



The Republican.

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MASS LIVE

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A CENTURY OF CELEBRATIONS

While it's been 100 years since the earliest observances of Black History Month, many still remain concerned about teaching an accurate reflection of Black history in America. Page A6

TODAY'S MUST-READS

SPRINGFIELD

Parole denied for man convicted in 2004 shooting

The state's parole board has denied release to a man convicted of second-degree murder after a 2004 fatal shooting.

Roy Dancy, who pleaded guilty in 2006 to the killing of Gregory Holmes, appeared for his first hearing before the Massachusetts Parole Board on July 29 last year.

Parole board members noted that Dancy has been convicted of six crimes while incarcerated, five of them being convictions for assault and battery on correction officers, according to a decision dated Jan. 12.

[Full Story on Page A2](#)

WEST SPRINGFIELD

Bookstore opens A New Chapter

When Scott Szaban hung up his badge after a 20-year career with the Connecticut Department of Correction, the 52-year-old veteran officer began writing the next chapters of his life.

"I started working as an administrative assistant for an orthodontist," he told The Republican, admitting the job barely made him smile.

[Full Story on Page B1](#)

HOLYOKE

New audit report finds 2025 public assistance fraud

A new report by the state auditor's Bureau of Special Investigations details nearly \$12 million in public assistance fraud in the 2025 budget year.

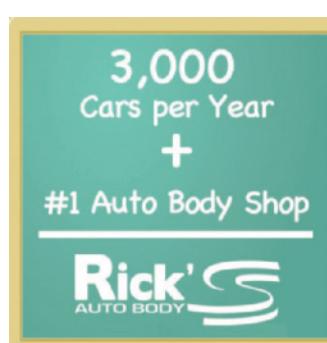
The largest portion of that fraud, \$4.1 million, was found in the state's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP.

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WEATHER

Warmer with partial sun. High: 31°; Low: 0°

[EXPANDED WEATHER, B4](#)



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HOLYOKE

A sudden escalator collapse at Holyoke Mall sparks questions

Incident underscores vulnerability of the mall's escalators, popularity of parrandas

BY APRELL MAY MUNFORD

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The music, dancing and joy of a traditional Puerto Rican parranda filled Holyoke Mall on Dec. 14 — right up until the escalator carrying the celebrants buckled under their feet, turning the night into a slow-motion scare that organizer Czar Adorno says he'll never forget.

Though no one was hurt, the collapse underscored both the vulnerability of the mall's frequently faulty escalators and the growing popularity of Adorno's parrandas, which have become a cherished cultural celebration across Western Massachusetts.

For Adorno, a faith-driven community leader who overcame addiction and has built a following through music and outreach, the incident won't slow plans to continue the annual tradition — though next time, he said, they might look for a safer venue.

WATCH THE FULL VIDEO

 To see a video of the parranda, visit this story online at [masslive.com](#).

A viral scare caught on video

The Matutino por la Ciudad celebration began at Brightwood Elementary School in Springfield, where Adorno explained the plan and why the parranda mattered to attendees.

Then about 250 people set off in a caravan to Holyoke Mall with a local Jeep club leading the way, followed by two school buses from Rozki Rides, Adorno said.

Holyoke Mayor Joshua Garcia, state Sen. Adam Gomez, Jerome Whalan, a congressional candidate, and other officials joined the festival.

The group entered Holyoke Mall through JCPenney and headed for the escalator to reach the spot set



Of the six escalators in the Holyoke Mall's common areas, half are not in operation at Ingleside on Jan. 20. Below, a Grinch helps event participants as a Holyoke Mall escalator gives way under its riders on Dec. 14. (DOUGLAS HOOK / THE REPUBLICAN; SCREENSHOT FROM FACEBOOK)

aside for the celebration, he said.

A festive Facebook video shows Adorno leading a group with tambourines and maracas — even the Grinch and Santa dancing — down the escalator near the AT&T store, moments before the moveable stairs flattened out.

"All of a sudden," Adorno said, "I heard screaming. I am like, 'What's this?' It all felt like it was going in slow motion. I couldn't believe what was happening. I thought about my wife and my daughter and son."

"Luckily," he added, "They were already off."

[SEE ESCALATOR, PAGE A2](#)



NORTHAMPTON

Remembering Dave Rothstein



Dave Rothstein and his giant pumpkin on the Connecticut River on Nov. 4, 2023. (PHOTO BY CONNECTICUT RIVER CONSERVANCY)

Friends gathered Saturday to share memories

BY GREG KERSTETTER

Special to The Republican

Friends from all over the country, skipping previous plans and ignoring the below-zero cold outside, flocked to Northampton Saturday morning in order to tell stories of doughnuts and pumpkins and sculptures, fashioned of ice and hay.

They assembled to celebrate Dave Rothstein, an environmental lawyer and artist whose embrace of improbable schemes, heirloom New England mint and driveway

snow art made him friends of such reach and variety that they filled the bottom level of Northampton's Academy of Music, some 200 strong.

They celebrated Rothstein on a day that Northampton Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra proclaimed "Day of Dave here in the City of Northampton," an honor at once fitting and not large enough, according to friends, to contain the effervescence with which Rothstein lived.

With sister Pamela Rothstein leading the tributes at The

[SEE ARTIST, PAGE A6](#)

SPRINGFIELD

Celebrating Black History month with multiple 'firsts'

BY JEANETTE DEFORGE

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The city has a lot to celebrate during Black History Month this year. There is the first Black female school superintendent, the first Black police superintendent and multiple political milestones including having a Black plurality on the City Council and School Committee.

Sunday, the first day of Black History Month, leaders

[SEE HISTORY, PAGE A6](#)

NORTHAMPTON ARTS PRESENTS THE

SILVER CHORD BOWL

THE 42ND ANNUAL COLLEGIATE A CAPPELLA SHOWCASE

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2026

2:00PM → DOORS AT 1:30 PM

JOHN M. GREENE HALL → SMITH COLLEGE

BUY TICKETS ONLINE



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