1/2 Override or any reduction in services. The budget I am presenting also leaves on the table a surplus of \$1,205,490 from the levy limit."

Garcia made a number of smaller cuts throughout the budget in order to balance it. He also, in his remarks, which can be found on the city's website, warns of a looming situation with the city's sewer budget.

"I want to bring to our community's attention the need to act soon to address the sewer enterprise deficit," Garcia said. "The sewer enterprise fund is currently being audited by an outside CPA thanks to the support of the City Council. We

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Mayor
Joshua Garcia

In The News

STEM Beats perform for UMass music education class

HOLYOKE – Student STEM Beat musicians recently performed for an undergraduate music education class at UMass Amherst—which included teaching college students how to perform a section of one of their original musical arrangements.

“Not only did our students perform, they also spoke about our program, answered students’ and professors’ questions, and had a chance to ask the undergraduate students questions about being a music education major at UMass,” said Holyoke STEM music teacher Aaron Di Pilla. “The professors and students were blown away by their skills.”

While at UMass, the STEM Beats performers toured the campus and

enjoyed a meal in a UMass dining hall. “This was a win-win for all involved,” Mr. Di Pilla said. “Our students were able to picture themselves being college students, and they were humbled with compliments on their skills. It also gave us the opportunity to represent Holyoke and recruit future teachers. We already have a number of UMass students from the class reaching out to inquire about opportunities to do classroom observations and about potential student-teacher placements.”

The next STEM Beats concert is scheduled for 5 p.m. on Wednesday, June 7 at the Holyoke STEM Academy, 1045 Main Street. Students will be performing their classics, past and present. Admission is free.

Enrollment now open for Extended School Year program

HOLYOKE – Eligible students with IEPs in grades preK-12+ can now register for the 2023 Extended School Year (ESY) Program, which provides a range of special education learning opportunities.

If you are unsure if your child qualifies for ESY programming, you can check your child’s current IEP or ask your child’s special education teacher or building team leader. You may send an email to Enrollment for assistance with online registration. You may send an Email to Jill Hughes for more information about extended year services.

ESY programs will begin on July 10 and will end on August 3, 2023. All programs are scheduled to take place

in-person. HPS will follow all state and local guidelines for social distancing and/or other precautions that may be required over the summer.

Based on their IEPs, students may qualify for one of these programs:

- Early Childhood Integrated Program (Donahue): Ages 3-5
- ABA Program (Donahue): PK-12
- RISE/SHINE Program (Donahue): Rising K-12
- Excelsior Program at Jericho: Rising 1-12
- Therapeutic Intervention Program Lawrence: Rising K-8
- Transitions Academy: Ages 18-22

More information is available on the HPS website.

Roundtable session to address drug abuse prevention

HOLYOKE — The city of Holyoke plans to use a recently approved \$100,000 from Cannabis Impact Fees to support substance abuse prevention programs in the city. A roundtable discussion with service providers to set program parameters will be held Tuesday, May 30, at 5 p.m. at the City Hall Annex Conference Room, 4th floor and via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88239226285> - Meeting ID: 882 3922 6285.

With support from the Citizens Cannabis Review Committee, the Holyoke City Council, Mayor Joshua A. Garcia, and the Office of Planning and Economic Development (OPED),

the roundtable with service providers from the public health and substance abuse prevention sectors will discuss the best way to use the funds and to craft a Request for Proposals (RFP).

The Review Committee, along with the Board of Health and OPED staff, will evaluate submitted RFPs and award funding to projects deemed most impactful. All service providers are invited to join the roundtable discussion to educate the Review Committee regarding ongoing efforts to address substance abuse.

With a lack of updated drug education and afterschool programs for youth, it is important to educate the public on the risks of drug, alcohol, and tobacco

use. Further, since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the rates of underage drug and alcohol abuse have increased dramatically and the need for these resources is greater than ever.

The community of Holyoke, like many others, faces daunting challenges of homelessness, mental health problems, and substance abuse issues. This funding will help support the work of community agencies engaged in supporting and helping individuals facing these crises.

Interested organizations, and/or for more information, contact OPED Director Aaron Vega, at vegaa@holyoke.org to reserve a seat at the roundtable.

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.

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.

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PROJECT BREAD



'Together HCC' 1-day giving campaign shatters record

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Community College Foundation shattered its annual "Together HCC" one-day giving campaign record in 2023, raising \$251,859 in 24 hours for HCC scholarships and student-support programs.

Alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of the college led a historic day of giving on April 25 during the third annual "Together HCC: Drive to Change Lives" campaign.

Organizers had set a goal of 400 donors for the one-day fund drive. The final tally was 506. Last year, the Together HCC campaign raised \$192,000 from 418 donors, itself a record.

"For the third straight year, the Together HCC campaign has exceeded expectations as our network of alumni, faculty, staff, and friends continue to show how much they care about HCC students," said Julie Phillips, HCC's interim director of Development. "With so many people giving what they can, it shows our students that we are invested in their success."

HCC alumni made up the majority of donors at 43 percent, followed by HCC faculty and staff at 27 percent, with 18 percent from friends of the college, 5 percent from parents, and 4 percent from students. Donors gave from as far away as California and Hawaii.

Together they unlocked more than

\$140,000 in challenge pledges.

One of those came from campaign partner Gary Rome, owner of Gary Rome Hyundai in Holyoke and Gary Rome Kia in Enfield, Conn., who donated \$5,000.

"I am thrilled to celebrate yet another successful year of partnering with HCC for its 'Together HCC: Drive to Change Lives' campaign," said Rome. "It is truly remarkable to witness the generosity of our community as we come together to ensure that a college education remains accessible to all. I hope my example encourages others to help build a stronger community."

HCC alum Arien Monti, who graduated in 2022 with her associate's degree

in marketing and business administration, said a scholarship from the HCC Foundation and a stipend from the President's Student Emergency Fund were critical to her success at HCC.

"The student emergency fund helped with one month's rent after my son and I had been homeless when I was a new student and rebuilding my life," said Monti, who lives in West Springfield. "I am graduating this fall with my bachelor's degree and am building my career in marketing and real estate thanks to HCC and the many alumni and friends who support students like me."

Anyone who missed this year's day of giving and still wants to contribute can do so at hcc.edu/drive.

HCC lands grant to create free human services internship program

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College has landed a \$1.28 million grant to launch a free new certificate and internship program intended to help address a shortage of workers in the human services industry.

The grant, from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health & Human Services, will cover the full cost of tuition, fees, books, and supplies for students who want to earn a certificate in human services coupled with a paid internship at one of four local social service agencies.

Partnering with HCC on the grant are the Gandara Center, ServiceNet, Mental Health Association, and Jewish Family Services.

"This program is really meant to accelerate a student's entry into the workforce," said Donna Rowe, chair of HCC's Human Services program. "It's wonderful that these four agencies have made this agreement with us. They're looking for workers, and we have students looking to get into the field."

The two-semester Social Service Internship Program will begin in the

2023-2024 academic year, with up to 30 students starting this fall and another 30 next spring. Recruiting for those two classes is now underway.

The human services industry presents a wide variety of career options for people who are interested in providing care to children, seniors, adolescents, the homeless, or individuals dealing with substance abuse or mental health issues.

"This is a great opportunity for students to get into this field, get their academic and their learning experiences with us and then have a placement with a community agency that could end up as a full-time paid position after their internship," Rowe said. "Plus, their tuition and books and everything else is paid for. That's huge."

The total savings on attendance is estimated to be \$5,384 per semester for full-time students. During their second-semester internship, students will receive a stipend of \$2,500, which equates to roughly \$20 an hour for 10 hours a week.

A 2018 report from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission detailed a

gap of some 600 social/human service workers in western Massachusetts, a deficit that has only widened due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"There is definitely a big shortage of human service workers," said Amy Brandt, HCC dean of Health Sciences, "and it's a challenge for agencies who have a variety of workers at different levels. They don't have a lot of additional resources to develop that talent pool. They really are on shoestring budgets trying to provide services to the community. When you look at this grant, it's a huge investment that can really help fill their needs."

The HCC Social Service Internship Program is modeled after other successful, grant-funded certificate/internship programs HCC has developed in the areas of community health and engineering.

Additionally, the grant provides for the creation of two new full-time positions, a human services certificate coordinator to focus on recruiting, planning, and academic support, and a social-services coordinator to coordinate the internships

and help students with any non-academic issues that might interfere with their education.

"A lot of community college students have complicated lives that impact their success in school, for instance they might be at risk of having their power turned off or they are facing housing insecurity or childcare issues," said Brandt. "The social services coordinator is there to be somewhat of a case manager, to help students find the resources at the college or in the community they need so they can remain successful in the program."

The 24-credit human services certificate students earn can also be "stacked" or applied toward an associate degree in human services, which could then lead to a bachelor's degree in social work.

"The program really has the potential to set students up for lifelong learning and career advancement," said Brandt. "and it's also helping these social service agencies meet their needs."

For more information or to complete a general interest form, please go to: hcc.edu/hsv-grant.

Dual Language Program is accepting lottery applications for 2023-24

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Public Schools' dual language program is right for all students, including students who are English dominant, Spanish dominant, already bilingual, not exposed to either language, on an IEP, or not on an IEP. Families who are considering enrolling their children in the program are encouraged to apply as soon as possible for the admissions lottery. (Note: If your child is already enrolled in the Dual Language program or if you previously applied for this year's lotteries, you do not need to fill out another application.)

Rolling admission opens on July 22 and is open to all students across the district, including those who have been placed on a wait list from Rounds 1 or 2.

HPS strives to accept an equal balance of students who are Spanish-

dominant speakers, English-dominant speakers, and bilingual speakers, based on the following requirements:

- Students entering preschool must be 4 years old on or before Sept. 1, 2023.
- All students applying for grades 2 and up will need to be evaluated to determine their verbal, written, and reading level in Spanish. Those students must meet the Spanish language criteria for the grade they are applying to in order to be accepted into that grade.

For the 2023-24 school year, E.N. White School will offer dual language for grades PreK-5, while Kelly School will provide dual language for grades PreK-3. Sullivan Middle School will continue to host the middle school pathway, and Holyoke High School North will host the high school pathway.

Residents challenged to do 22 push-ups on Memorial Day

HOLYOKE — This Memorial Day, the city's Patriotic Events Committee challenges you to complete 22 push-ups.

The 22 push-up challenge is done to promote awareness around veteran suicide and mental health struggles in recognition of the sobering statistic that 22 military veterans in the United States take their lives each day.

Any reason to honor veterans is a good one, according to Jesus Pereira, Holyoke's Director of Veterans' Services.


"We hope you will join us at the War Memorial, 310 Appleton Street,

on Monday, May 29, to celebrate Memorial Day. The 22 push-up challenge will be at 9:30 a.m. followed by complimentary donuts and coffee. Our Memorial Day program will begin promptly at 10 a.m."


The Patriotic Events Committee encourages anyone and everyone to partake in this event. They hope to see participation by some of Holyoke's city leaders who will be speaking at our event: Mayor Joshua A. Garcia, Police Captain Matthew Moriarty, City Council President Todd McGee, State Senator John Velis and State Representative Patricia Duffy.

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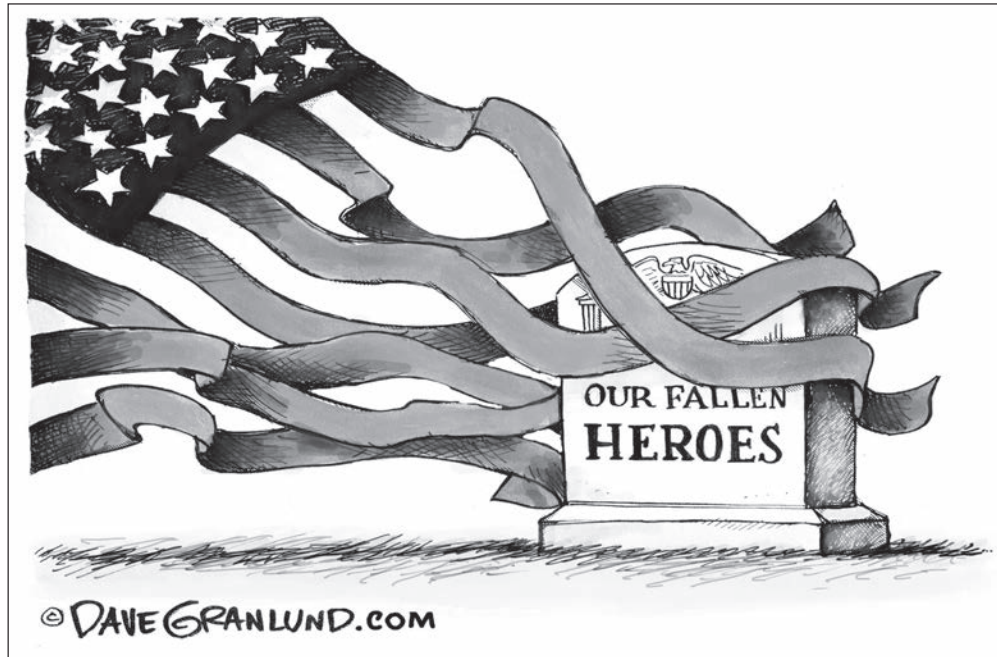
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Poetry Corner

Sun - Serve You Noble

By Thomas J. Kennedy

*Fox - Forever over-pox . . .
Caring sharing.
Sun - Son masker raid-in.
Like to play games - Hide and seek
Or little ones - Peek a boo!
Just jovial - Have a GOoD day.
Peace and love - Grace and compassion.
Tonight only intercession - no recession
Or depression - Jesu mind met . . .
Go forward - Holy Family in sight.
No fear - anxiety Joy soonight.
Peace, Love and Joy . . . No you (you)!*



Guest Column

Senior concerned about Social Security solvency



Dear Rusty:

I retired at age 58. My husband and I worked 40 years of employment each. I had a 401K only...no other benefits. We saved, we invested through our financial advisor and have done okay watching our investments grow (except for the last three years). Neither my husband nor I have taken Social Security; we were both waiting until age 70 to get full benefits. Do you think this is still wise? I'm concerned there will not be any funds in five years when we both turn 70.

Signed: Concerned Senior

Dear Concerned Senior:

Your question relates to Social Security solvency, no doubt inspired by the recent spate of media discussion on this topic. Most articles I've read promote a "doomsday" scenario and, in fairness, Social Security's financial issues are serious. The latest report from the Trustees of Social Security warned Congress that the reserves now held in Social Security's Trust Fund, which enable full benefits to be paid, will be depleted as early as 2033. What you may not know is that this is not new news – the Trustees have sounded the same warning for decades to multiple Congresses, which have neglected to enact corrective measures.

And, unfortunately, they are likely to continue to drag their feet for a while because the reform needed is not politically palatable and the impact is still a few years away.

Nevertheless, although Social Security's looming financial issues are serious, they are not fatal. Congress already knows how to fix Social Security's financial issues – they just currently lack the bipartisan spirit and political will needed to do so. The clock, however, is ticking and Congress will be forced to act soon, which we are confident will happen before the Trust Funds run dry. What motivates most politicians is getting reelected and allowing an across the board cut to all Social Security recipients, which would happen if the Trust Fund reserves were depleted, would be political suicide. Therefore, I'm confident that reform will occur in time, and I don't suggest changing your Social Security claiming strategy over worries about Social Security's solvency.

Let me further allay your fears by explaining what would hypothetically happen in the worst case scenario, if Congress doesn't act and Trust Funds are depleted. If that were to occur, when the reserves are depleted in about 2033, everyone would face an across the board benefit cut. Social Security can't go bankrupt because there would still be about 175 million workers contributing to the program but, since Social Security by law can only pay benefits from revenue received, everyone's benefit would be reduced by about 23%, according to the Trustees. Every beneficiary would still get benefits, but only to the extent available

from income received. Which brings me to your specific question – whether it is still wise to wait until age 70 to claim or to claim your benefits now.

Ask yourself this question: which would result in a larger monthly payment, a 23% cut to your age 70 S.S. payment amount or a 23% cut to your current benefit amount? The answer, of course, is that your monthly payment would be more if you stay with your current strategy and wait until age 70 to claim a plan, which I assume you developed considering your current financial needs as well as your life expectancy, both of which are very important to that decision.

Again, I do not believe the worst case scenario will happen. Congress already knows how to restore Social Security to full solvency and they will almost certainly act in time to avoid an across the board cut to everyone's benefit. The Association of Mature American Citizens has proposed legislation which would restore the Social Security program to full solvency for generations without raising payroll taxes, a summary of which people can review by visiting www.amac.us/social-security. AMAC has provided this proposal to various members of Congress for consideration.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature American Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security

See SECURITY, page 5

The dialogue of democracy needs tending



There are so many things I worry about these days. Are we going to default on our debts? Can we adapt to the accumulating impact of climate change? How are we going to handle the dangers posed by China and Russia?

But bigger than all of those is this: Can we as a nation confront those challenges by arriving, together, at reasonable solutions? Or to put it another way, do we even know any more how to carry on a public dialogue about the issues we face and how to resolve them?

Because I worry – a lot – that we're losing our ability to engage in the reasoned dialogue that democracy demands of us. The evidence surrounds us: the hot-tempered dogmatism that's rampant on social media, the take-no-prisoners rhetoric of cable commentators, the shallow political debate carried on by everyone from pundits trying to gin up an audience to politicians who should know better, the widespread impatience with others' view-

points, the shrill and even offensive language that permeates public debate – you know the problem as well as I do.

And it is a problem.

If Americans lose faith that our democracy is up to the task of addressing our challenges because we're incapable of holding a discussion that isn't distorted by spin, misleading studies, grassroots manipulation, untrustworthy media and political leaders who wouldn't publicly recognize a fact if it smacked them in the forehead, then the travails of the last few years will seem like a cakewalk.

So, I have some suggestions. Because in the end, if we want the quality of public dialogue to improve, then it's up to us to improve it – and then let our political leaders know that we expect more than political posturing that produces inadequate solutions to difficult problems.

Living in a democracy takes work, and that applies to all of us, from voters who cast their ballot every few years to neighbors who roll up their sleeves and try to improve their communities to elected officials whose job it is to decide the course of their town or state or country.

Here are basic principles we need to keep in mind:

Don't fear differences or dissent. They're inevitable, and they are vital to looking at chal-

lenges from all sides.

Advocacy and even conflict have their place in a democracy, but in the end, we resolve differences and break gridlock through discussion and deliberation.

Which means that the goal is not to highlight or inflame our political differences, but to resolve and reconcile them. The highest good should be to search for compromise, where everyone is at least a partial winner.

Remember that political differences may be stark, but that doesn't mean they're irreconcilable.

Focus on facts. They're the starting point for level headed debate and effective policy. As citizens, it's our job to find trustworthy sources of information, question our own biases, and discern when we're being misled; as politicians, to strive always to seek the truth about the facts.

View one another as neighbors, fellow community members or colleagues who all want the same thing: what's best for our country and for where we live. Find common ground and build trust from there.

It is always worth the time to understand others' viewpoints – and to talk. You may not just find common ground, but ways to improve your own ideas. And when you do search for

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



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A Quote

OF NOTE

"It is often the small steps, not the giant leaps that bring about the most lasting change."

Queen Elizabeth II

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.

Dazed for dahlias



Do you ever get sidetracked? Well, last night I went into my mudroom to assess my dahlia collection in preparation for planting. Besides housing baskets and buckets of dahlia tubers, the mudroom contains a wood box, lots of coats and shoes, and when the temperatures dip into the negative realm, it may house a chicken or two.

Our big, upright freezer is also in the mudroom. Why were the floorboards in front of the door wet?

Upon inspection, the freezer wasn't at temperature and the contents had partially thawed. Just what I needed on a Saturday night.

After the mess was cleaned up and what could be salvaged was, I rewarded myself with some alone-time with my dahlias.

I chuckle when I think that the last time I wrote about dahlias I had four varieties. I'm at 10 in two short years - oops, make that 11 after the tuber I purchased at the plant sale yesterday.

It's hard not to become a collector when they come in so very many flower

types and sizes, from a mere couple of inches to the size of a dinner plate.

Read on for a refresher course on dahlia growing, and if you become inspired to purchase a tuber or two, rest easy with the cost; you'll be giving the offspring away before you know it!

Plant dahlias in full sun, in fertile soil amended sparingly with compost and organic fertilizers. Most tubers are planted about 3 inches deep and 1-3 feet away from one another, depending on plant size. Providing enough air circulation between plants will help keep diseases at bay.

Most gardeners install a stake at planting time and attach the dahlia to it as it grows, beginning when it is a foot tall. Subsequent ties are made every 18 inches or so depending on variety. Without the use of stakes, large flowers will likely topple in the wind and rain, sometimes taking a good portion of the plant with it.

Pinching dahlias is another good practice. When the plant has three sets of leaves gently remove its growth tip.

This will encourage more branching and inevitably more flowers. Once blooming starts it is important to cut away spent blooms on a regular basis; tubers will grow stronger because of it.

Dahlias thrive on sufficient moisture, especially since they are shallow rooted. Furnish them with one inch per week during active growth.

As the growing season draws to a

close, hold back on water and any supplemental fertilization you have been providing. This will give the tubers a chance to harden off before they are removed from the ground.

Dig up dahlia tubers either just prior to or soon after frost hits. Leave a small portion of stem attached to the tubers - it is a great place to adhere a label.

Take it from me - it is easy to forget a name over the winter months!

Soil should be eased off the tubers with a spray of water before placing in storage. Choose a location to overwinter your tubers that maintain 40-50 degrees temps and 90% humidity.

These conditions will keep them dormant and healthy until it is time to replant. Many people have good luck using a cold basement or root cellar; small quantities of tubers can be stored in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator.

Placing tubers in damp peat moss, saw dust, shredded leaves, or even ventilated plastic bags will help to prevent shriveling. Be sure to check on your tubers every couple of weeks throughout the offseason.

Should you see shriveling, mist them with clean water and re-dampen the medium in which they were placed. If you see mold, bring down the temperature and humidity level.

Some dahlias like to get a jump-start on the season by prestarting dahlias indoors.



Dahlias

We have done this occasionally at Old Sturbridge Village and I am always amazed at just how fast the plants grow, and how quickly they outgrow their pots and become leggy. If you attempt it, four weeks prior to the last spring frost would be soon enough.

It's my hope that you will venture into the land of dahlia growing and love it as much as I do!

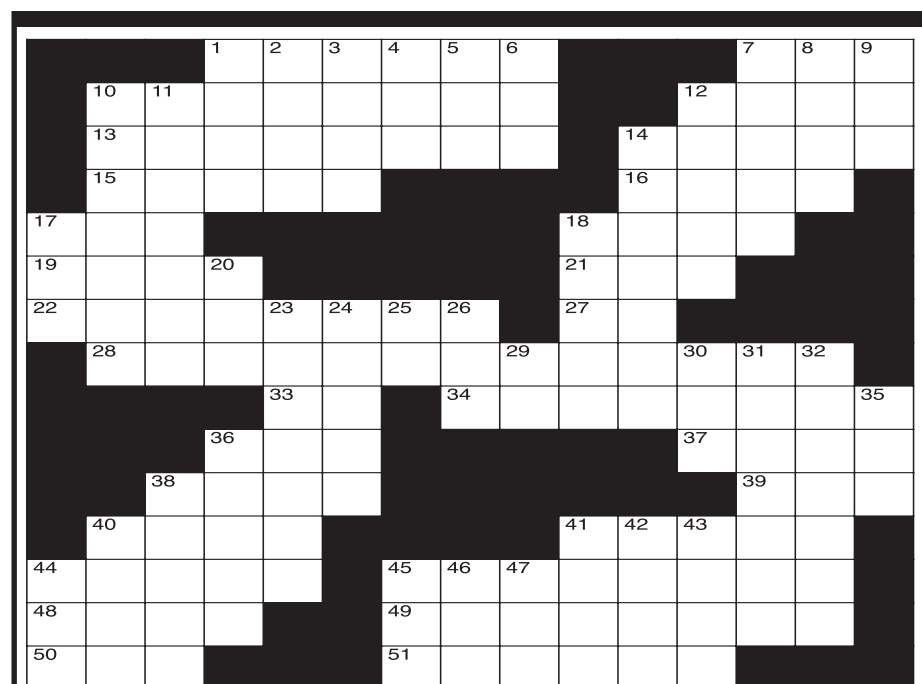
Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with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

SECURITY, from page 4

Association. NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental

entity. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisory@amacfoundation.org.

Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Wear away by friction
- 7. Insecticide
- 10. Elicited a secret vote
- 12. Beef
- 13. Disagreement
- 14. ___ Crawford, supermodel
- 15. Jeweled headdress
- 16. Digits
- 17. Trillion hertz
- 18. Snap up
- 19. Classical portico
- 21. Residue after burning
- 22. Large integers
- 27. Free agent
- 28. Where ballplayers work
- 33. Blood type
- 34. Scottish city
- 36. Google certification (abbr.)

- 37. Serbian monetary unit
- 38. Make a sudden surprise attack on
- 39. Wood or metal bolt
- 40. Relaxing attire
- 41. Famed neurologist
- 44. Dullish brown fabrics
- 45. Member of ancient Jewish sect
- 48. Griffith, Rooney
- 49. Lawmakers
- 50. Government lawyers
- 51. The arch of the foot

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Nonflowering aquatic plant
- 2. Britpop rockers
- 3. National capital

- 4. Consumed
- 5. The habitat of wild animals
- 6. Sun up in New York
- 7. Cygnus star
- 8. Male parents
- 9. Talk to you (abbr.)
- 10. A place to clean oneself
- 11. Southwestern US state
- 12. South Korean idol singer
- 14. Pirate
- 17. Pituitary hormone (abbr.)
- 18. Mistake
- 20. Promotions
- 23. Prepares
- 24. Partner to flowed
- 25. State lawyer
- 26. Patti Hearst's captors
- 29. Pound
- 30. Electronic data processing
- 31. Sports player
- 32. Treats with contempt
- 35. Apprehend
- 36. Excessively talkative
- 38. Highways
- 40. Ribosomal ribonucleic acid
- 41. College organization for males
- 42. Any customary observance or practice
- 43. Employee stock ownership plan
- 44. Male parent
- 45. The 23rd letter of the Greek alphabet
- 46. Female bird
- 47. Autonomic nervous system

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 9

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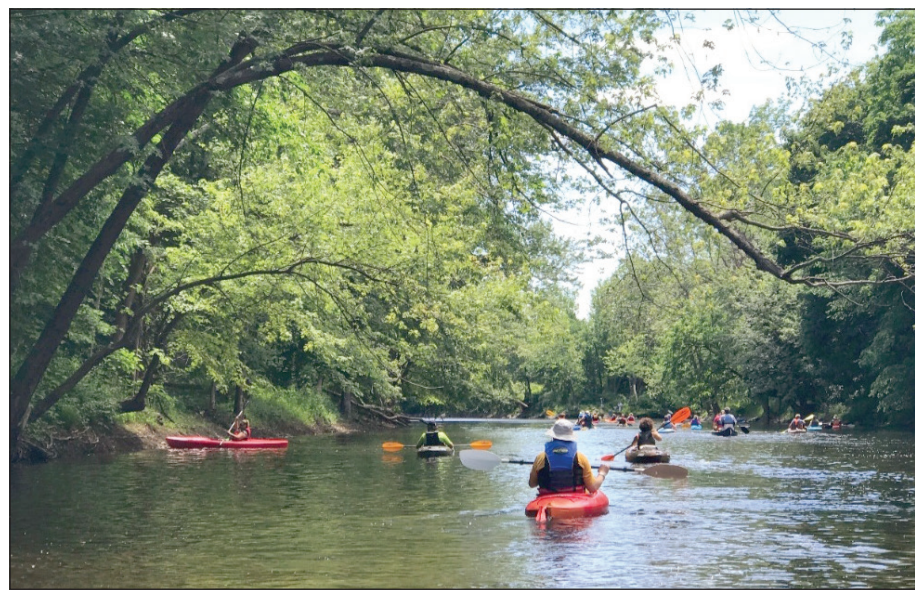
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Six-mile paddle cruise on Westfield River on June 3

WESTFIELD – Paddlers on Saturday, June 3 will be treated to unique vistas of the Westfield River at the annual Westfield River Watershed Association Canoe and Kayak Cruise. This leisurely six-mile paddle from the Great River Bridge in Westfield to Robinson State Park in Agawam reveals a river so special that parts of it are designated Wild & Scenic by the US Congress. Members of the Association lead the group through the lower watershed past former industrial sites and restored riparian areas that are once again teaming with fish and wildlife. Bald eagles, blue herons, beavers, otters, red tailed hawks and snapping turtles are likely to be seen. The event begins at 9 a.m. at the corner of Meadow and Elm Streets in Westfield and concludes at approximately 2 p.m. in Robinson State Park in Agawam.

“This family-friendly on water event began in 1997 with the Watershed Association wanting to get more people to appreciate the natural beauty of the Westfield River,” says Brian Conz, a WRWA Board member and professor of geography at Westfield State University. “Each year there is great excitement as people get a view of the river so removed from urban life yet inherently a part of it. The route takes paddlers through some of the riverine wilds hidden just out of



Participants from the Westfield River Watershed Association's Canoe and Kayak Cruise paddling six miles down the scenic Westfield River to Robinson State Park. Submitted photo

sight from some main roads and neighborhoods, revealing the critical habitat for many of our local species.”

“The story of the Westfield River Watershed is one of renewal,” Conz continues. “The organization was founded in 1952 by a coalition of concerned citizens in Westfield and the Hilltowns. They were aware of the pollution from the mills, but as those factories shut down

saw great promise from environmental restoration and recreation. We're proud of how early people in our area were stepping up to support river health. You have to remember that the sweeping and monumental Clean Water Act was not passed until 1972.”

The Westfield River Watershed Canoe & Kayak Cruise is suitable for novice paddlers who welcome the added support of navigating the river in a group. Children under 14 are welcome if they are paddling with an adult. Unlike the Westfield River Wildwater Races, which the organization is the present-ing sponsor of, there is no whitewater. “For anyone interested in building up to

the Wildwater Races, which take place upriver starting in Huntington, this is a chance to expand your knowledge and experience,” says Brian Conz. “There will be some experienced paddlers participating in the Cruise and they will share their knowledge of the river and paddling in general.”

Participants need to bring their own canoe or kayak, paddles and personal flotation devices, as well as sunscreen and drinking water. Organizers recommend that participants have some experience paddling, given that river conditions may be unpredictable. Children under 18 must be supervised by a parent or guardian. Children under 14 must paddle in the same boat as an adult. Other suggestions for what to bring include a picnic for a late lunch once you reach Robinson State Park and snacks for munching along the way. A shuttle will carry paddlers to the start so that they can leave their vehicles at the finish.

The participation fee of \$15 per person (\$10 for members) helps cover shuttle service, insurance and light refreshments. Registration begins at 9 a.m. in the municipal parking lot off Meadow Street near the Great River Bridge in Westfield. Participants will register, unload boats and gear, drive their vehicles to Robinson State Park and return by shuttle to the launch area. Staggered Cruise departures will begin around 10 a.m.

Low or high water conditions or severe weather may require cancellation of the event. Please like our Facebook page and check it for notifications or visit www.westfieldriver.org.

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NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

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Jeduar Colon Lanausse bumps for the Knights.

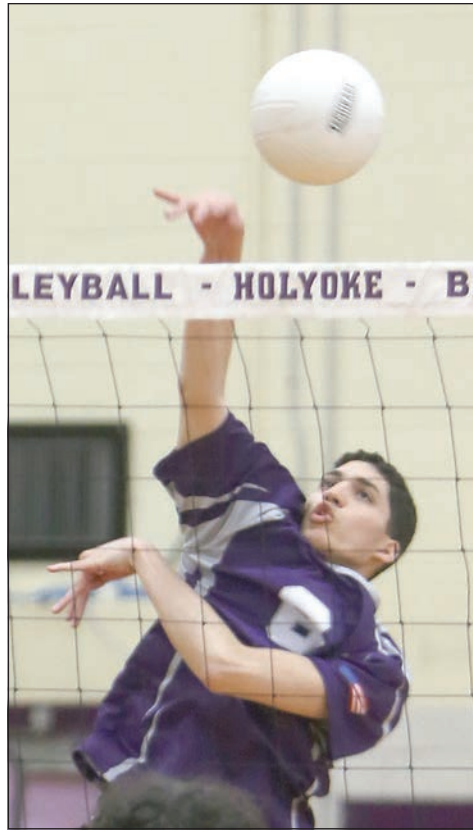


Nelson Figueroa goes low to keep the ball in play.
Photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Volleyball set for state tournament

HOLYOKE – The High School boys volleyball team has qualified for the Division 2 state tournament.

The Knights headed into the final week of the season with a 10-7 record, but the Knights also rank in the top 32 teams in the state. The state playoffs are expected to begin next week.



Willie Lopez Morales goes for an emphatic spike.

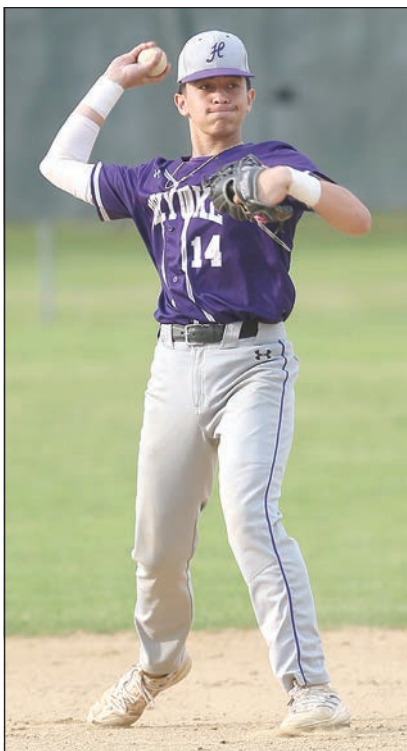


Gedeon Ortiz-Torres sends a high hit back over the net.

Knights baseball edged by Brownies

HOLYOKE – Last Monday afternoon, Holyoke and Agawam played a close game, with the Knights falling short 7-5. In the defeated, Braeden

Lamirande had two hits and two RBI for the Knights while Raul Lopez had two runs scored. Holyoke is 7-12 and did not qualify for the state tournament this year.



Nathan Pok fires to first for an out.
Photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Darwin Jiminez squares up first base and makes a throw.



Anibal Diaz Ofray slides into second.



Yomar Rodriguez Calderon pitches for Holyoke.



Justin Rivera scoops one out of the dirt.

Western Mass. Pioneers open regular campaign with win

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW – Alec Hughes scored ten goals for the UMass men’s soccer team as a junior. The forward has netted almost half that many goals in the Western Mass. Pioneers first two regular season matches.

Hughes scored a pair of goals in the season opening shutout victory at the Boston Bolts on May 16. He added two more goals to his stat sheet in the home opener, as the Pioneers celebrated a 3-0 win over Pathfinder FC on a miserable, rainy night at Lusitano Stadium last Saturday.

“I had never played a match at this stadium before last week’s friendly, so scoring two goals in the home opener is very special for me,” said Hughes, who’s from Glastonbury, Connecticut. “Despite the rain, we still had a very good crowd here tonight. I can’t wait to see the atmosphere at this stadium on a nice night. I just want to do anything that I can to help me team win.”

Ben Brewster, who’s the associate head coach of the UMass men’s soccer team, recommended Hughes to Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. Brewster, who’s a former Pioneers player, also coaches the club’s USL Academy boys’ team.

“I was very impressed with Alec when I watched him play for UMass last year,” Molinari said. “He’s a key player for us, but we need everyone to contribute in order to have a successful team.”

Hughes, who played for Hartford City a year ago, thinks playing for the Pioneers will help him prepare for his senior season at UMass.

“We have several players from several different countries on this team,” Hughes added. “It’s also a little bit higher level than the Hartford team that I played for last summer.”

The Pioneers, who are looking to qualify for the USL League Two playoffs for the fourth time since 2019, had several scoring chances during the first 45 minutes, but the contest was still scoreless at halftime.

“It was a little bit frustrating not scoring any goals during the first half,” said Hughes, one of the first-year players listed on the Pioneers roster. “We had some good scoring opportunities, but we finally scored in the second half.”

A little more than ten minutes into the opening half, Western Mass. midfielder Khalid Rose sent a pass into the box from the right side. A shot attempt from Tomas Duben, who’s also a forward, was deflected away by Pathfinder FC goal-



Goalie Gianluca Cerosimo kicks the ball away. keeper Eirik Elvestad, who made the diving save.

Hughes also had a couple of headers during the first twenty minutes, but they either sailed wide or were saved by Elvestad, who finished the match with a total of five saves.

Pathfinder FC, who played their first match of the season, are from the Poughkeepsie, New York area.

Down at the other end of the field, first-year Western Mass. starting goalie Gianluca Cerosimo didn’t see very much action on the rainy and windy night.

Cerosimo, who was a grad student on the L.I.U men’s soccer team last fall, made a kick save late in the first half. It wound up being his only save of the match.

Cerosimo received plenty of support from his defense, which was led by Rodrigo Saraiva de Castro, Gabriel Pacheco, Jared Smith, and Nicholas Obberauch, who’s the Pioneers captain.

Connor Hicks, who helped the Monson boys’ varsity soccer team win two state titles and three Western Mass. titles during his memorable high school career, is another Pioneers defender. After sitting out the season opening match with an injury, Hicks entered last Saturday’s contest during the second half.

Another Monson resident listed on the Pioneers roster is Jonathan Murphy, who’ll be a junior on the Boston College men’s soccer team in the fall. Frankie D’Agostino, who’s also a former Pioneers player, is the Eagles associate head coach.

Ten minutes into the second half, a shot attempt from Pioneers forward Augustine Boadi deflected off the far post.

Another shot by Hughes was saved by Elvestad.

The home team finally gave their



Alec Hughest runs up for free kick.



Nicholas Obberauch gets the throw-in.
Photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

faithful supporters something to cheer about during the 67th minute. Rose was tripped up in the box by a Pathfinder defender resulting in a penalty kick.

Hughes stepped up to the line and blasted a shot into the back of the net giving his team a 1-0 lead.

“I just booted the ball as hard as I could down the middle into the back of the net. It’s always a good feeling whenever you score a goal and your teammates are happy for you,” Hughes said. “I also made a P.K. at UMass last year at Central Connecticut.”

The Pioneers took a 2-0 lead six minutes later.

After receiving a pass from Rose, Boadi fired a low shot that skipped on the



Rodrigo Saraiva de Castro sends a quick touch away.

wet turf into the right corner of the net.

Rose, who’s one of the Pioneers elder statesmen, was also credited with the assist on the second goal scored by Hughes during the 77th minute.

“The rain made it very difficult to see, so it was nice to score those three goals in the second half,” Rose said. “We didn’t have very many fans here tonight, but you could still hear them on the field. It’s always an amazing feeling whenever we win a match at this stadium.”

The Pioneers are scheduled to play a couple of road matches before returning to the friendly confines of Lusitano Stadium to face Black Rock FC at 7 p.m. on June 3.

Registration open for 2023 Bay State 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@bay-stategames.org or call 781-932-6555.

Blue Sox in need of host families

HOLYOKE – The Valley Blue Sox is still searching for a few host families for the 2023 season.

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

In return, 2023 volunteer host families will receive:

- Free general admission to all Valley Blue Sox home and away games
- Food vouchers for every home game
- Transportation and ticket free to the Boston Red Sox game on June 12
- Free clinics for any household member ages 6-13
- Special Host Family recognition event
- 40% discount on all merchandise
- Season-long access to our live-game radio
- Access to our fan bus to an away game to be determined

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

Justin Bonsignore gets the checkered flag at Riverhead

RIVERHEAD, N.Y. – A classic short-track battle between two of the veterans of the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour ended with Justin Bonsignore's 10th career Riverhead Raceway win on Sunday afternoon in the Buzz Chew 200. Bonsignore started from the top spot after scoring his 25th career pole in qualifying and ran second for much of the race, but was able to roll the outside lane by Ron Silk on a late restart to get back to Victory Lane.

Silk led much of the race – but a caution late stacked the field up and gave Bonsignore another shot. The two battled side-by-side, beating and banging during a short-track battle in New York. Off turn four, Bonsignore was sideways on the outside lane, but a caution flew for a multiple-car accident and Bonsignore was out front, holding the advantage for the final restart of the 200-lap race.

Bonsignore drove off turn four to



Justin Bonsignore scored a modified win at Riverhead Raceway last weekend. Submitted photo

the checkered flag. The victory places Bonsignore just one short of the Whelen Modified Tour wins record at Riverhead – 11 – held by Mike Ewanitsko. Bonsignore will have a chance to tie when the series returns to Riverhead on June 24.

The win was also Bonsignore's 36th

career – giving him sole possession of fourth place on the all-time wins list on the Whelen Modified Tour. He now sits just seven wins short of Ted Christopher for the top-three.

"Ron and I have been beating the heck out of each other all year," Bonsignore said. "The caution towards

the end was good for us. You just have to keep yourself in these races and it fell our way today. It's unbelievable to get number 10 at Riverhead. I can't thank everyone on this team enough. It's a cool way to get to Victory Lane. All of these are special. Tying Mike has been a goal of ours for a long time and to get this close to the record is special. These races never get any easier to win."

In just six days, Justin Bonsignore will return to the track with the next race on the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour schedule – the Granite State Derby at Lee USA Speedway – on Saturday, May 27. For more information and tickets for the race, visit JDVProductions.com.

For more information on Justin Bonsignore and the Kenneth Massa Motorsports team, visit JustinBonsignore.com and follow his Athlete page on Facebook for the latest news and updates.

Public Notices

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD23C0085CA
In the matter of:
Pilar Alvarado
CITATION ON PETITION
TO CHANGE NAME**

A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by **Pilar Alvarado of Holyoke, MA** requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:

Migdalia Jimenez
IMPORTANT NOTICE
Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: **Hampden Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 06/13/2023.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

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

Date: May 16, 2023
Rosemary A Saccomani
Register of Probate
05/26/2023

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Division
Docket No. HD23P1016EA
Estate of:
Barbara Barton Dunn
Date of Death:
March 16, 2023
INFORMAL PROBATE
PUBLICATION NOTICE**

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Jeffrey B Dunn of Apex NC** a Will has been admitted

to informal probate.
Jeffrey B Dunn of Apex NC has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
05/26/2023

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Suffolk Probate and Family Court
24 New Chardon Street,
Boston, MA 02114
(617)788-8300
Docket No. SU23A0199AD
In the matter of:
Elizabeth Priscilla Lasseter
CITATION
G.L. c. 210, §6**

TO:
Chriscilla Lasseter-Forcier
Lyle Seymour
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:
**Sabrina Seymour of Mattapan, MA
Lyle Seymour of Mattapan, MA**

requesting for leave to adopt said child and that the name of the child be changed to **Elizabeth Priscilla Seymour**
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 **Boston ON OR BEFORE TEN O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING (10:00 AM) ON: 06/26/2023.**

WITNESS, Hon. **Brian J. Dunn**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: April 21, 2023
Vincent Procopio
Register of Probate
05/12, 05/19, 05/26/2023

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Suffolk Probate and Family Court
24 New Chardon Street,
Boston, MA 02114**

**(617)788-8300
Docket No. SU23A0198AD
In the matter of:
Gabriel Joseph Lasseter
CITATION
G.L. c. 210, §6**

TO:
Chriscilla Lasseter-Forcier
Lyle Seymour
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:
**Sabrina Seymour of Mattapan, MA
Lyle Seymour of Mattapan, MA**

requesting for leave to adopt said child and that the name of the child be changed to

Gabriel Joseph Seymour
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 **Boston ON OR BEFORE TEN O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING (10:00 AM) ON: 06/26/2023.**

WITNESS, Hon. **Brian J. Dunn**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: April 21, 2023
Vincent Procopio
Register of Probate
05/12, 05/19, 05/26/2023

**RFP # 10577
LEGAL NOTICE
REQUEST FOR
PROPOSALS (RFP)**

The Girls Inc. of the Valley is seeking Requests for Proposals from qualified firms to complete toilet room renovations described in this RFP. Project 480 Hampden Street, Holyoke, Massachusetts.

Requests for proposals may be obtained thru DropBox https://www.dropbox.com/s/rfybcwa2imzvvxh/20064.04%20-%20Girls%20Inc%20-%20Phase%20B_Bid%20Set.pdf?dl=0

The deadline for submission is Wednesday, June 14, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. to OPM Franklin.Quigley@fdquig.com

The Girls Inc. reserves the right to cancel any request for proposals, and to reject in whole or in part any and all proposals, when it is deemed in the best interests of Girls Inc. to do so.

All questions pertaining to this RFP must be submitted in writing to the Project Manager [Franklin Quigley@fdquig.com](mailto:Franklin.Quigley@fdquig.com) for assistance if needed.
05/26/2023

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Suffolk Probate and Family Court
24 New Chardon Street,
Boston, MA 02114
(617)788-8300
Docket No. SU23A0197AD
In the matter of:
Abraham Job Lasseter
CITATION**

G.L. c. 210, §6
TO:
Chriscilla Lasseter-Forcier
Lyle Seymour
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:
**Sabrina Seymour of Mattapan, MA
Lyle Seymour of Mattapan, MA**

requesting for leave to adopt said child and that the name of the child be changed to

Abraham Job Seymour
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WITNESS, Hon. **Brian J. Dunn**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: April 21, 2023
Vincent Procopio
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05/12, 05/19, 05/26/2023

The Sun
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CONGRESS, from page 4

commonalities, talk about common concerns first and differences second.

Focus on the common good.

Do not speculate on rivals' motivations or demonize them. Focus on their ideas – and see them as just as human as you are.

Sometimes drama can be effective, but always maintain civility and convey respect for people who think differently from you.

Finally, always keep in mind that you may be wrong. The world is complicated and solutions to its challenges are never perfect or straightforward.

Lee Hamilton is a Senior Advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar at the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice at the IU O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

MARKET, from page 1

tance and for the vendors to control the environment.”

Rivera also hopes to encourage more vendors to come and open a stand at this market by not charging them to set up their table.

“I don’t charge local vendors the vending fee so that they get to set up their tables for free and all the money they make is profit for them,” Rivera said.

The market also accepts both HIP and SNAP so that customers are able to get their fruits and vegetables without having to worry about the cost.

“The HIP incentive is only five years old, about to be six years old,” Rivera explained. “It was a program started by groups of families and people from Western MA. They created it so that people in low-income communities had

access to money to use at local farms and farmers’ markets. The money is aside from the SNAP money that you get, it is a separate slot of money that is \$40 to \$80, depending on how many people are in your household, and it’s to use at farmers’ markets or a farm stand.”

Rivera encourages people to come to the market as a way to relax and enjoy their Saturday. It is a great way for people to support their community and to have some fun with their families.

“People should go to support local entrepreneurs and all the small businesses there that are just being started. And, also, just to support the farmers’ market, to get the word out to their friends and family, and to enjoy the day,” Rivera said. “The last two were really nice, sunny, and beautiful. There were a lot of smiles and good vibes, a lot of laughter and people playing. It was really good.”

BUDGET, from page 1

anticipate there will be a deficit within the existing enterprise budget which has been the case for many years caus-

ing taxpayers to subsidize the bill. The Board of Public Works and the Auditor will soon be reviewing recommendations with the City Council for a longer-term sustainable financial plan.”

DEBATE, from page 1

mayor had the power to veto their decision, and whether or not they wanted to do an override vote.

The finance committee met with Attorney Michael Bissonnette on Wednesday, May 10. There Bissonnette gave his opinion on why the mayor is allowed to veto this question.

“In following the dictates of how the council dealt with [the initial CPA ballot vote] administratively it would seem that the requisite conditions of 44B be that the city take action in the same manner in which they initially put the question on the ballot, which would seem to be primarily the reason it has to go to the mayor,” Bissonnette said.

Councilor Kocayne Givner is in agreement that the mayor should have the right to veto this ballot question.

“I have a hard time believing that the mayor doesn’t have the right to make this veto or that he has somehow wasted all of our time by vetoing this proposed ballot question. I would make a motion to sustain the veto and, if we want to negotiate the wording of this, send it back to committee and start over,” Givner said.

Councilor Linda Vacon believes that this question should appear on the November 2023 ballot.

“The reason that I filed the order in the way that I did was because we had been advised when we initiated CPA that any changes made to the tax, any modification at all, would need to occur in exactly the same fashion as the initial approval, as it turned out, here in Holyoke, occurred,” she said. “So, I followed the proper procedures in order to put it before the taxpayers and voters of our city to be able to make that decision,

as is their right.”

Councilor Kevin Jourdain agrees with Vacon. He argues that it does not make sense to wait on putting out this question, given that they have put out large financial legislative questions in the past.

“There was a ballot question that was put on in 2019 to see if the citizens wanted to spend \$155 million to fund new middle schools. A \$155 million and it was put on a city election. This question is only about a \$300,000 reduction in the CPA tax...[the citizens are] qualified to vote on a \$155 million tax override question, they’re not allowed to have a say this year on whether or not we should have a \$300,000 reduction in CPA tax? To me, that argument didn’t hold a lot of water,” Jourdain said.

Jourdain also argues that the mayor does not have the ability to veto this issue.

“This statute, chapter 44.B section 3 is really crystal clear. It has a sentence in it, I’m going to read it, it says ‘notwithstanding the provisions of chapter 59, which doesn’t apply in this particular case, or any other general law or special law to the contrary, the legislative body may vote to accept sections 3-7.’”

According to Jourdain, given that the charter, which is what gives the mayor the power to veto, is a special law, the statute would disregard it, therefore not allowing the mayor the power to veto when it comes to this ballot question. So, the council has the ability to put up a ballot question regarding the CPA when they wish, as that was the initial way the CPA tax was adopted as well.

After further debate, the council decided to table this discussion for a future meeting.

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In The News

Panorama survey shows progress, offers directions for the future

HOLYOKE – During the May 15 School Committee meeting, Superintendent Anthony Soto shared highlights from the recently concluded 2023 Panorama Culture and Climate Survey. Complete survey findings have also been linked on the district website.

HPS administers the Panorama survey each spring to help gather insight from students, staff, teachers, and families about the district's culture and climate that will help guide on-going improvement efforts. For the 2023 survey, 743 families provided feedback. In addition, 69% of HPS students took the survey, as did 76% of district staff.

"This year's survey highlights the work our school leaders have done to

invest in their schools, with teachers and staff reporting more effective communication, data-driven decision making, and leadership showing responsiveness to feedback," Superintendent Soto said. "Our family surveys showed an increase in family engagement, which is also a very good indicator of growth. We did see some dips in our student responses this year, with most feedback areas showing slight decreases in positive responses, which we need to take steps to improve going forward. On the positive side, 90% of respondents in grades 3-5 and 79% of respondents in grades 6-12 responded favorably to the question 'Are there adults at your school whom you can go to for help if you need it

right now?' And 62% of our student respondents said they feel connected to other students at their school. This is an increase of 6 percentage points, which is also a good indicator of improvement."

Even with this encouraging feedback, Soto said there is still more work to be done to strengthen the culture and climate of Holyoke Public Schools. "We know, for example, that we need to be more conscientious about how we talk about and frame equity and inclusion within the district so that we are broader and more inclusive of all students and staff, not just our Latino and Latina students and staff. And that is just one of our areas of focus going forward."

Other focus areas include:

- Doing more to meet students' social and emotional needs, including ensuring that all schools have Deans of Students and other support staff to better meet students' needs;

- Providing middle and high school students more opportunities for their voices to be heard;

- Offering elementary and middle school learners more opportunities to build connections to their schools, especially those moving to new buildings in the fall; and

- Leveraging key attributes built into the district's REACH learner profile so HPS educators can effectively reinforce and strengthen students' learning behaviors in their classrooms.



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Submitted photos

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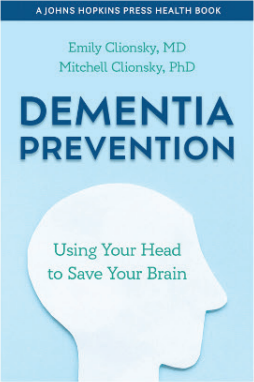


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