

PIONEER VALLEY

HCC honors late art professor with exhibit

Closing reception for
Alix Hegeler of Sunderland
scheduled for Monday

By **STEVE PFARRER**
Staff Writer

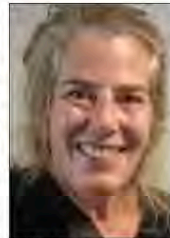
HOLYOKE — In the Fine & Performing Arts Building at Holyoke Community College, visual art professor Alix Hegeler held court in Room 317, which is officially known as the facility's "Graphics Studio."

But HCC arts students have long

referred to Room 317 at "The Batcave," a place where Hegeler taught printmaking and painting and was an inspiration for hundreds of young artists during some 35 years at the school.

Hegeler, of Sunderland, died last October after a brief battle with cancer, according to HCC. Now the college and some former students have combined to stage "The Batcave and Beyond," an exhibition of Hegeler's art alongside the work of over 30 of her students.

The exhibit, in Taber Art Gallery, has over 80 works on display, includ-



ALIX HEGELER

"Alix's passing is a deep loss for me as well as the school," said Amy Johnquest, the Taber's director. "She was a fierce, beautiful soul who cared

deeply about her work, and in particular the welfare of her students.

Hegeler's paintings, prints, and collages. The show runs through Monday, May 9 and will conclude that day from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. with a reception and celebration honoring Hegeler.

For "The Batcave and Beyond," the Taber Gallery accepted art submissions from former students of Hegeler that were created while they studied with her, or that were created later but still influenced by her teaching.

Some HCC students have left

messages to their teacher in the gallery guest book, testifying to her influence. "I wish you could have seen how your teaching has impacted the progress of all your students' work," reads one entry.

Writing several years ago in her blog, Amherst artist Terry Rooney, founder of the Amherst Biennial exhibit, called Hegeler "one of the most modest and talented artists in the Valley that I know. It does not surprise me that many of her students at

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Holyoke Community College call her one of the strongest instructors of art there.”

At the closing reception for “The Batcave and Beyond” on May 9, a tent and refreshments will be set up on the plaza outside the gallery. Announcements will be followed by an open mic at 6 p.m. for anyone who wants to speak.

The Taber Gallery, located off the lobby of the HCC Library on the second floor of the Donahue Building, is free and open to the public Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., during regular school sessions. For more information, please contact Amy Johnston, at (413) 552-2614.

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