

HOLYOKE

Gallery exhibit celebrates work of late art teacher

By CHRIS YURKO

Special to The Republican

A sign on the door identifies Room 317 in the Fine & Performing Arts Building at Holyoke Community College as the “Graphics Studio.” But art students who have studied printmaking there through the years know it better as “The Batcave” — the lair of the late visual arts professor Alix Hegeler.

Hegeler, a painter, printmaker, and collage artist from Sunderland, died in October after a brief battle with cancer. Now through Monday, the Taber Art Gallery at Holyoke Community College is presenting “The Batcave and Beyond,” an exhibition of Hegeler’s artwork alongside the artwork of the students she inspired.

“Alix’s passing is a deep loss for me as well as the school,” said Taber director Amy Johnquest. “She was a fierce, beautiful soul who cared deeply about her work, and in particular, the welfare of her

students. The walls of art she curated from her classes for the annual student art shows were always outstanding and meticulous. I was fortunate to have her as a friend as well as a colleague. I miss her dearly.”



ALIX HEGELER

On Monday, the gallery will host a closing reception and celebration honoring Hegeler from 4 to 7 p.m. There will be a tent and refreshments set on the plaza outside the gallery on the second floor of the Donahue Building. Announcements will be followed by an open mic at 6 p.m. for anyone who wants to speak.

For “The Batcave and Beyond,” the Taber Gallery accepted submissions of artwork from her former students who were either influenced by Hegeler or that were created while they stud-

ied with her.

“After 35 years teaching art at Holyoke Community College, Alix impacted many students,” said Johnquest. “Over 30 students submitted work. There are over 80 pieces of art in this exhibition, which includes works by Alix as well as artists who were her students.”

Some of those students have already left messages to their former teacher in the gallery guest book:

“Your talented teachings shine through in everyone’s work. I wish you could have seen how your teaching has impacted the progress of all your students’ work.”

“Alix, I think you would have loved this. We sure loved you. RIP.”

The Taber Art Gallery, located off the lobby of the HCC Library on the second floor of the HCC Donahue Building, is free and open to the public Monday through Thursday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. during regular school sessions



An untitled work by Alix Hegeler is one of several on display at the Taber Art Gallery at Holyoke Community College. (SUBMITTED / HCC)

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Amy Johnquest, Taber Gallery director