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TRUMP TARGETING BLUE CITIES

President Donald Trump threatened to broaden his military deployments to more Democratic-led cities, including Batlimore, Chicago and New York City on Sunday. Page A6

TODAY'S MUST-READS

NEW ENGLAND

More great white sharks traveling to colder waters

Boaters, beachgoers and fishermen who spend time in the chilly waters of New England and Atlantic Canada are learning to live with great white sharks. Sightings of the apex predators are up in places like Maine.

Scientists link the white shark sightings to increased availability of the seals the sharks feast on, and say beachgoers are generally very safe from sharks.

Full Story, Page A3

SPRINGFIELD

City cracks down on Dollar Tree trash problem

Dollar Tree managers promised to do better after racking up thousands of dollars in fines and years of complaints about their trash-strewn parking lot on Allen Street.

"I've been dealing with it since it opened, and it has always been a problem with litter," said City Councilor Timothy Allen, whose ward includes Allen Street. "There isn't a day when you go there, and there aren't at least 150 pieces of litter on the driveway."

Full Story, Page A3

SPRINGFIELD

AI-powered elder care service rolls out in WMass

Access Care Partners, formerly WestMass ElderCare, is rolling out a new service.

The Virtual Communication and Monitoring service provides a combination of digital companionship, health coaching and proactive monitoring through 24/7 artificial intelligence and human-supported technology.

Full Story, Page A2

WEATHER

Clouds and a thunderstorm.
High: 82°; **Low:** 55°

EXPANDED WEATHER, B4



Drive Safe
School is in Session



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GRANBY

'You cut a finger off the hand'



Heather Ruel, owner of Ruel Farm in Granby, starts clearing bird nesting boxes from her land before mowing in August. She's seen here on July 24. The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently told Ruel it was unable to schedule a date on which to close on a conservation easement for her farm. Below, a federal sign on the land at Ruel Farm in Granby. (DOUGLAS HOOK / THE REPUBLICAN)

Preserving land a challenge in Trump era for local farm, nonprofit groups

By **DANIEL JACKSON**
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It has taken Heather Ruel years to get to this point, on the verge of finalizing a conservation easement for her family's farm in Granby.

Conservation easements are a key tool to keep working farms operational, so they doesn't succumb to the lure of developers and quick cash. It's an agreement between a landowner and a conservation group or government agency, restricting certain land uses on a property with the aim of preserving the land for generations.

Over the last few years, Ruel has worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to establish such an easement on her family farm, which involved a survey of the 92-acre property and research into its title.

But the process has been thrown into limbo

because of the Trump administration's reorganization of the federal government. The U.S. Department of Agriculture told Ruel it was unable to schedule a date on which to close on the conservation easement for the farm.

It was late July, when Heather Ruel went out onto the land, no longer an active farm, to remove bird nesting boxes to prepare for the haying of the fields, clearing out the old nests and disinfecting the boxes for next year.

Decades ago, the hay fields were for a handful of cows, when the farm grew rhubarb and had a pumpkin patch for the neighborhood kids, Ruel said. These days, the farm is a haven for wildlife.

SEE **FINGER**, PAGE A2

NORTHAMPTON

Not in public view, but for the public

City's conservation endowment quietly goes toward saving city's available land

By **GREG KERSTETTER**
Special to The Republican

Some residents have been giving back to the city they love by sustaining a largely unknown endowment that's helping to conserve 30% of Northampton's land.

Unique to cities and towns, the fund gives the city of Northampton about \$30,000 in earnings each year, totaling about \$175,000 over the past 18 years. Now, the fund's driving force is going public in a final push to have the endowment reach \$1 million.

Wayne Feiden, the city's former director of the Office of Planning and Sustainability, said an anonymous Northampton resident is putting up \$25,000 as a challenge to others who live in the city. If others donate \$25,000, the resident will match it.

Feiden, a longtime city employee, got the fund started in December 2007 and has been its staunchest advocate.

SEE **LAND**, PAGE A6

STATE

Mass. could soon allow cannabis lounges

But the state wants your help shaping the rules

By **WILL KATCHER**
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Massachusetts cannabis authorities want to hear from you — the casual smoker, genuine stoner, intrigued entrepreneur or any other stakeholder in the state's pot industry.

State officials are finalizing regulations for on-site cannabis use, the sort of rules that will, for the first time, license businesses to allow customers to enjoy weed products

in person.

Also known as social consumption, it would mean the introduction of lounges or bars that could serve marijuana just as a regular bar serves alcohol.

But the regulations would also open up a variety of other businesses and venues to legal marijuana use.

Existing marijuana businesses,

State officials are finalizing regulations for on-site cannabis use, the sort of rules that will, for the first time, license businesses to allow customers to enjoy weed products in person.

such as dispensaries or farms, could be licensed to add on-site consumption areas to their facilities.

Non-cannabis businesses, from yoga studios to spas to theaters, could be licensed to host cannabis consumption activities in partnership with typical cannabis companies.

And organizers of festivals, concerts or similar short-term

events could apply for temporary licenses to allow marijuana use on site, with approval from their local officials.

The state's Cannabis Control Commission approved the proposed regulations on July 29 and last week opened a public comment period, inviting feedback from interested parties before it finalizes the regulations.

Comments can be submitted by email to commission@CCCMass.com with the subject line, "Social Consumption." The deadline is 5 p.m. on Sept. 8.

SEE **LOUNGES**, PAGE A5