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Friday, May 21, 2021

# Brimfield firefighters look to improve street address numbering

BRIMFIELD — Firefighters in Brimfield are asking local residents to help them get to emergencies more efficiently by ensuring that their houses are well numbered. The department is rolling out a new program aimed at ensuring that every address in town is well marked. "Each year there are a few instances where Fire, Police or EMS agencies responding to emergencies in town have a hard time finding someone's house" says Brimfield Fire Chief Don Contois.

*Alyssa Kievra of Holland Graduates from Assumption University*

WORCESTER — Alyssa Kievra, of Holland, was one of nearly 400 graduates to receive a bachelor's degree during Assumption University's 104th Commencement exercises on Sunday, May 9, at the DCU Center in downtown Worcester. Pulitzer Prize-winning and nationally syndicated Washington Post columnist George F. Will, Ph.D., delivered what he called the "last Assumption lecture for which you will be a captive audience" to the Class of 2021, in which he urged the graduates to live in the present while also imagining the past. The Class of 2021 is the first to graduate from Assumption University, which transitioned from Assumption College last year.

"Mr. Will's influence as an author, newspaper columnist and journalist, particularly for the Washington Post as well as a political commentator on ABC and MSNBC, cannot be overstated," said Salutatorian Maeve McDonald '21 in her introduction of the speaker. "In speaking with Mr. Will about the value of such an education, he noted that, 'the point of a liberal arts education is to teach you to open your mind to question, not to reject, but to question received opinions.' He argued that this is a particularly important skill for graduates today as we enter a world that is fraught with political turmoil and moral relativism."

In his commencement address, Will shared an example of just how one's liberal education can help one better understand the world. He prompted graduates to consider the political unrest in

Turn To **KIEVRA**, page **A13**



Brimfield Fire Department Lt. Zach Lemieux stands with one of the signs being offered through the street numbering program.

The Chief notes that in rural communities, where houses are often set back far from the road, responders often rely on mailboxes to find a home and that they often do not correspond to where the person or residence might be.

"We have areas where there are four or five mailboxes together and the houses are spaced out," says Contois, who notes that finding the right house if it is not numbered clearly could delay responders in getting to a person.

Responders at times can have trouble finding a specific house at night or in bad weather in a timely manner.

To help resolve the problem the department is rolling out a program to improve the numbering system in town. For \$20 local residents can have the department install an aluminum sign with the corresponding street address right at the end of their driveway. The signs are made of aluminum and come mounted on a post. Installation will be done by members of the Brimfield Firefighters Association and should be available three or four weeks after a resident places an order. Residents were sent a mailer this week letting them know about the program. Additional information is available at the Brimfield Fire Departments Web site (<https://www.brimfieldma.org/fire-department>).

While the goal is to get every house in town numbered, the program also will serve as a fund-

Turn To **ADDRESSES**, page **A13**

**Wales man identified as victim in Belchertown motorcycle crash**

WALES – A Wales man was identified by State Police as the motorcyclist who died in a weekend wreck in Belchertown.

Niles Robbins, 46, of Wales, died from injuries sustained in the May 15 accident. The wreck occurred at approximately 2:10 p.m. near the intersection of Ware Road and Enoch Sanford Road in Belchertown.

The wreck involved a collision between an SUV and a motorcycle with two riders. Robbins, who was operating the 2018 Harley Davidson motorcycle, was transported to Mary Lane Hospital where he later died.

The passenger of the motorcycle, a 52-year-old woman from Charlton, was life-flighted to the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester with serious injuries. As of press time, no update was provided on her status.

The crash is being investigated by Troop C of the Massachusetts State Police, the State Police Collision Analysis and Reconstruction Section, and the State Police Crime Scene Services Section.

Troopers were assisted at the scene of the wreck by the Belchertown Police Department and the Belchertown Fire Department.

# Nichols College celebrates 2020 & 2021 graduates

**BY JASON BLEAU**  
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY – Nichols College celebrated not one, but two graduating classes on Saturday, May 15 and Sunday, May 16, as the classes of 2021 and 2020 were recognized in a ceremony on campus with a limited number of loved ones and guests invited to experience the pomp and circumstance.

The first ceremony on May 15 featured the Class of 2021 where TV panels were set up and a socially distanced seating arrangement making for a unique ceremony, but one brimming with school spirit. The



*Jason Bleau*

(Left) Members of Nichols College's Class of 2021, arranged in a socially distant manner, listen intently during a graduation ceremony on May 15.

ceremony included the customary speeches from select members of the class, including Valedictorian Adam Phillips of Brookfield, MA who reflected on his years at the college, but especially the challenges of the past year that make the Class of 2021 a special one.

"I have high hopes for

Turn To **GRADS**, page **A15**







# Bay Path PN students shine at SkillsUSA state competition

UPTON — Four practical nursing students of Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy wowed as members of the panel of judges with their health-related skills during the recent SkillsUSA state competition held at the Blackstone Valley Tech.

Dr. Adelina Healy, adjunct faculty at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy served as the Team Lead for the Volunteer judges. She was glad at how well everything went at the SkillsUSA State competition.

“The PN student judges did a great job,” Dr. Healy added, “all the PN students took leadership roles.”

The practical nursing students from the class of 2021 are Brianna Cloutier of Charlton, Meghan Reidy of Auburn, Angeley Santa of Southbridge, and Sonya Ugrinow of Southbridge.

Recounting the experience, Cloutier stated, “When the opportunity came up to participate as a SkillsUSA judge I was overjoyed! I was filled with pure excitement upon arriving at Blackstone Valley.”



Courtesy

Four practical nursing students of Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy wowed as members of the panel of judges with their health-related skills during the recent SkillsUSA state competition held at the Blackstone Valley Tech.

According to Cloutier, “The competitors were prepared and ready to go.”

Cloutier has experience as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA).

She adds, “I was blown away to see the talent and true determination these students had” as she witnessed them perform their skills. Cloutier stated that she really enjoyed rating

the competitors while expressing the importance of proper and safe patient care. “I was proud to see so many students with extremely bright futures ahead of them!”

Similarly, Santa stated, “I really enjoyed being a volunteer judge for SkillsUSA. I was able to meet new people, and everyone was very friendly.”

She adds, “one of the greatest benefits I found from judging was that I was able to reflect upon and test my own knowledge on certain skills before I tested the student competitors.”

Both Cloutier and Santa were thankful for the opportunity to serve as judges on skills such as measuring height and weight, labeling human anatomy, and the proper application and removal of Persona Protective Equipment (PPE).

Santa even added, “I had a fantastic day with my peers and Dr. Healy!”

SkillsUSA’s mission is geared to empower members to become world-class workers, leaders and responsible American citizens and serves as the blueprint for workplace readiness.

## QCC student honored in 29 Who Shine ceremony

WORCESTER — On May 13 at the 10th Annual “29 Who Shine” Ceremony, Quinsigamond Community College Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) student Fatima Mohammed, of Worcester, joined 28 other public college and university graduates, to be honored virtually by Gov. Charlie Baker and higher education leaders in a Live YouTube ceremony at 2 p.m.

Each year, these awards are given to one student from each of the Commonwealth’s 29 public campuses, including the 15 community colleges, nine state universities and five campuses of the University of Massachusetts. This year, the 29 graduates are being honored for their resilience in the face of pandemic-related challenges and their willingness to pitch in and support COVID-19 relief efforts, while working to earn their degrees.

Ms. Mohammed played an essential role with QCC’s COVID-19 health team, assisting with student surveillance testing during the Spring 2021 semester, working multiple volunteer shifts each week, and acting as a mentor and advisor to new volunteers.

“Fatima has been volunteering her time during the COVID-19 pandemic, helping to keep our college community safe. Her dedication to her fellow students, while maintaining the highest academic standards is inspiring. We are honored to have her as a member of our QCC community,” said QCC President Luis G. Pedraja, Ph.D.

Currently majoring in Liberal Arts, Ms. Mohammed will be graduating from QCC later this month with an Associate Degree in Liberal Arts. She plans to continue her education at the Mass College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS) in fall 2021. She has received a \$10,000 merit scholarship from MCPHS, based on her academic qualifications, for the entire 16 consecutive months



Courtesy

Fatima Mohammed of the program. After earning her Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene, she plans to continue her education to earn a Doctor of Medicine in Dentistry. Ms. Mohammed said she hopes to continue helping others in her future career in dentistry, caring for and educating low-income families about dental care.

“Ten years from now, the letter grades of the ‘29 Who Shine’ won’t matter. What we will remember is their commitment to their communities in a time of crisis,” said Gov. Charlie Baker. “Our public colleges and universities educate homegrown Massachusetts natives – people who are here to learn, and here to stay. They have shown how much they care about where they come from, how much they care about us, and how much they will contribute to the civic and economic future of our Commonwealth.”

For more information about QCC, contact Josh Martin, Director of Institutional Communications at 508-854-7513 or [jmartin@qcc.mass.edu](mailto:jmartin@qcc.mass.edu).

## Abigail Stansky of Sturbridge receives academic award from Nichols College

DUDLEY — Nichols College Academic Awards Ceremony took place virtually on Tuesday, May 4.

Each year the English Department is awarded to a deserving English major, this year there are two recipients, Abby Stansky and Jacob White.

Dr. Kellie Deys, Associate Professor of English presented the award, commenting “Both Abby and Jake are creative, analytical and insightful, embodying the wonderful traits we hoped for in all of our majors. They’ve added so much to every class they have been a part of. I’ve been impressed with their work and their willingness to dig deep into their own lives, novels or into crafting their own fiction.”

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Confirmed fact errors will be corrected at the top right hand corner of page 3 in a timely manner.

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## Friday’s Child



Jadelyn  
Age 12

**Hi! My name is Jadelyn and I want to attend college and be a princess.**

Jadelyn is a girl of Hispanic descent who enjoys being active. Some of her favorite activities include singing, playing on the playground and practicing her cartwheels. She is very open and willing to try new things and loves animals. Jadelyn thrives with adult attention and care, and she benefits from structure and clear expectations. She hopes to attend college when she is older and also wishes to be a princess.

Jadelyn enjoys school and was a peer mentor in her summer program. She is currently working on learning her multipli-

cation tables.

Legally freed for adoption, Jadelyn will do well in a family of any constellation that can provide her with positive attention and support. If there are other children in the home, it would be best if they are older than Jadelyn so that they can act as a role model for her. An ideal family will help Jadelyn maintain contact with her birth parents and siblings.

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The process to adopt a child from foster care requires training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you, and if so, to help connect you with a child or sibling group that your family will be a good match for.

To learn more about adoption from foster care, call the Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) at 617-964-6273 or visit [www.mare-inc.org](http://www.mare-inc.org). The sooner you call, the sooner a waiting child will have a permanent place to call home.





# Lunch and Learn talk reveals historic role of beavers in flood control

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — Look through Southbridge history, and you'll see regular references to what our

ancestors called “freshets” – the springtime floods of the Quinebaug River and its tributaries. During the 1800s, they routinely left Main Street and other downtown areas under-

water until the river was dammed and the brooks canalized or put underground. Parts of today's downtown literally sit on top of Nuisance Brook, and that's a common feature of older New England mill towns.

According to ecologist and engineer Denise Burchsted, what we now try to control to reduce flooding were heavily influenced by beaver dams in the pre-Colonial era. The Native Americans were also often involved.

“As soon as the glaciers melted, people have been here... and have been manipulating the landscape,” she told statewide Conservation Commissioners at a recent online “Lunch and Learn” talk. But, she noted, there's been a lot of “intentional and unintentional erasure” of the Native presence, so we don't know a lot about how they influenced the ecosystem in many places.

One potential difference, she thinks, is that the fact they “held the beavers as sacred” and had a “very deep and very complex” relationship with beavers (and many other species), even though they hunted them. That worldview very likely influenced how they dealt with beaver dams in ways that are significantly different from what we now do.

Ecologically, beavers are “the agents that make the valley wet from one end to the other... and that's very incompatible with what we're doing today,” Burchsted said. While modern civilization tries very hard to control river and stream

flows in relatively narrow areas, beaver dams routinely spread them out into wide marshes. She noted it's common for people trying to follow streamflow to lose it in such areas, where many small dams abound.

Some of them are beavers' work, but others are logjams and other blockages caused by storms, previous floods and other aspects of natural processes. A major difference between them and modern dams, she noted, is this: they're leaky and relatively short-lived (a couple months). Fish can usually swim through them, and they create complex habitats within the resulting pond and downstream that provide refuges for various species, balance water temperatures across the year, and help control nutrient flow. But the streams themselves “do not stay in one channel; there's multiple threads,” she said.

Modern dams, by contrast, are “walls that prevent organism passage,” she said. “They're very, very destructive.” Among other things, she noted, the ponds tend to be kept at a consistent depth and area and have very little biological material in them. Meanwhile, other parts of dammed rivers tend to erode more because they're forced into one channel, so the water level is far lower than in pre-Colonial times, she said.

As an example, she emphasized the Ashuelot River and Town Brook in her hometown of Keene, NH. In the 1750s, local documents show Main Street was a frequently-flooded causeway “several feet below the present [road] surface.” When it flooded, “it abounded in fish, especially hornpout,” and required boats or swimming to cross. The brook was largely forced underground by 1899 and what remains on the surface is mostly in deep mini-canyons several feet below the land level.

She noted her town's DPW routinely destroys beaver dams using “an incredible amount of fossil fuels” and lots of labor, which she described as a “continuous process” that creates “an entirely artificial condition.”

Despite that, she noted, there are many places beavers can be encouraged “and many places they cannot.” The key to balancing them and setting river restoration or dam removal targets is “a value judgment” that demands paying “more attention to how we are ourselves dependent on the ecosystem.” One thing that would help, she observed, is to manage infrastructure “to act more like natural dams.”

Gus Steeves can be reached at gus.steeves2@gmail.com.

### CLUES ACROSS

1. Prevents harm to young
5. “Losing My Religion” rockers
8. Partner to pan
11. Cavalry unit
13. Peyton’s little brother
14. Mexican dish
15. Disseminates info to the public
16. Set an animal on
17. Canadian flyers
18. Elongated mouths of anthropods
20. I (German)
21. Opposite of west
22. Glows
25. Measures how quickly a car moves
30. One who has gained wealth
31. Patti Hearst’s captors
32. Extensive landed property
33. Male aristocrat
38. For each
41. More fidgety
43. Very happy
45. A place to store info
47. Helps to heal
49. 12th month (abbr.)
50. Broad, shallow craters
55. Nocturnal S. American rodent
56. Frost
57. Ethiopian town
59. Curved shapes
60. Company that rings receipts
61. Spiritual leader
62. Sheep native to Sweden
63. Cars need it
64. Partner to relaxation

### CLUES DOWN

1. Scientist’s high-resolution tool (abbr.)
2. Type of school
3. Formal close (music)
4. Transmits high voltage
5. A way to occupy a certain area
6. Draws out
7. His Airness
8. Nocturnal rodents
9. South American plants
10. Homestead
12. Bland or semiliquid food
14. Forest resident
19. The body needs it
23. Atomic mass unit (abbr.)
24. Spell
25. Relaxing place
26. Political fundraising tool
27. Make a mistake
28. Partner to Adam
29. Tyrant
34. Unit of electrical resistance
35. A history of one’s life
36. Actor DiCaprio
37. Sea eagle
39. Avoiding being caught
40. \_\_ de Mornay, actress
41. Belonging to a thing
42. Not us
44. Motorcars
45. Capital of Bangladesh
46. Ancient Greek sophist
47. Practice boxing
48. \_\_ Grant, actor
51. Swiss river
52. S. Sudan river
53. A bumpkin
54. One point south of southwest
58. Small island (British)

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\$217,900, 108 Cubles Dr, McLaughlin, Shaun,  
to Lace, Joseph.

\$30,000, 6 6th St, Langlitz, John C, and  
Langlitz, Kathleen M, to GJL RNL NT, and  
Levine, Gwendolyn J.

0,000, 71 Reservoir St, Drohan, Ashley, to  
Pisqolla, Gloria, and Laudone, Pasquale W.

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Osleger-Seplowitz, Rebecc.

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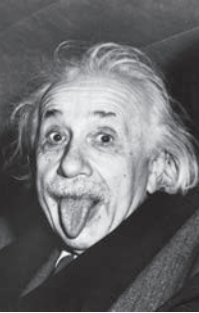
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# QCC's E-Sports team once again crowned champions in League of Legends Tournament

WORCESTER — Another great season has ended for the fledgling Wyverns League of Legends E-Sports team, and another championship is added to their impressive record. The Quinsigamond Community College team played their final games on April 25, winning handily 3-0 over Bunker Hill Community College in the Region XXI Championship E-Sports game. The Wyverns finished the season with a 5-1 record, echoing the record from the fall 2020 season and even mirroring their fall championship win against Bunker Hill 3-0 in the finals.

"The team of 12 came together this season. Week in and week out, they dedicated time and effort to improving their skills. Each player got a chance to

start in a game throughout the season, and each and every player stood out," said Wyverns E-Sports Coach Nathaniel "Nate" Mello.

"I am so proud of what this team was able to accomplish this year and I hope to continue our success in the future with players new and old," Coach Mello said.

QCC began its E-Sports team in the summer of 2020, taking part in a League of Legends collegiate competition. This is a highly competitive, fast paced, action-strategy online game. When not in a global pandemic the game is often played in-person, in an arena setting.

QCC's Athletic Director Lisa Gurnick said the E-Sports team has made a superb addition to the Wyvern sports teams and

Coach Mello has been an important part of the team's success.

"Coach Mello was fantastic, and he was the 'sports announcer' for all three of these final games. He presented the play-by-play action. It was great for anyone to follow who didn't know anything about the game League of Legends but wanted to follow along," Ms. Gurnick said. "The team has played amazing all season and has worked hard to get where they are. We are incredibly proud of our newest Wyvern team."

The Wyvern 2021 E-Sports team includes:

- Alexis Fluegel
- Samuel Marshall
- Trevor Dodson

- Alex Vongkhamheuang
  - Andrew Boucher
  - David Huynh
  - Dylan Tang
  - Joseph Pauplis
  - Monica Doan
  - Eric Miller
  - Lawrence Loughan
  - Gabe Varner
  - Head Coach Nate Mello
  - Assistant Coach Alec Yorston
- Visit [www.QCC.edu/athletics](http://www.QCC.edu/athletics) to learn more.

For more information about QCC, contact Josh Martin, Director of Institutional Communications at 508-854-7513 or [jmartin@qcc.mass.edu](mailto:jmartin@qcc.mass.edu).



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# Charlton resident prepares for Jimmy Fund Walk

BY JASON BLEAU  
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON – The town of Charlton will be represented in the annual Boston Marathon Jimmy Fund Walk presented by Hyundai as town resident Jamie Zeveska will continue her longstanding tradition of honoring her loved ones to help the fight against cancer.

Zeveska started her journey as a part of the annual walk in the early 2010s after her husband's cousin Barbara lost her battle with cancer in 2011. In 2021, she is walking with added purpose as another loved one, a close friend named Judy, has been diagnosed with Stage 4 lung cancer leading Zeveska to double down on a pledge to participate in the walk every year until a cure for cancer is found.

"I would love to see a day that cancer only refers to a zodiac sign. New treatments being discovered could mean quality of life for those battling will be much better. Without research progress is difficult. It takes money to conduct research, I am healthy and am happy to play a small part," Zeveska said of her participation in the event.

Even the COVID-19 pandemic couldn't stop her from taking part as she continued her yearly commitment through a virtual walk adding the cemetery where Barbara was buried to her route to honor her memory.

"Last year, I walked alone; there was no support along the way cheering the walkers on like there was in prior years. It's very emotional to see so many people out there, walking for a cure. I am determined to walk each year as long as I am able. The walk this year will also be our way, like last year. The research needs to continue, cancer has not taken a day off," she said.

Zeveska's fundraising efforts go beyond her contributions to the walk. When she's not preparing for the event, she is knitting and crocheting items that she sells through her Facebook page Jamiez Handiwox to benefit the cause.

"I wanted to raise more money, so in 2019, I decided to make items to sell at a craft fair in Charlton on Labor Day. Covid made that impossible for 2020. I typically work on something every morning with my coffee and again in the evening. I thought it may be easier to obtain donations if the person were able to purchase something. I started the Facebook page to attempt selling my items



Charlton resident Jamie Zeveska is preparing for her ninth consecutive Boston Marathon Jimmy Fund Walk.

and was able to sell various products before fundraising ended last year. I've sold many other items this year and it appears Old Home Day

will take place on Labor Day. I've had many supporters that continue to donate year after year, which is wonderful, I appreciate every one of

them. Every penny counts and add up," Zeveska said.

Those wishing to support Jamie Zeveska's fundraising effort can visit [danafarber.jimmyfund.org/goto/jamiezeveska2021](https://danafarber.jimmyfund.org/goto/jamiezeveska2021) to donate. As of this report the donation page had recorded \$2,568 in donations with a \$3,000 goal.

## Decor ideas to give homes a fresh look this spring

Warm weather and longer hours of daylight make spring a perfect time to imagine a home's interior design in a new light. The following are a handful of decor ideas that may inspire homeowners to give their homes an entirely new look this spring.

- **Wallpaper:** Wallpaper fell out of favor years ago, but new styles that aren't so heavily patterned can make for wonderful additions to any room. Large-scale prints can give a room a whole new feel without giving homeowners or their guests the impression that they have stepped back in time. A simple, mural-style floral wallpaper on the walls surrounding a table in a breakfast nook can bring nature inside.

- **Pastel colors:** Nothing embodies the spring quite like pastel colors. If colorful, bright flowers dot the garden in the backyard, homeowners can bring those uplifting pastels inside by painting an accent wall or even adding some brightly colored accent furniture to rooms that could use a lift.

- **Declutter:** Clutter is often conquered during spring cleaning sessions, but homeowners who want to create more free-flowing interior spaces can downsize their furniture and/or look for multipurpose features that make it hard for clutter to take over a room. Create more open space in entertaining areas by mounting the television and getting rid of a bulky entertainment center. Create even more space by replacing rarely used end tables with a storage ottoman where books and magazines can be stored to give a room a fresh, clean look.

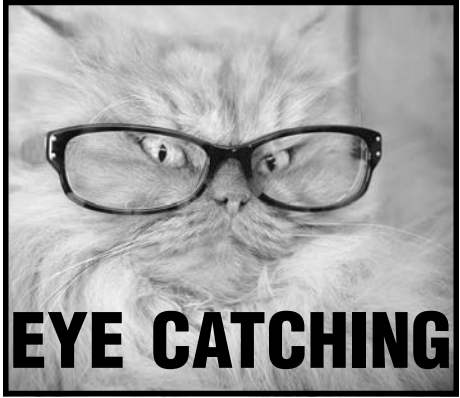
- **Accent features:** Sometimes the smallest changes to an interior space make the biggest impression. Replace dated accents like vases and table lamps with newer items that reflect the latest styles and trends. Such adjustments won't break the bank, and they can give rooms a whole new feel.

Spring is a great time to reconsider home interiors. This spring homeowners can embrace various strategies, both big and small, to give their homes a whole new feel.



## BAY PATH PRACTICAL NURSING STUDENTS HOST FUNDRAISING PLANT SALE

The Bay Path Practical Nursing (PN) Academy, PN Class of 2021 hosted a plant sale the week before Mother's Day. The members of the PN Class of 2021 offered a wide variety of plants with appropriate COVID-19 precautions in place. The fundraiser benefited an alumna diagnosed with cancer. The plants sold from an anonymous donor's garden that has been grown specifically for the sale included Chinese Money Plant (Pilea), ZZ plant, Tiger Aloe, Snake Plant, Jade Plant, Peperomia, Oxalis, Pothos, Bromeliad, Ivy, Anthurium, and Cereus plants. The funds raised totaled \$505. The fundraiser plant sale was made possible by the support of Khamphan Houatchanthara of Southbridge, Meghan Reidy of Auburn, Loise Kamero of Worcester, Tianna Welcome of Oxford, and the generosity of the management and employees of Simon Says Pizza Chef of Southbridge.



## LEGALS

### The Brimfield Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing

The Brimfield Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing on the Special Permit request of Webber Road, LLC, regarding 275 Sturbridge Road, Brimfield, Parcel ID Map 15 Block A Lot 6. The Board will consider whether the proposed Marijuana Retail Establishment, Webber Road, Ops, LLC, will be detrimental to the neighborhood. Abutters are invited to consider the proposals and provide public input. The hearing will be held at the Town Hall, 21 Main St Brimfield, MA 01010 on Thursday, June 3, 2021 at 6:30 pm.  
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EDITORIAL

# The pitfalls of ‘senioritis’

We've all heard the term 'senioritis' — perhaps even experienced a case of it ourselves — but is this diagnosis real? After some lengthy research, we say absolutely.

Senioritis is defined as, “A supposed affliction of students in their final year of high school or college, characterized by a decline in motivation or performance.” The end is near, with graduation just around the corner, and many seniors can taste freedom, but aren't quite sure what to do with it. Even with some students heading off to college, the fear of the unknown combined with a complete change in the cadence in life is enough to make several seniors come down with a serious case of senioritis. The senioritis is a way to break away from the stress and rigors of 13 years of schooling.

Some signs of the affliction include a lack of motivation, a decline in grades, or feeling as though nothing they do in the final months leading up to graduation really matters much. Most students' entire senior years of high school are spent trying to plan for the future, this can be daunting and stressful for these kids, who are still really, just kids. Some symptoms parents should look for include extreme laziness, apathy, spending all of their free time with friends away from home.

Unfortunately, the rapid decline in motivation does not go unseen by universities. After being accepted, many schools will look at a student's last semester, and a substantial decrease in grades raises a red flag. This has admissions offices questioning a prospective student's level of commitment and the question of maturity is also put on the table. If the situation is bad enough, a college or university can rescind an acceptance. Each year, thousands of students receive such letters. Sometimes a student will enter their freshman year of college already on academic probation. If a student was issued merit aid from an institution, they risk losing those funds.

There are things that can be done to help offset senioritis. One thing a student can do is to set tiny goals such as getting a B or higher on the next quiz or test, or to finish an assignment ahead of time. Working on better ways to study for tests is also crucial. Too much pressure can cause students to shut down so taking some time to relax and have fun with family and friends is a great idea.

Another idea is for parents and teachers to reassure students that life after high school is an exciting time and that not every graduate needs a definitive plan right away. Explain different opportunities for a gap year, including the pros and cons of taking one.

If your child becomes too self-destructive handing out consequences is key. Finding their currency and removing it may change their perspective and keep them on track. Remembering to reward good behavior is a must. If your child is behaving in such a way that they become emotionally removed, disobedient and disrespectful taking a gap year might be the best option as college is expensive and tuition should never go to waste. Sometimes when students see their friends off at school while they are left behind can be motivation to get back into the swing of things.

# OPINION

Views and Commentary from Sturbridge, Brimfield, Holland and Wales

## Everyday Activities Reduce Stress

Stress is a part of daily life and common, everyday tension can take a toll on both your physical and mental health. With more than half of Americans concerned about the high levels of stress they experience in their daily lives, high anxiety is practically an epidemic in this country. While it's a fact that frayed nerves are often the price you pay for an overactive lifestyle, that doesn't mean you can't diffuse the impact. In fact, odds are your daily routine includes everyday activities that have been proven to lessen the stress factor. From petting your dog to writing in your diary, there are many simple and deliberate actions you can practice to de-stress without reaching for a pill.

\*\*



TAKE THE HINT  
KAREN TRAINOR

and jotting down your feelings both good and bad, can also help relieve stress. University of Texas at Austin psychologist and researcher James Pennebaker contends that regular journaling strengthens immune cells, called T-lymphocytes. Pennebaker believes that writing about stressful events helps you come to terms with them, thus reducing the impact of these stressors on your physical health.

To boost the stress relieving effect, be sure to “count your blessings” and list them, as keeping a gratitude journal has been proven to be a powerful calming aid. On the other hand, it is also beneficial to write out your feelings and negative emotions. According to Psych Central, journaling about anger, sadness and other painful emotions helps to release the intensity of these feelings. By doing so you will feel calmer and better able to stay in the present.

\*\*

- Here are some more stress busters:
- \*It's a known fact that color can alter our moods. "Cool" colors like violet, purple and green can soothe jittery nerves. Blue has shown to be the most calming color influence of all.
  - \*Meditation can be a powerful weapon in the fight against stress, and can work to head off a panic attacks. Meditation and proper breathing can help slow the heart rate and calm nerves A quick calming trick is to close your eyes and breathe slowly and deeply, focusing on the breaths.
  - \*Prayer helps you focus within and can offer a calm perspective on the world. A research study showed that that college students who practiced a religion were less stressed than their non-religious counterparts. Other research suggests that those who are religious are less likely to have a stress-related mental illness.
  - \*Listening to music can change our moods, and in fact, music can be a powerful weapon in the battle with stress and anxiety.
  - \*Taking a deep breath and stretching often not only brings instant relief to a stressed, frazzled body, but it has been shown to lower cortisol levels, which can help reduce stress and anxiety. Deep breathing can also cause a temporary drop in blood pressure.
  - \*Naps are also therapeutic for diffusing stress. A study found that workers who nap for at least 45 minutes during the day had lower average blood pressure after suffering psychological stress compared to those who did not.
  - \*According to the Calm Clinic, whole grain snacks, blueberries, peaches, almonds, and dark chocolate are all good food choices with natural calming properties. Also, foods with magnesium, vitamin B12 (and other B vitamins), zinc, and antioxidants can be beneficial for helping you deal with stress.
- \*\*

Win Dinner for Two at the Publick House

Your tips can win you a great dinner for two at the historic Publick House Historic Inn in Sturbridge! Simply send in a hint to be entered into a random drawing. One winner per month will win a fabulous three course dinner for two at the renowned restaurant, located on Route 131 across the town common in historic Sturbridge. Because I'm in the business of dispensing tips, not inventing them (although I can take credit for some), I'm counting on you readers out there to share your best helpful hints!

Please note the contest had been suspended due to COVID restrictions for seating in restaurants. It is expected to start up again in June. All entries have been collected and will be entered into an upcoming drawing.

Do you have a helpful hint or handy tip that has worked for you? Do you have a question regarding household or garden matters? If so, why not share them with readers of Stonebridge Press newspapers? Send questions and/or hints to: Take the Hint!, C/o the Southbridge Evening News, PO Box 90; Southbridge, MA 01550. Or email KDRR@aol.com. Hints are entered into a drawing for dinner for two at the historic Publick House Inn.

If you drink coffee in the morning, a study by University College of London might convince you to switch to black tea. According to the study, drinking daily cups of the tea has a positive effect on stress hormone levels, which can help a person recover more quickly from everyday stresses.

The research, published in the journal Psychopharmacology, revealed found that people who drank black tea were able to de-stress more quickly than those who drank a placebo tea. Moreover, the participants (who drank black tea four times a day for six weeks) displayed lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol after experiencing a stressful event, as compared to a control group who drank the placebo tea for the same period of time.

\*\*

Exercise is a proven method of lowering stress levels, and many people make a workout part of their daily routine. And there's good news for those who don't go to a gym on a regular basis. Research reveals a daily 20 minute walk can be as effective as a mild tranquilizer.

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It's no surprise pets play an important role in reducing stress. What is surprising is a research study that shows pets may be better at reducing stress than a loved one! According to a report published in the September/October issue of the journal Psychosomatic Medicine, researchers examined the effects of the presence of friends, spouses and pets on the level of stress associated with certain relatively unpleasant tasks. They found that compared with human support, the presence of pets was associated with lower perceived and actual responses to stress.

\*\*

Even if you're not artistically inclined, dabbling in some form of creative art each day can boost your stress relieving hormones. In fact, the University of California – Irvine offers a class in Art Therapy, utilizing the simple act of drawing and creating art to relieve stress in two ways. First, creating artwork requires focus, and takes your mind off stress causing issues. When the project is done, your head is clearer (and less tense). Also, while creating art, you are engaged in the action to the point of being in a near meditative state. This results in many of the benefits of meditation and you may feel less stressed when you are done.

\*\*

Gardening is another pastime that has been linked to lower blood pressure and reduced anxiety. An estimated 40% of Americans find that being in the presence of a garden makes them feel relaxed and calm. Retreating to a garden can renew energy, create a sense of peace, and restore well-being. The benefits of gardening, both physically and emotionally, are well-documented. Whether planning, planting, tending, or harvesting, many gardeners describe feeling this emotional "high", which promotes well-being and relieves stress symptoms. Like meditation and relaxation programs, gardening involves both physical movement and mental concentration, a combination that has been attributed to numerous health benefits. Today, a variety of garden programs are used as Horticultural Therapy to promote health and wellness.

\*\*

Writing in a journal is therapeutic

## Two wooden sticks formed my world

I've been a percussionist since I was eight years old. For those who are unfamiliar with the term... I'm a drummer.

A man named Levi Rock handed me a pair of Ludwig 3S laminated drumsticks. Although I didn't know it at the time, the trajectory of my life was set. He then said, “Hey Bill ... strap a drum on this kid and take him outside and teach him to play Paradiddles, Triplets and Shave and a Hair Cut.” Bill Buck,



POSITIVELY SPEAKING  
GARY W. MOORE

still a dearest friend to this day, nodded and I followed him into “the cage,” the equipment room for the Kankakee Challengers Drum & Bugle Corps.

It was love at first grip as I held those sticks in hand and looked at that red, silver, and blue sparkle drum strapped to my right shoulder and resting on my left thigh. It felt natural ... as if I were born

## What to expect from a financial review



FINANCIAL FOCUS  
JEFF BURDICK

The COVID-19 pandemic may have unsettled many aspects of your life – including your financial situation. Even if your employment and earnings were not directly affected, you might have concerns about whether you've been making the right investment moves in such a stressful environment. The pandemic is, hopefully, just a once-in-a-lifetime occurrence, but different events can rattle financial markets. And changes in your own life also can affect your plans. To prepare yourself for whatever tomorrow may hold, you may want to get some professional help – but what, really, can you expect from a financial advisor?

A financial advisor will look holistically at your life – your family composition, your career, your hopes and dreams, your instincts about saving and spending money, your risk tolerance and other factors. So, during your initial meeting, and at subsequent reviews afterward, here are some of the key areas you'll discuss:

- Feelings about your financial situation – Numbers are important to financial advisors, but what's most meaningful to them is understanding what's important to their clients. Are you confident about your overall financial outlook? Are you worried about your cash flow? Are you distressed over volatility in the financial markets? Do you have concerns about your career? By getting at the answers to these and similar questions, a financial advisor can gain a clear sense of who you are and what matters to you. You can then follow an established process to build your personalized strategies and take the specific actions needed to achieve your goals.
- Progress toward your goals – It takes patience and discipline to achieve long-term goals, such as helping send your kids to college or enjoying the retirement lifestyle you've envisioned for yourself. As you save and invest for these goals over the years, you'll want to...measure your progress regularly. If you seem to be falling behind, your financial advisor can suggest moves such as increasing your investments or adjusting your investment mix.
- Changes in your family situation – Marriage or remarriage, the arrival of new children, the departure of children for college, caregiving responsibilities for older parents – any and all of these events can make a big difference in your goals and, as a result, your investment plans. During your reviews, your financial advisor will consider these changes when making suggestions or recommendations. (Changes in your family's status may affect your estate plans, so you'll also need to work with your legal advisor or other estate-planning professional.)
- Changes in your retirement plans – As you near retirement, you might decide that your original plans for this time of your life no longer suit you. For example, you might have once thought that, when you retired, you would stay close to home, volunteering and pursuing your hobbies. But now you've been thinking how much you would enjoy traveling, or perhaps even living abroad for a while. To accommodate your change in plans, a financial professional may recommend certain moves, such as working a couple of years longer or adjusting the amount you eventually withdraw from your 401(k), IRA and other retirement accounts.

As you work toward your goals, you may find it challenging to navigate the financial markets and respond to the changes in your life – but you don't have to go it alone. And knowing what to expect from a financial advisor can help smooth your journey.

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Jeff Burdick, your local Edward Jones Advisor in Sturbridge at 508-347-1420 or jeff.burdick@edwardjones.com.*



# Fluke fishing



THE GREAT  
OUTDOORS  
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TRUE

This week's picture shows Captain Mel True with his fishing buddy, John Caiazi, with a nice catch of winter flounder this past week in Massachusetts! Rhode Island winter flounder fishing in most if not all of Narragansett Bay is closed because of overfishing by commercial draggers over the years. Fluke fishing in both states have very different regulations. This year, Rhode Island has decided to raise the fluke size to 19

inches, while Massachusetts has stayed at 17 inches. The 19-inch size for fluke is totally ridiculous, and will result in many dead fish for crabs to feed on. Anyone that does any amount of fishing for fluke, can tell you that there will be a lot of them that do not survive after being released. You do not need a college education to make that evaluation. Again, it is driven by politics!

This past week, I had my Lab, Twig, at the Veterinarian's for a checkup, and was not able to go with her when the technician came to bring her in to the doctor. As I was sitting in my car with the windows rolled down, I heard a familiar sound. I looked down to see a hen turkey walking along the grassy

Turn To **RALPH**, page **A13**



Courtesy

**Captain Mel True of "FISHNET" Charters with a nice catch of winter flounder this past Saturday while fishing with his buddy on the Cape, and John Caiazi with his prize.**

# Rock and roll memorabilia



ANTIQUES,  
COLLECTIBLES  
& ESTATES  
• • • • •  
WAYNE  
TUISKULA

It may seem hard to believe, but the Beatles made their first American appearance on the Ed Sullivan show over 60 years ago, on Feb. 9, 1964. Rock and roll's origins go back further, even prior to Bill Haley and the Comet's release of Rock around the Clock's in 1954. Rock and Roll was influenced by R & B performers of the 1940s and 1950s.

In a 1950s interview Fats Domino said, "Rock & roll is nothing but rhythm & blues," according to a Rolling Stone article. Which is the first rock and roll song is the subject of debate. Mental Floss Magazine's website lists 5

songs that might be considered the first rock and roll song:

1. "That's All Right Mama" by Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup (1946)
2. 'Good Rockin' Tonight" by Wynonie Harris (1948)
3. "Rock this Joint" by Jimmy Preston and his Prestonians (1949)
4. "Saturday Night Fish Fry" by Ls Jordan & the Tympany Five (1949)
5. "Rocket 88" by Jackie Brenston and his Delta Cats (1951)

Of these songs, "Rocket 88" is considered by most to be the first rock and roll record. Ike Turner wrote the record that was recorded at Sam Phillips' Sun Records studio in Memphis. According to Mental Floss magazine, "the guitarist's amplifier had a torn speaker, and producer Sam Phillips (who a few years later, would discover Elvis) jerry-rigged it, stuffing some packing paper in the speaker cone. The unexpected result



was a fuzzy sound that defined the song's raw vibe, and became a blueprint for the guitar tone of everyone from Chuck Berry to the Rolling Stones." Later

during the 1950s, Rock grew and other acts such as Elvis Presley, Sam Cooke, Chuck Berry, and Fats Domino became popular. In the 1960s Berry

Gordon's Motown Record Company produced a string of hits by multiple artists. The Beatles, the Animals, and the Rolling Stones were some of the bands that came to the U.S. as part of the British Invasion during the '60s. The Vietnam War influenced many American performing artists during the 1960s, like Bob Dylan, Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, and the Doors. The Eagles and Southern rock bands Lynyrd Skynyrd and the Allman Brothers

were some of the most popular performers during the 1970s. Alternative musical acts such as the Ramones, Blondie, and the Talking Heads started to gain attention and fans. The 1980s and 1990s saw a wide range of styles from Van Halen and ZZ Top to the Red Hot Chili Peppers and the Pretenders.

There are a variety of items from throughout Rock's history that are popular with collectors. If you happen to have something exceptional like a Ringo Starr drum kit or Kurt Cobain played

guitar, it could sell for millions. More common things like records and posters can still be valuable though. The First U.K. pressing of Led Zeppelin's III album sold for over \$3,300 in 2011. A rare Beatles poster for a 1966 Toronto Maple Leafs Garden performance sold for \$50,000 in 2019. Even a guitar pick can be valuable. An Eddie Van Halen Ed Leffler guitar pick recently sold for \$1000 online after striking a chord with bidders.

Our next multi-estate online

auction will begin soon and end in June. Our sports and non-sports cards auction will also be running online soon. More auctions are being planned. See our website for details on upcoming events: <https://centralmassauctions.com>

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# Create a garden anywhere with straw bale gardening



GARDEN  
MOMENTS  
• • • • •  
MELINDA  
MYERS

Add productive garden space and raise your planting bed with straw bale gardening. This technique allows you to create a raised bed garden on the patio, lawn, or poor compacted soil. Straw bale gardening has been around for centuries, but thanks to Joel Karsten's book "Straw Bale Gardens," it has gained new popularity.



Melinda Myers

**The straw bale gardening technique begins with the conditioning process which is done to start the inside of the straw bale composting, so it can support plant growth.**

All you need are a few straw bales, fertilizer, a bit of compost and time to condition, plant and water your garden.

Purchase straw bales made from alfalfa, wheat, oats, rye or other cereal that have less weed seeds than hay. Start a few weeks before you plan to start planting.

Place bales in their permanent location with the cut sides up and twine parallel to the ground. When you start the condition process, they become very heavy and hard to move. Once the bales are in place, you are ready to start the conditioning process. This is done to start the inside of the straw bales composting, so they will support plant growth.

Day one spread fertilizer over the top of the bale. Use one half cup of a complete garden fertilizer or three cups of an organic fertilizer, like Milorganite. The organic fertilizers feed the microorganisms that help decompose the straw into a nutrient rich planting medium. Now thoroughly moisten the bale with water.

Continue to thoroughly soak the bale every day. On days three and five you will also add more fertilizer at the same rate used on day one.

Days seven through nine use half the rate used on day one. This would be one quarter cup of a complete garden fertil-

izer or one and a half cups of an organic fertilizer. And once again thoroughly water the bale.

On day ten you will add one cup of 10-10-10 or three cups of an organic fertilizer rich in phosphorous and potassium. This completes the conditioning process.

Bales treated with a complete fertilizer should be ready to plant. You will likely need to wait a few more days when using an organic fertilizer. The inside of the bale should be the temperature of warm bath water or cooler. If it is hotter than this, wait for the bale to cool a bit before planting.

Use a trowel to pry open a hole in the bale. Place the transplant in the hole and cover the roots with potting mix or compost.

Create a planting bed for seeds by covering the bale with a one- to two-inch-thick layer of planting mix. Follow the planting directions on the back of the seed packet.

Regular watering is critical for success with this method. Soaker hoses or drip irrigation make this an easier task. You can also use gallon milk jugs with holes in the bottom or inverted 2-liter soda bottles placed near the base of each plant to provide water where it is needed.

Give your straw bale garden a nutrient boost about once a month or as needed throughout the growing season.

You are on your way to growing a productive straw bale garden to enjoy throughout the season.

*Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including The Midwest Gardener's Handbook and Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series and the nationally-syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment TV & radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine. Her Web site is [www.melindamyers.com](http://www.melindamyers.com).*

## MOORE

continued from page **A8**

to wear it.

Time passed, but every step of my life was guided or influenced by this pair of wooden sticks. My junior high and high school years were all dominated by concert band, jazz band, marching band, and drum & bugle corps at the American Legion.

The sticks then took me to VanderCook College of Music for a degree in music education. I won a state NBTA Rudimental Drumming Solo Championship and two months later placed third in the nation. I performed and toured for a season with the National/World Champion Chicago Cavaliers. Music never became my vocation but led, guided, and influenced my professional and personal life in profoundly positive ways.

Those sticks took me on a five-week tour as a drummer for Country Star Ray Price. All along the way, I couldn't have ever imagined where my sticks would take me next.

Through the years, I've performed off and on in my church with our praise and worship team, but life, health and professional travel brought me to the point where performing ended.

A few weeks ago, Pastor Matt Smith, arranged an opportunity for me to take those wooden sticks and make music one more time, and maybe for the last time. I was so rusty... but the band pulled me along and allowed me the privilege to sit at those drums and play. I'm grateful.

What's the point of this column? One point is to emphasize the importance of music education, which I believe is tragically undervalued within our educational system. More importantly, the point is to highlight the impact of doing what you love and finding your passion. The joy of taking those two pieces of wood into my hands and making a joyful noise, for me, is priceless. It has enriched my life in indescribable ways.

You just never know the profound impact moments in time can have. Lightning may strike at any time. You must always be open to new experiences, as you never know where they will lead.

For my dad, I'm guessing it might be the first time someone handed him a baseball. For my daughter, a Pastor, the first time she was handed a Bible. For my wife, it's gardening. Drumsticks, a baseball, a Bible, a few flowers magically arranged to create beauty... all unexpected but profound moments that led to a

lifelong passion.

We can't choose those moments that lead to our passions. They just happen. We don't plan them and usually are not even aware that they've happened at all until years later. A parent can't choose for a child... and I don't think we choose at all. Maybe the passion chooses us... seizing our emotions, creating a life-long love.

I think the best we can do is give ourselves and our children a wide variety of experiences until they find what they love. And unfortunately, for some, maybe they never find that passion. It's never too late. I know people who in the latter years of their life were struck by something they learned that they loved.

Be open. Let your mind and heart explore the possibilities.

Did you have that moment in your life? If not, are you open to having it?

*Gary W. Moore is a freelance columnist, speaker, and author of three books including the award-winning, critically acclaimed, "Playing with the Enemy." Follow Gary on Twitter @ GaryW Moore721 and at [www.garywmoore.com](http://www.garywmoore.com).*

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# A lesson in building a backyard retaining wall

Flat, even landscapes are often coveted in backyards. However, flat backyards are not always so easy to find. Fortunately, varied terrain does not mean that certain landscaping plans are entirely off limits, especially for homeowners willing to build retaining walls.

Retaining walls help turn steep slopes in a yard into terraced focal points. They also can reduce soil erosion in hilly areas and can be used for aesthetic purposes, like raised planters, or to create more usable space within the yard. When an inground pool or pond is cut into a backyard hill, a retaining wall helps keep the remaining portion of that hill from collapsing into the cut-away area.

When contemplating retaining



wall projects, a lesson in physics and engineering may be needed. A sturdy and long-lasting retaining wall needs to be built in a way that will take into consideration the force of the soil and the point at which the soil will begin to slide away, advises the experts at The Family Handyman. If these calculations seem beyond the scope of your ability, installation of a retaining wall is a job best left to a professional. If you are ready to forge ahead, these tips can get you started. However, it's important to note the potential benefits of working with others who have already built a retaining wall.

- Safety first: Call to have underground utilities plotted and marked before beginning any excavation.
- Map out your trench and begin to dig. The trench should have a level, compacted base as it will be the foundation for which the retaining wall materials, be they blocks, bricks or wood, sit in. A crushed stone base will help anchor the courses and serve to promote drainage. The Family Handyman says to bury the first course of the retaining wall one-tenth the height of the wall to prevent soil behind it from pushing the bottom out.
- Check for level. When placing blocks or timbers, make sure they are even with the first and periodically check for level as you go, advises the home improvement retailer Lowes®.
- Stagger and set back. The next row of blocks or material should be positioned so that the joints are staggered for blocks, bricks or wood. A masonry blade will be needed to cut the harder materials; a circular saw will cut timber. Also, work against gravity by setting the second course slightly back from the first to help push back against the soil that is trying so hard to push forward. Repeat the process as each level is placed. Many retaining wall products are made with a lip to create this set back.
- Go with the grade. For especially steep slopes, a gradual step-up design may be more secure and more appealing than a very tall retaining wall. Each level of a stepped design should be done like the first.
- Backfill with stone for drainage. Using a layer of stone behind the retaining wall can help successfully direct water away so it will not increase the weight of the soil behind the wall and push against the retaining wall, advises The Home Depot.

# Mulching mistakes to avoid

Landscape features vary significantly from house to house. Some homeowners may prefer water features on their properties, while others focus on flowers that would be the envy of a botanical garden. Regardless of those preferences, lawn and garden enthusiasts who want to make their properties as idyllic as possible may eventually look to mulch to help them accomplish that goal.

Mulch helps soil retain moisture, which promotes strong, healthy flowers, plants, trees, and shrubs. And because soil beneath mulch retains more moisture than soil that's not protected by mulch, homeowners won't have to spend as much time watering mulched landscapes. That saves time and conserves water, which can be a big benefit in areas prone to drought and/or especially hot summers. Mulch also helps to suppress weed growth, which can ensure all that hard work needed to create an eye-catching garden won't be compromised by the presence of unsightly, thirsty weeds.

Mulching seems like a simple task, and it can be. But that does not mean homeowners cannot make mistakes when mulching. The following are some common mulching mistakes to avoid as lawn and garden season hits full swing.

- Not enough mulch: Mulch is ineffective when spread too thin. The Virginia Cooperative Extension at Virginia Tech and Virginia State University recommends applying mulch no less than two inches in depth. Anything less than that will prove ineffective at preventing weed growth and helping the soil retain moisture, and that means you will



need to water more often.

- Poorly located mulch: Mulch should not be placed too close to plant stems or tree trunks. When it is, tissue is so wet that it makes for a perfect environment for disease and insect infestation.
- Failing to mulch to the drip line: The drip line of a tree refers to the outermost circumference of the tree's canopy from which water drips onto the ground. The VCE recommends mulching to the drip line of a plant or tree, which ensures the plant or tree will get the most out of the mulch. Mulching to the drip line also minimizes competition from the grass, leading to stronger plants and trees.
- Failing to weed before mulching: Weeds should be removed prior to mulching. If they're not, the mulch can provide the same growing environment for weeds that you're trying to create for your plants and trees.

Mulching benefits a landscape in myriad ways, especially when homeowners avoid some common mulching mistakes.

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Minimum purchase of four. Interest accrues from the purchase date but is waived if paid in full within 12 months.



<sup>1</sup>DETAILS OF OFFER: Offer expires 5/31/2021. Not valid with other offers or prior purchases. Buy one (1) window or entry/patio door, get one (1) window or entry/patio door 40% off, and 12 months \$0 down, 0 monthly payments, 0% interest when you purchase four (4) or more windows or entry/patio doors between 5/2/2021 and 5/31/2021. 40% off windows and entry/patio doors are less than or equal to lowest cost window or entry/patio door in the order. Additional \$50 off each window or entry/patio door, minimum purchase of 4, taken after initial discount(s), when you purchase by 5/31/2021. Military discount applies to all active duty, veterans and retired military personnel. Military discount equals \$300 off your entire purchase and applies after all other discounts, no minimum purchase required. Subject to credit approval. Interest is billed during the promotional period, but all interest is waived if the purchase amount is paid before the expiration of the promotional period. Financing for GreenSky® consumer loan programs is provided by federally insured, federal and state chartered financial institutions without regard to age, race, color, religion, national origin, gender or familial status. Savings comparison based on purchase of a single unit at list price. Available at participating locations and offer applies throughout the service area. See your local Renewal by Andersen location for details. License number available upon request. Some Renewal by Andersen locations are independently owned and operated. "ENERGY STAR" is a registered trademark of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. "Renewal by Andersen" and all other marks where denoted are trademarks of Andersen Corporation. ©2021 Andersen Corporation. All rights reserved. ©2021 Lead Surge LLC. All rights reserved.



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NEW LISTING



ON DEPOSIT



ON DEPOSIT

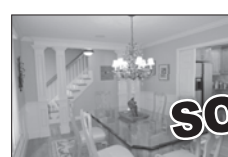
**WEBSTER LAKE** - 11 Bay View Rd! One of the Lake's Premier Properties! 9,822' of Real Nice Set on .68 Acres of Park Lake Grounds with 297' Waterfront! Over \$4 Million Spent! Nothing was Spared! 18 Spacious Rooms! 5 Water View Bedrooms, 4 with their Own Bathrooms! 5.5 Bathrooms Total! Brazilian Cherry Hardwood Floors, Grand & Spiral Stairways! Elevator from the Ground Floor up 3 to the Master Suite! In-door Resistance Swimming Pool, Hot Tub & Bathroom with Steam Shower just off the Mirrored Exercise Room! Billiard Room! Media Room with Custom Cabinetry & Wet Bar! Fantastic Center Island Granite Kitchen with Viking Gas Range, Sub-Zero Refrigerator, 16' Butler's Pantry & Breakfast Bar! Open Floor Plan! Dining Area, Family Room with Cherry Entertainment Center & Wet Bar! Open Formal Dining Room, Fireplace Living Room & Atrium! Library with Private Deck! Waterfront Master Suite with Private Office, Bedroom with Triple Glass Door to its Private Deck with Panoramic Lake Views, 3 Walk-in Closets, Lake View Bathroom with Huge Multi-Head Shower, Whirlpool Tub, Double Vanity Sinks & Separate Commode/Bidet/Pedestal Sink Area! 16 Zones of Updated Geothermal Heat & Air Conditioning - 30 Tons! Recessed Lighting & Sprinkler System Through Out! 3 Car Heated Garage! Full House Generator! Slate Roof! All Decks & Railings Brazilian Ipe Hardwood! Copper Gutters & Downspouts! It's Time to Reward Yourself! **\$2,249,900.00**

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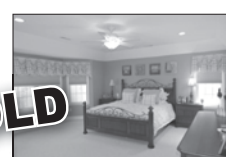
**WEBSTER** - 44 Sunny Ave! Sought After Neighborhood! 7 Room 1,632' Colonial! 1st Flr Features Open Flr Plan, Kit w/IsL, Din Area, Fam Rm, Frpld Liv Rm, 1.5 Baths! 2nd Flr w/3 Bedrooms & Bathrm! 2.5 Baths Total! Tile Flrs Throughout! LPGas Heat & Hot Water! Town Services! **\$289,900.00**



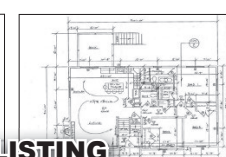
ON DEPOSIT



SOLD



NEW LISTING



**DUDLEY** - 12 Susan Drive! Ideal 7 Rm Split! Beautifully Landscaped 18,615' Lot including a Heated In-Ground Pool House! Fully Appliance Kitchen w/Corian Counters, Island, Hrdwd Floor & Door to the Deck! Dining Rm w/Hrdwds & Slider to Deck overlooking the Pool! Living Rm w/Bay Window, Brick Fireplace w/Wood Pellet Insert & Fujitsu Wall Mount A/C Split Unit! 3 Comfortable Bdrms all w/ Double Closets, Spacious 12x16' Master! Hallway Full Bathrm w/Skylight & Door to the Master! Lower Level 13x24' Family Rm w/Recessed Lighting! Convenient Half Bath! 2 Car Heated Garage! Many 2018 Updates - Roof, Siding, Windows, Buderus Furnace, Hot Water Super Store, Oil Tank & Pool Liner! Out Back a Garden Area & Storage Shed! Town Services! Won't Last! **\$339,000.00**

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ON DEPOSIT

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ON DEPOSIT

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WEBSTER - 155 THOMPSON ROAD



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Several businesses. 4784 sq bldg. Zoned B5. Off  
1395 exit 1. High Traffic & Visibility. Excellent  
Location! assisted sale **\$695,000.**

WEBSTER • 9 BIRCHWOOD DRIVE



SORRY, SOLD!

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MORE COULD YOU WANT? INGROUND POOL? OK!! has that TOO!! All  
Painted!! SS Appliances. New Tankless Hot Water Boiler. **\$467,000**

WEBSTER - 103 UPPER GORE RD



SORRY, SOLD!

Estate Sale! Scenic View of Beautiful Webster Lake!  
Boarding Stone Walls! Split Level! 3 Bedrooms,  
Kitchen, Dining Rm, Hollywood Bath! Master Bedroom  
& Master Bath. Fireplaced Living Room! Finished Lower  
Level w/1/2 Bath, Garage. "Salt Water" Inground Pool.  
**\$319,000.**

WEBSTER • 233 - 235 NORTH MAIN STREET



SORRY, SOLD!

large 3 Family- a rare find! 1st Floor spacious  
2 bedroom apartment. 2 - 2nd floor, 3 bedroom  
apartments Walkout basement to off street parking.  
**\$289,900.**

## On the shores of Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg

Webster Lake - 100 Lakeside Ave



SORRY, SOLD!

**WEBSTER LAKE! PANORAMIC VIEWS! BEAUTIFUL SUNSETS!** Extraordinary Waterfront Contemporary! Architect designed with Lake Living in mind. Custom Built with Attention to High Quality & Detail. Outstanding open concept, water view from almost every room. Nicely situated on a 25 acre level peninsula, 180' +/- prime lake frontage! Enhanced by a all natural shoreline! All you need to live is located on the 1st floor. Grand 2 story foyer, cozy fireplaced living room, gourmet kitchen, lake facing dining, formal dining room, media room & spacious 1st floor guest BR Suite w/private bath. Incredible 2nd floor fireplaced lake-facing corner master suite w/luxurious private bath, 3 more 2nd floor BRS & full bath! Something Special! Remember, Timing Is Everything! **\$1,075,000.**

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**Dudley:** 3-4 Bedrooms, 7-8 Rooms,  
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Natural woodwork  
**2 Ellis St. ~ \$324,900**

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## DUDLEY • 57 Mill Road



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KIEVRA  
continued from page A1

America and the "mudslinging" against "past Americans who played large roles in the creation and preservation of our nation," whose statues are being toppled and names scrubbed from public buildings and places for what mudslingers deem moral and political failures.

"No one says our nation was, or those who passed it on to us, were without sin," he shared. "Rather, I am here to warn against the sin of pride. This is the sin of those who today so much enjoy rendering harsh judgments against those who acted in earlier days in harshly judging those who produced our nation, today's unforgiving critics are guilty of their own sin. It is the sin of presentism."

Will explained that presentism is "the fallacy of judging by our standards the behavior of those who acted in circumstances very different than ours," and that the only cure is a deep historical knowledge. "Only such knowledge can give us the ability to imagine what it was like to have been America's leaders trying to act morally, as we all must try, in situations not of their choosing or of their making," he said. "What I'm asking for, what I'm pleading for, is imagination. Usually when we speak of imagination, it is prospective imagination, imagination of the future But what we urgently need now is retrospective imagination. The ability to imagine the past," he said, adding that we need to reimagine the textures of a time long ago, with social settings, customs, political practices, and institutions and ethical standards much different than we have today.

He asked those in attendance "on this 21st century Sunday morning" to return in their imaginations to 167 years ago when the Kansas Nebraska Act became law. It allowed popular majorities in Kansas and Nebraska to decide whether to permit enslavement. Will asked the audience to imagine the scene as politically engaged Americans in 1954, and asked "What would you have advocated? What would you have done?"

Will shared that while Lincoln was against enslavement, he was also opposed to allowing the Union to dissolve, which would have called self-government into doubt. He "adopted the ethic of responsibility and committed himself to the patience of politics, to the long path of maneuver and persuasion." Will said that to understand such dilemmas that politicians confronted in the past requires more than just the grounding of facts in history; it requires imagination and the empathy that imagination can nourish. "Our nation today needs the empathy that can only come from imagination and the ability to imagine oneself in other people's shoes. The ability to reason, and maneuver, and compromise as they had to do."

Will called presentism a "pandemic of vindictiveness," and a pandemic, though not of a virus, but something for which there is no vaccine. "Historically-grounded empathy inoculates us against the sin of pride that is at the cold heart of presentism," said Will.

Will said that he hoped that the graduates' time at Assumption had provided them with two talents that would make them immune to such moral vanity-a talent for gratitude and a talent for praising. "Having gratitude for those men and women in the American past, who, like

all of us, were flawed but who nevertheless handed on to us a nation that had fewer flaws than when they inherited it," he said. "Praising is an act of humility, an act of homage to those who have been in the arena and who have distinguished themselves there."

He concluded his "final lecture" with an old English couplet: "The couplet is: 'All men are created equal. They differ only in the sequel.' You are the sequel to this excellent University's fine touch," he said. "You will go forth from here and live in the present. But you will, I hope and expect, leave the nation better, because you will avoid presentism. You will do so by appreciating the always crooked road we Americans are always traveling toward a more perfect Union."

Assumption President Francesco C. Cesareo, Ph.D., also emphasized the enduring importance of a liberal arts education. "While so much changed this past year, what did not change was the essence and value of your Assumption education," he said. "The pandemic has made more evident the value of the Catholic liberal education you have received in the last four years. You have come to appreciate that enduring ideas matter and provide a framework for understanding our contemporary world. You have explored the deepest questions of the human heart, which transcend time and place."

President Cesareo added that these questions include understanding the common good, cultivating good judgment and understanding complexity, finding one's purpose in life, and understanding the responsibilities we have to one another, especially among the most vulnerable. "A Catholic liberal education engages these questions and has prepared you to live out your vocations, professions and to be lifelong learners," he said. "It has provided you with the wisdom and courage to confront the challenges we face during a time like this and that you will face throughout your life."

Valedictorian Hannah White '21 also spoke of Assumption's emphasis on vocation and its importance as she and her classmates enter "a pandemic-stricken workforce with no guarantee that we'll find our ideal entry-level job, much less a clear career path," she said. "Over the past four years we have become familiar with the tagline, 'Light the way.' How can we be a light for others when we ourselves cannot see through the darkness of the unknown?"

White shared her experience in the SOPHIA program as one example in how Assumption helps its students understand what it means to choose a vocation. "Our vocations-our life callings- affect all aspects of how we live, work, and engage with the world around us," she said. "Although we find it difficult to discern our future through the haze of uncertainty, remember this: our life purpose is not some far off goal that will allow us to be happy forever. Vocation is an ever ongoing process of self-discovery. It is living magnanimously, striving for the greatest good, especially in the day to day. It is using what gifts we have to serve others who have nothing. It is living in authentic community with others, where we help each other bear our burdens. Even if our futures are shrouded in darkness, in our vocations we have the light we need to see the next right step."

In closing, President Cesareo reminded the graduates that they are the first

class to graduate from Assumption University, representing a milestone in the history of Assumption. "Throughout its history, Assumption has shown itself to be a resilient institution, overcoming challenges that on the surface seemed insurmountable," he shared. "This year, you have also shown yourself to be resilient as you adapted to the changes that were necessary as we addressed the impact of the pandemic. The sacrifices you made have allowed you to grow as a person in ways that were unexpected. In this way, the pandemic shaped your education as it shaped you as well. Thank you for the many ways you contributed to making Assumption a better place over the last four years. As you move on to the next chapter of your journey, I congratulate you on all that you have accomplished as students at Assumption. We look forward to the many contributions you will make to our society because of your education at your alma mater."

During the ceremony, Will and Vincent Strully, Jr., founder and CEO of the New England Center for Children, received honorary degrees. Will was honored for his "steadfast pursuit of knowledge

and distinguished commentary [that] has enriched the American media landscape," while Strully was recognized for his "four decades of selfless service" in which he has dedicated himself to "empowering those in the autism community."

Assumption University, founded in 1904 by the Augustinians of the Assumption, is New England's premier university for high-quality education, integrating career preparation and education of the whole person, drawing upon the best in the rich and centuries-long tradition of Catholic higher education. Assumption, located in Worcester, Massachusetts, seeks to provide students with a transformative education that forms graduates who possess critical intelligence, thoughtful citizenship, and compassionate service. The University offers 34 majors and 49 minors in the liberal arts, sciences, business, nursing and professional studies; as well as master's and continuing education degrees and professional certificate programs. For more information about Assumption University, please visit [www.assumption.edu](http://www.assumption.edu).

ADDRESSES  
continued from page A1

raiser for the Brimfield Firefighters Association. Fire services in the town are provided entirely by an on-call force of local community residents. Chief Contois noted that the Department is always open to residents who are interested in joining the department.

Contois is hoping a significant number of residents make use of the program. He notes that not only will it

help first responders get to an address more efficiently, but that visitors and delivery drivers will make use of the better numbering.

"It's a win - win for everyone," he said. "Emergency vehicles will get to your house quicker as well as your online shopping packages!"

Signs are also designed to help to assist motorists calling to report incidents on roads they may not be familiar with. The program started in May and residents should see the signs going up around town next month.

RALPH  
continued from page A9

area of the parking lot only few feet from the highway. As she walked, she was "putting," a sound female wild turkey make. I soon had three hens and a jake (one year old turkey following the vocal hen to the edge of the woods. Suddenly, a loud gobble from a tom turkey was heard as he came into view that was sporting a long beard.

It was not long before they were all in a small patch of woods alongside of the highway when the vocal hen darted across the highway, nearly being hit by a car. I knew this was not going to end well. As the vocal hen called to the rest of the flock, the Jake bird and hen attempted to cross the road also. One made it across the road by running, but the second bird took flight and nearly crashed through the window of a small car. I watched the Tom bird in the woods as he seemed to be wondering were all his flock had gone. His neck was stretched high, as he stood motionless in the woods. Suddenly, he headed for the road to cross over. The Tom bird and the hen were the last to attempt a crossing to the other side of the road.

The Tom turkey quickly ran across the road safely, but the hen turkey was a bit slower crashing into the side of a car. The driver never touched his brakes, or even slowed down after the collision. The big bird lay motionless on the side of the road, and not a single car slowed, as the turkey's feathers were blowing across the road. Not all colli-

sions with wildlife are preventable, but many are. Drivers need to give wildlife a break. The driver not only killed the hen, but also another flock of young turkeys. There will be a lot of activity with wildlife crossing roads at this time of year. Whitetail deer will be having their young, as well as many other four-legged animals. Canada geese are also raising their young, as well as ducks, and often cross roads with their young broods.

A pair of Eagles continue to make their home on the Meadow Pond, Whitinsville. They were spotted by a couple of fishermen last week. One eagle was carrying home dinner (fish) when he dropped it in flight. As soon as it hit the water, the second Eagle tried to make a recovery, but failed. They sure are nice to see in the area. The Eagle restoration project started years ago by Mass. Fish & Wildlife and sure is a great success story. It mostly funded by sportsmen's monies.

Stripers are in in many areas, both on the Cape and Rhode Island waters, with some legal-size fish being caught. It is only a matter of days before the bigger fish move in. The Providence River should become active with legal size stripers by the time you read this column. Porgies were in the river last week and snagging a few to catch stripers should improve daily if the commercial Porgy boats do not take them all!

Seabass fishing opened this past Tuesday in Massachusetts!

Take a Kid Fishing & Keep Them Rods Bending!



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# Open House Directory


<b>(C)</b> Condo <b>(B)</b> Business <b>(P)</b> Land	<b>(X)</b> Condo <b>(U)</b> Duplex <b>(L)</b> Mobile Home	<b>(M)</b> Multi-Family <b>(S)</b> Single Family <b>(A)</b> Apartment	<b>(T)</b> Townhouse <b>(D)</b> Adult Community <b>(W)</b> Waterfront	
ADDRESS	STYLE	TIME	PRICE	REALTOR/SELLER/PHONE
<b>SUNDAY, MAY 23</b>				
<b>WEBSTER</b>				
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**Please contact June Simakauskas 508-909-4062**




**Jo-Ann Szymczak** 774-230-5044  
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**Outreach Coordinator  
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The Outreach Coordinator performs professional and administrative work in communicating programs and services with the Town's senior population. This is a 37.5 hour per week benefited position. High School Diploma with some additional coursework in Social Work, Human Services or Health Service required along with at least 1 year of working with the elderly; or any equivalent combination of education and experience. Please see job description for complete list of qualifications and responsibilities. Salary range: \$20.61/hr – \$24.93/hr depending on qualifications. Please apply online at <https://www.townofcharlton.net/158/Human-Resources> no later than **May 27, 2021.**

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**TOWN OF SPENCER  
SEWER DEPARTMENT**

**Laborer Sewer Department:** Assist in the operation and maintenance of a Municipal Sewer System duties including but not limited to, equipment and collections system maintenance, operate filter press, operate sludge disposal process, respond to emergency calls, pump station inspection, grounds keeping and snow removal, record keeping, and filing. The position requires a high school diploma or general education degree (GED), and/or one to three years of related experience working in wastewater treatment plants with three years of experience performing equipment and plant maintenance, or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Opportunity for advancement to Assistant Chief Operator with ability to obtain a Grade 5 Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator's License within a time period set by Sewer Commissioners and Superintendent.

Submit application letter, resume and standard Town application form, available at [www.spencerma.gov](http://www.spencerma.gov) to Town of Spencer, Human Resources Department, 157 Main Street, Spencer, MA 01562. Open until filled. Reviews begin immediately. Subject to Union Rules and Regulations.

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**TOWN OF SPENCER  
SEWER DEPARTMENT**

**Assistant Chief Operator Sewer Department:** Assist in the operation and maintenance of a Municipal Sewer System including Laboratory analyses, equipment maintenance, scheduled weekend rotation, collections system maintenance, respond to emergency calls, record keeping, and filing. The position requires a high school diploma or general education degree (GED), and/or three to five years of related experience working in wastewater treatment plants with three years of experience performing equipment and plant maintenance, or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Grade 4 Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator's License is required with the ability to obtain a Grade 5C within a time period set by Sewer Commissioners and Superintendent.

Submit application letter, resume and standard Town application form, available at [www.spencerma.gov](http://www.spencerma.gov) to Town of Spencer, Human Resources Department, 157 Main Street, Spencer, MA 01562. Open until filled. Reviews begin immediately. Subject to Union Rules and Regulations.

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**Treasurer/Collector  
Town of Charlton**

The Full-time Treasurer/Collector provides high-level financial, administrative and technical work involving the receipt of money and the collection of all taxes due to the town. Bachelor's degree in accounting, finance or related field; a minimum of five years' experience in a municipal supervisory position; or any equivalent combination of education and experience. Massachusetts certification as Treasurer and Tax Collector preferred, but not required. Ability to become bonded. Please see job description for complete list of qualifications and responsibilities. Salary range: \$36.39 – \$40.17 hourly depending on qualifications. Please apply online at <https://www.townofcharlton.net/158/Human-Resources> no later than **May 27, 2021.**

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**HR Generalist – Full-Time  
Town of Charlton**

The HR Generalist performs responsible and complex administrative work assisting the Human Resource Director with the overall responsibilities of the department. Responsibilities include scheduling interviews, performing reference checks, onboarding, scheduling trainings, maintaining employee files and database, payroll processing as well as many other duties. Familiarity with unions and FLSA standards a plus. Must have strong attention to detail. Bachelor's Degree in related field; at least 5 years of related work experience preferred, or any equivalent combination of education and experience. Please see job description for complete list of qualifications and responsibilities. Salary range: \$22.59/hr – \$24.93/hr depending on qualifications. Please apply online at <https://www.townofcharlton.net/158/Human-Resources> no later than **May 25, 2021.**

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**FULL TIME MAINTENANCE LABORER  
SPENCER HOUSING AUTHORITY**

Applicant must possess a valid driver's license and minimum 5 years' experience in maintenance repair and/or one of the building trades. Applicant must be able to pass a pre-employment physical, drug test and background check. Applicant must be a self-motivated, team member, who is deeply respectful of elderly, handicapped and low-income families. An employee in this classification will be expected to perform a variety of unskilled and semi-skilled tasks in the upkeep of the properties and grounds including cleaning apartments following tenants use to prepare for re-leasing, removing tiles and other floor coverings, lifting heavy objects, mowing lawns, pruning trees and shrubs, snow removal and use of a variety of hand tools and implements. This position requires regular on-call service hours when the staff member cannot travel or be incapacitated in any way. Wage is set by Labor & Industry standards. Supervision is received from the Maintenance Supervisor. Spencer Housing Authority employees are not permitted to smoke anywhere on housing property. Spencer Housing Authority maintenance employees are required to acquire a Mass Pesticide Applicators License within a year from hiring.

Job descriptions and applications are available for pick up at the Spencer Housing Authority office, 13 McDonald Street, Spencer, MA 01562. (508) 885-3904 daily from 7:00 AM – 3:00 PM.

Applications will be accepted until 2:00 PM on Friday May 28, 2021.  
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# 5 outdoor projects that add value

Exterior renovations can enhance the appearance of a property and make it more enjoyable for homeowners. Certain renovations have the potential to add value to a home, while others may do the opposite. Learning which one have the largest return on investment can help homeowners select features that will have the most positive impact.

Curb appeal goes a long way toward attracting potential buyers. According to the National Association of Realtors, first impressions of a property have a strong influence on buyers. Landscaping and external features can do much to influence such impressions.

- **Lawn care program:** Investing in a lawn care program that consists of fertilizer and weed control application and can be transferred over to a subsequent home owner is an attractive feature. NAR says such a care program can recover \$1,000 in value of the \$330 average cost, or a 303 percent ROI.
- **Low-maintenance lifestyle:** When choosing materials for projects, those that offer low-maintenance benefits can be preferential. These include low-maintenance patio materials, composite decking, vinyl fencing, and inorganic mulched beds.
- **Fire pit:** A fire pit can be used for much of the year. In the spring and summer, the firepit is a great place to congregate to roast marshmallows or sip wine and gaze into the fire. In the fall, the fire pit can make for a cozy retreat. A fire pit that has a gas burner is low-maintenance, and the National Association



of Landscape Professionals says that most can recoup about \$4,000 of their \$6,000 average price tag.

- **Softscaping:** Hardscaping refers to structures like outdoor kitchens or decks. Softscaping involves the living elements of the landscape. Hiring a landscape designer to install trees, shrubs, natural edging, and rock elements can do wonders toward improving the look and value of a home.
- **Pool or water feature:** In certain markets, particularly hot climates, a pool or another water feature is a must-have. However, in other areas where outdoor time is limited, a pool or water feature can actually lower the value of a home. Speaking with a real estate professional can give homeowners an idea of how a pool will fare in a given neighborhood.

Outdoor improvements can improve the marketability of a home, as well as enhance its appearance and function.

## GRADS

continued from page A1

this class. A class made of accountants, police officers, sports executives, salesmen, entrepreneurs, or whatever path you decide to follow. I'm betting on you. You know why? Because we've experience everything together. We've made it through a global pandemic – We even suffered the loss of a fellow Bison,” said Phillips, referring to their classmate Hallie Linacre, who passed away in 2020 and was honored at the ceremony with the presentation of her degree to her parents. “We did what Bison do. We rallied around one another, we gave each other a shoulder to lean on, we became closer, we got back on our feet.”

The class of 2020 was celebrated the following day after last year's ceremony had to be moved to a digital celebration due to restrictions imposed from the pandemic. Student speaker Taylor Ward, a resident of Hopkinton, who acknowledged that while the pandemic did put a damper on their initial celebration it certainly made their class one Nichols will never forget.

“Well, COVID, thanks to you, the whole world will remember our class. Our graduating class will always be famous. We will be remembered as the class that lost their graduation, sports, memories, where the whole world felt our pain. Pretty cool though that our graduating class will be taught now as history, will be referred as to ‘It could be worse, when I was in school, I lost my senior year,’” Ward said comically. “Where I am today, honestly, would not have happened without COVID. We might have not realized in the past four years, but Nichols has actually prepared us to succeed in a situation like this. During COVID, I was able to secure a full-time job, move into my own apartment and still be so involved with Nichols College. I know for a fact all my classmates are killing it in life through social media and those LinkedIn updates.”

Both classes hosted the same guest speaker at their ceremonies, Henry M. Thomas, III, the President and CEO of the Urban League of Springfield. In his speech, Thomas implored both classes to charge forward towards achieving their goals and to not let the fear of failure stand in their way.

“My advice to you is fundamental: whatever your aspirational dreams are, you should set your sight for it, go out and fight for it, use all you might for it. You can do it. Don't let anyone convince you that you can't,” Thomas said. “It was because of your will to succeed that you have accomplished and learned so much at Nichols College. I'm thinking about



Jason Bleau

Ferryton Kpalie of Burlington, N.J. poses with his mom in a pre-graduation photo.



Jason Bleau

Rachel Forte of Douglas celebrates her graduation with her father, Doug.



Jason Bleau

Class of 2021 Valedictorian Taylor Ward addresses his fellow students.



Jason Bleau

Ketnote speaker Henry M. Thomas, III accepts an honorary degree from Nichols before his speech.



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