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# Spirits bright at Auburn High School's holiday craft fair



Kevin Flanders Photos

Maverick MacDonald, 5, of Woodstock, CT, shares his Christmas list with Santa.

AUBURN – Although this is Santa's busiest time of the year, he always makes time to stop at Auburn High School and say hello to youngsters.

On Dec. 14, families from throughout the area attended the annual holiday craft fair at AHS. The event is one of the largest fairs in the area, with hundreds of vendors occu-

pying two floors. No matter what guests were searching for, there was something for everyone's Christmas list.

The event also featured several AHS student volunteers who assisted vendors and served meals throughout the day. See More pictures on A6 & A7!

# Local nurse receives grant for continuing education

AUBURN — Elizabeth Lartey, LPN, of Worcester (formerly of Ghana), a nurse at Life Care Center of Auburn, has been awarded grants for her nursing studies at Fitchburg State University.

Lartey was accepted as an undergraduate evening transfer student to the Nursing-LPN to BSN program at Fitchburg State University in March of 2019 for the Fall of 2019 semester. In a letter by Director of Admissions, Jinawa McNeil, Lartey was congratulated and wished well for a successful and rewarding career at Fitchburg State University. In August 2019, Lartey received notification of grant eligibility and award with MASSGrant in pursuit of higher education.

Lartey is a graduate of Bay Path RVTHS Practical Nursing Academy, PN Class of 2018. She was inducted to the National Technical Honor Society and was an officer of the UNICEF Club (Chair). Lartey attended training at Framingham State University's Sigma Theta Tau International Rho Phi Chapter,



Elizabeth Lartey

"Understanding Gender Identity to Better Serve Our Clients." She was a volunteer at Blood Pressure Clinics in Charlton, and a competitor for SkillsUSA District CPR/First Aid. Lartey is Infusion Therapy and Central Line Care certified.

## Overlook CEO named 2019 Outstanding Woman in Business

WORCESTER

Tameryn Campbell, President & CEO of Masonic Health System of Massachusetts, Inc., was recently named one of six outstanding women in business by the Worcester Business Journal. This year 65 nominations were received, with the Worcester Business Journal selecting just six nominees to be named Outstanding Women in Business.

Campbell joined Masonic Health of MA, Inc. (The Overlook's parent organization) in 2014 to help redefine the overall business strategy, spearhead a financial and cultural transformation and bring The Overlook back to its status as a highly sought-after retirement community.

When Campbell was hired, The Overlook relied on money from the Masonic Trust to fund daily operations. Her main goal was to create a self-sustaining retirement community and a work environment with great morale and the highest quality of care. In four short years, she helped guide the organization to an unprecedent-



#### **Tameryn Campbell**

ed outcome. In 2018 the organization reinvested \$1.3 million dollars back into the Trust for the first time ever and achieved several industry achievements and satisfaction awards.

For more than 100 years, The Overlook, sponsored by the Masonic Health System of MA, Inc. (MHS) has served thousands of Massachusetts' older adults and has also successfully partnered with and managed Briarwood Retirement Community in Worcester for the past eight years.

Under Campbell's leadership, the organization has begun to broaden its

involvement with the surrounding community, expanding its summer concert series on the common and offering regular farmer's markets. A group of The Overlook residents also formed the Brew Crew. The brewery is wittily and suitably named "Senior Moment" and the craft beers have won several local awards and been highlighted as a "gem" of New England on Chronicle, Channel 5's Boston television program.

Campbell's vision is to expand The Overlook's large campus beyond its singular use as a retirement community to a popular mixed-use environment, attracting chefs, artisans, select retailers and visitors of all ages from the surrounding region and beyond. Campbell believes strongly in the growing evidence that mixed-use environments and an intergenerational approach will benefit residents, families and team members--giving them immediate proximity and access to shopping, restaurants, entertainment, outdoor activities and more.

Please Read CAMPBELL, page A4

## Joshua Hyde Library offers an evening of intrigue



#### BY KEVIN FLANDERS STAFF WRITER

STURBRIDGE – Residents are eagerly anticipating a night of mystery and intrigue next month at Joshua Hyde Public Library.

On Thursday, Jan. 16, the library will present its annual Stewing Over Mysteries event at the Publick House. Set for 6:30 p.m., the event will once again feature dinner and a presentation from a New England mystery author. Since 2011, residents have enjoyed the opportunity to get out on a winter night and have some fun with friends.

"This is not a fundraiser, but a community event subsidized by the Friends of the JHPL and supported by the Publick House and Old Sturbridge Inn & Reeder Family Lodges," said Becky Plimpton, the director of Joshua Hyde Public Library.

This year's featured mystery author is Peter Swanson, who has penned five novels, including "The Kind Worth Killing." The novel was the winner of the New England Society Book Award. Swanson also wrote "Before She Knew Him," "All the Beautiful Lies," and "Her Every Fear," which was named an NPR Book of the Year recipient. A graduate of Trinity College, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and Emerson College, Swanson lives in Somerville. His books have been translated into over 30 languages, and his stories, poetry, and features have appeared in several magazines. These include Asimov's Science Fiction, The Atlantic Monthly, Measure, The Guardian, The Strand Magazine, and Yankee Magazine.

Residents and library officials alike are looking forward to Swanson's presentation. There is always plenty to learn about mystery and suspense writing when you hear from the author in person. Moreover, the event always attracts many local writers and aspir-

#### Please Read LIBRARY, page A4



# Charlton to assess Friday tax deadlines

#### **BY JASON BLEAU** VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON – While Charlton's tax deadline doesn't always land on a Friday, it did in 2019 with Nov. 1 landing at the end of the week when Charlton's town hall is normally closed.

As a result, taxpayers who waited until the final day of the pay period were unable to pay their taxes without an interest fee, a situation that disappointed one resident, Stephan Sage, who brought his concerns to the attention of selectmen in late November. Sage said there were actually two occasions in 2019 where tax payments were

due by a Friday and the town hall was closed both times.

'When real estate tax bills are due on a Friday — and it happened, I believe, in February and on Nov. 1 — the town hall is closed on that Friday. I questioned the folks in the tax collector's office what happens to people who don't get their taxes in on that Thursday, Oct. 31. When they come in on Monday, they will be charged interest. I thought that was kind of unfair to be penalized for the fact that the day the taxes are due this building is closed so you cannot come in and pay that bill," Sage said.

Sage did acknowledge that this applies more to people

who wait until the last minute or don't use online payments for their taxes. Charlton does offer online bill payments and encourages all citizens to pay their taxes promptly rather than wait, but every citizen's financial situation and availability is unique. It was also noted that this is not a common occurrence and that the deadline won't be on a Friday again until 2024. Still, Sage found it disappointing that taxpayers who do wait until the state mandated Nov. 1 deadline to pay, should it land on a Friday, would be forced to pay extra if the town hall was not available to them. He suggested one solution is to extend payments to Monday without penalty in those circumstances.

"That would be, to me, a simple solution," said Sage. "The second solution would be that in those years where Friday is a tax due date, you could have employees in that office take another day off and come in on that Friday to make that building available to people to come in."

Selectmen didn't dismiss the idea of making changes to accommodate taxpayers, however they were indecisive on what compromise can or could be made. Selectman Bill Borowski even questioned whether or not the town should go back to opening, at least partially, on Fridays altogether. The town had previously decided to close on that day each week as a way to cut costs.

"I've never seen quantitively what the benefits are to close on Friday, and I'm sure there are," Borowski said. "I'd probably weigh that against the qualitative impact."

Selectman John McGrath made a suggestion to have the tax collector assess the situation and give information to help selectmen make a more educated decision on how to handle Friday tax deadlines in the future.

### Kaitlyn Johnson of Auburn selected for Lasell Student Luncheon Series

NEWTON — Kaitlyn Johnson, a Marketing major at Lasell University, joined faculty from the institution's School of Business at an exclusive luncheon.

Lasell University School of Business faculty invited several students, including Johnson (a Auburn resident), to meet in November at the first of several events. It was a great opportunity for the two groups to connect on a more personal basis and understand more about one another's goals and achievements.

For more information contact: Samantha Mocle, assistant director of communications at smocle@lasell. edu or at 617-243-2386.



#### **BY JASON BLEAU** VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON – While the holiday season is in full swing, when it's all over families will be looking for a way to remove and dispose of their Christmas trees. The local Cub Scouts have you covered.

Charlton Cub Scout Pack 165 is debuting a new service in early 2020 where they will come to your home and remove your Christmas trees for a generous donation. Cub Master Eric Borgeson said the troop is currently collecting information from interested citizens who would like the scouts to come to their homes on Sunday, Jan. 5 to remove Christmas trees and put them to good use as forms of conservation.

**Cub Scouts offering** 

Christmas tree pickup

"If you contact us, we'll make arrangements to come and get your Christmas tree. We'll take it away and dispose of it and it's a win-win situation. We're going to have a bonfire with some of them on a camping trip alongside the fire department. We'll probably burn three or four of them. Most of the trees though will be used to build animal and critter habitats up at Capon Hill Farm on Route 20," Borgeson said.

The scouts themselves will be a big part of the effort. While retrieving trees the local boys and girls of Troop 165, which Borgeson describes as a "family troop" meaning it is inclusive of all genders, will examine each tree carefully for ornaments that have been forgotten before hauling the trees away.

"It's going to be over one day that we'll be doing it. If they're home that's great, if not they can just leave it outside and we'll take care of it," said Borgeson. "It's a good day for the kids to be out and be involved."

Those who would like to utilize the new service can contact the Charlton Cub Scouts at CharltonDen10@gmail. com. Donations of \$10 to \$20 are recommended for the removal.

# Conservation Commission sponsoring annual Winter Tree Scavenger Hunt

STURBRIDGE — Join the Sturbridge Conservation Commission for our 10th Annual Winter Tree Scavenger Hunt, a great free and fun event at Heins Farm.

Walk the beautiful Heins Farm trails between now and Jan. 1 to find the trees decorated by Sturbridge Town Hall departments and local organizations and businesses. Maps are available at the farm's kiosk or may be downloaded at www.sturbridge.gov/conservation-commission/2019-winter-tree-scavenger-hunt.

Find a decorated tree, take a selfie with the tree, and post it on the town of Sturbridge Facebook page, then identify which town department, organization or business decorated that tree and email your guess, along with your picture and contact information, to SturbridgeConservation@gmail.com to be entered into our grand prize drawing. Find as many trees as you can for additional chances to win. The winner will be drawn and announced at the first Conservation Commission meeting of 2020, and all participants will receive a certificate of participation.

Enter as an individual or a team! We encourage family and group participation, but primary participants should be under the age of 13. The grand prize drawing is limited to children 12 and under.

# Alexander Strafer of Auburn presents at Lasell University Connected Learning Symposium

NEWTON — Lasell University held its Fall Connected Learning Symposium on Tuesday, Dec. 10. Alexander Strafer, an Auburn resident, spoke on a panel,

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"Internships: Steps to Success."

Under the guidance of Professor Kathleen Potter, Strafer (a Sport Management major) shared informa-

tion and personal anecdotes about their internship experience.

The biannual Symposium offers Lasell University students of all majors and class years to showcase work directly reflective of the institution's curricular foundation, Connected Learning. Students share presentations, exhibits, visual art, performances and more that demonstrate industry applications of their work.

"This semester's presentations were extraordinary, with a wonderful and positive buzz throughout the campus," said Lasell Provost Jim Ostrow. "All students and faculty should once again take great pride in the results of our Connected Learning educational philosophy at work!"

For more information contact: Samantha Mocle, assistant director of communications at smocle@lasell. edu or at 617-243-2386.

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\$290,000, 8 Deerfield Cir, Creelman, Harriet F, to Bergstrom, Kenneth, and Bergstrom, Martha.

\$265,500, 5 Sherman Ave, Tran, Vinh, to Bender, Robert L, and Carter, Sarah.

\$235,000, 10 Inwood Rd, Mcilvaine FT, and Mcilvaine, Paul A, to Grier, Kwame M.

\$235,000, 76 Bancroft St #B2, Reno, Michael J, and Reno, Oluyinka O, to Vayo, Robert C.

\$195,000, 32 Boyce St #A, AMTD LLC, to Robertson, Angela M, and Robertson, James.

\$190,000, 24 Rockland Rd, Goguen, Cynthia A, and US Bank NA Tr, to US Bank NA Tr.

# Hitchcock Academy still working toward fundraising goal



Pictured here is one of the Scouting Groups which utilize Hitchcock Academy facilities throughout the year.

BRIMFIELD — Before the end of the year, Hitchcock Academy, which serves all of the surrounding communities, hopes to reach its fundraising goal of \$10,000. It is about \$1,500 short. Monies raised in this campaign work hard for the community. There are 75 different groups who call Hitchcock Academy home including a Union 61 pre-school program, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts. 4-H, the American Legion, Brownies, Brimfield Community Partnership, Alcoholics Anonymous, Boy Scouts and the Opacum Land Trust to name a few.

Donations allow Hitchcock to keep the costs of such classes as art, babysitting, CPR, watercolor, felting, cheese making, dog training, genealogy, cake decorating, yoga, Pilates, Tai Chi, Judo, fencing, and ravioli making at affordable levels. While these are important aspects of Hitchcock's function as a community center they are just a part of the picture. Hitchcock Academy sponsors the Farmer's Market, which runs from April through October, the Summer Fun program for ages three to 12, Concerts on the Common, Make Music Day, December Delights, and the Town Wide Tag Sale. When the area was hit with a tornado several years ago Hitchcock was the locale that served as the hub for donations. In the aftermath it became the venue for a support group to facilitate healing. Hitchcock Academy's mission is, above all else, community service.

This year Hitchcock's Friends Campaign was initiated on Dec. 3 -Giving Tuesday. Giving Tuesday's promotion featured the words and drawings of local community members who recognized Hitchcock's positive contributions to the local climate. The Friends Campaign continues this focus with its Giving with Gratitude slogan, which asks donors to contribute to honor a skill, a friendship, the memory of an alumnus, a concert, anything leading to the formation of a good memory facilitated by an interaction involving Hitchcock Academy. People are encouraged to share those stories on Hitchcock's Facebook page. Those stories are the reminders that the work of Hitchcock Academy is not finished. Hopefully, it never will be. Donors are asked to give at www.hitchcockacademy.org. Just click on the Events page to find Friends Campaign.



### ACCURACY WATCH

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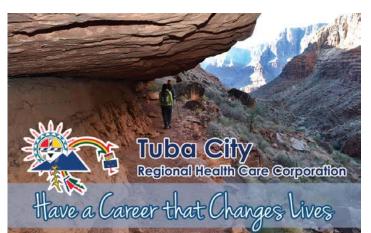
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If you find a mistake, call (508) 909-4106 or email news@stonebridgepress.news during normal business hours. During non-business hours, leave a message in the editor's voice mailbox. The editor will return your phone call.





# Woman in Business kicks off 2020 with presentation on Worth, value and negotiation



STURBRIDGE — Woman in Business, Inc., (WIB) will welcome women's leadership professional and Nichols College administrator Rachel Ferreira to the first meeting of the organization's 2020 calendar.

The lunch presentation, "How to Successfully Negotiate Your Worth," will be held Wednesday, Jan. 15 inside Crafts Hall at the Publick House in Sturbridge. Registration is now open by visiting wibsturbridge.org.



**Rachel Ferreira Photo** 

it sector. In her current role as Director of the Institute for Women's Leadership, she works to bring awareness and advocacy to the issues that face women in their professional lives. She also acts as a resource for female students at Nichols and engages men and women in conversation to bring about change in the wage gap, underrepresentation in leadership, and confidence, in addition to other topics facing women in the workplace.

The registration price is \$20 for WIB members and \$30 for nonmembers; cost includes lunch.

Woman in Business, Inc., was founded in 1985 and provides a network to share business experiences, knowledge and ventures. New members are welcome from all over south central Massachusetts and northeastern Connecticut. From in-home sales to executive managers, WIB offers something for everyone

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women in all walks of career paths the opportunity to gain confidence and

The January meeting offers

improve negotiation style with tips to help better identify and articulate personal value and develop strategies for making the ask, including deflection. building a pitch, and responding persuasively.

Before she started working at Nichols College six years ago, Ferreira's focus was on human rights and access to education working in the non-prof-

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# Area towns join gun Buyback Day

### BY GUS STEEVES CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY - Polls have repeatedly shown around half of the US population owns guns, and millions of them are in our homes. Last Saturday, police departments across the area gave residents a chance to reduce that firepower a little bit with the annual Gun Buyback Day.

In general, relatively few people participated.

'The stuff we get is usually either something they don't know what to do with, or it's broken," Webster Police Chief Michael Shaw noted afterward, describing them as generally "lower-end."

Specifically, Webster got "a couple" of guns – a BB gun and a starter pistol – while Dudley reported collecting five, including a few paintball guns.

Shaw said that's far below what his department received when Webster initiated the program in 2015. Then, they collected 56; he partly attributed the drop to the fact many more departments are participating, so the guns get more dispersed.

To him, that's actually a good thing. He sees having more options to turn them in as beneficial to the community as a whole.

Before the event, Dudley Chief Steven Wojnar described such weapons this way: "These can often be the subject of theft or improper use. These circum-



Courtesv Photo

Pictured: Dudley Officer James Annese Nichols College Intern Ms. Taylor Commesso, Officer David Carpenter, Police chief Steve Wojnar (Seated) Volunteers Ms. Emilia Noyes (Worcester State College) and Chrissy Grech (Umass Medical School).

stances can lead to injuries and death. For whatever the reason, those looking to dispose of unwanted weapons, have a great opportunity to do so safelv.'

Indeed, even though the day has passed, Shaw said people can turn such guns in anytime, or take them to dealers and consign them. He said he's seen research that suggests around 30 percent of guns in crimes were stolen from homes.

Southbridge Chief Shane Woodson agreed, noting, "What I have seen in our community in previous years is that many senior citizens come to our Gun Buy Back saying their spouse had recently passed away and they no longer wanted the firearms in their homes. ... Even if we remove one firearm from the street, I consider the Gun Buy Back successful and our PD will continue to participate for many years to come."

A study from the November 2013 International Journal of Police Science and Management found that such a

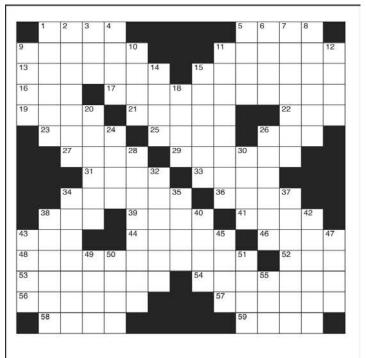
view is common, but buybacks have minimal actual impact. Looking at the buyback program in Buffalo, a team led by Scott Phillips found "no significant impact" from the first one, but some effect from the second and third on some crimes. Most notably, they found "an overall downward trend in the level of gun robbery after the third intervention, but the effect was only temporary and lasted about a year." Later, they note that reduction "took several years to materialize.'

Homicides of all types (with and without guns) were "stationary" during their study, with changes being just "white noise," but it also states "there were increases in gun homicide levels" after buybacks.

In general, the Phillips team concluded, their project "failed to provide robust evidence that the gun buy-back policy of Buffalo did significantly lower post-intervention gun-related crimes." Gun buy-backs large-ly serve "to satisfy the public's expectations" and are "rational and workable policy to reduce the public's fear," but are "an ineffective response on the part of local policymakers,' the team argues.

Shaw noted part of the solution is already in use - gun safes and trigger locks, which are generally available for many guns today. Those make household guns a lot more secure, less likely to be either stolen or used in the heat of the moment.

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



#### CLUES ACROSS

33. Witnesses

#### CAMPBELL

#### continued from page 1

Coupled with the Town of Charlton's plans for a Village Center, The Overlook's expansive land, buildings, trail system, mushroom farm, hotel, barn and other facilities will enable The Overlook to become a trailblazer in Senior Living through a Village Center concept that takes master planning to a whole new level. Campbell is passionate about a larger master plan comprising an Overlook banquet, events center, boutique hotel and farm-to-table restau--attracting more people

Campbell's mind and sights are set firmly in the future, laying the groundwork for continuous improvement and innovation. Over the past year and a half, Campbell spent more than 100 hours helping to design and launch The Overlook's Culture of Excellence training program, offered to over 700 team members. This will be the fourth organization where she has spearheaded similar programs, emphasizing integrity, communication, hospitality and teamwork through clearly defined "Guiding Principles" that establish the foundational expectations and behaviors in The – nothing is impossible! When insecurity and fear get in the way, focus on being in service to others."

This focus on service to others has yielded a clear growth and change in the Masonic Health System. With Campbell at the helm, The Overlook has opened Fieldstone, a Memory Care neighborhood, a pulmonary care specialty program, an adult day program for people with dementia-related challenges, as well as expanding The Overlook's home care and hospice services across The Commonwealth.

- No longer on the market 5. W. African language 9. A way to open 11. A type of pigeon 13. Japanese warrior 15. Pelvic areas 16. No seats available 17. Not working 19. In a way, soaks 21. Growing outward 22. Ritzy local Air 23. Telegraphic signals 25. Metric units 26. Large wine cask 27. Fiber from the husk of a coconut
- 29. Gets up
- 31. French river

#### **CLUES DOWN**

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- are two 18. Soldier in an airborne unit
- 20. Taken illegally
- 24. Capital of Valais

- 34. They make great neighbors 36. The sun does it 38. Used to store ashes 39. First Chinese dynasty 41. Network of nerves 43. Word element meaning ear 44. Metric unit of length (Brit.) 46. Tributary of the Danube 48. Off-limits 52. Appeal earnestly 53. It's good to have them 54. Commercial flying company 56. Acted out in protest 57. Took to the sea 58. Cuckoos
- 59. Drove fast
- 26. Male reproductive organs 28. State capital 30. One with supernatural insight 32. Starts all over again 34. Jai alai arena
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- something 42. Made level
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Overlook's workplace.

Asked what advice she has for women in the business world, Campbell said, "Choose a field

you are passionate about. Be your authentic self; support one another and give encouragement. Don't be overcome by the imposter syndrome

"We want to continue to educate, inspire and improve the quality of life for our residents, patients, families, team members and the surrounding community. We're just getting started," Campbell said. "Pay close attention to The Overlook over the next five years - you're going to want to be part of it!"

#### LIBRARY

continued from page 1

ing novelists, as well as readers who are passionate about the mystery genre.

"Our goal is to make this an affordable and entertaining evening with a first-class author," Plimpton added. "We are thrilled to have author Peter Swanson as our guest of honor.'

A dinner of beef stew will be offered to guests, who always enjoy the cozy atmosphere of one of the oldest taverns in the Commonwealth. On a cold winter night, residents are invited

to warm up over dinner and a suspenseful story.

The event is limited to 80 people and has frequently sold out in the past. Tickets are available for \$15 per person, which includes beef stew, rolls, coffee, and dessert.

Tickets and books can be purchased at the library, or by visiting www.sturbridgelibraryfriends.org.

In case of inclement weather, a snow date would be held on Jan. 23. For more information about the program, call the library at 508-347-2512.



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# Holiday Craft Fair



Tammy Dasho, of Paxton, gets ready for a day of crafting.



Members of the Brown family represent Shrewsbury-based Umbrella for Infants.

\* \* Friday's Child

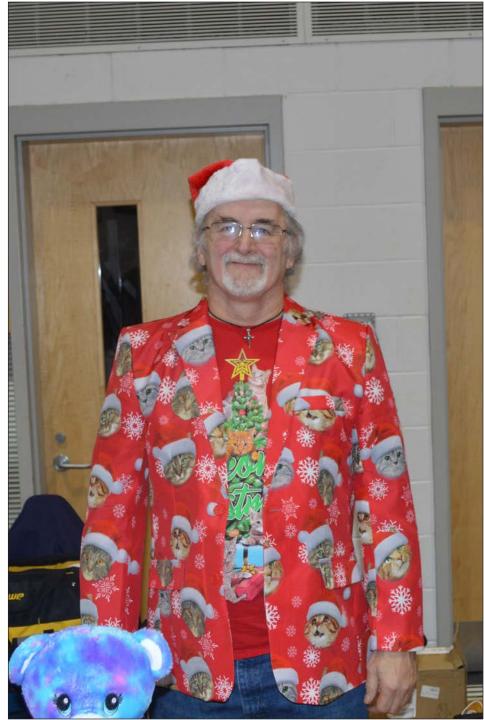
PLACE MOTORS IS PROUD TO SPONSOR

Hi! My name is Keighan and I like to tell jokes!

Keighan is a funny 10-year-old

to the park. Keighan recently went

camping for the very first time where



Warren's Everett Smith is feeling festive at the fair.





Keighan Age 10

he enjoyed fishing, swimming and making s'mores.

Legally free for adoption, Keighan is in need of an active two-parent family. Keighan has requested his future family have a mother, father and older siblings. He would like to continue visiting with his foster family and his brother once his future placement is identified, therefore his social worker is exploring in-state families at this time.

#### Who Can Adopt?

Can you provide the guidance, love and stability that a child needs? If you're at least 18 years old, have a stable source of income, and room in your heart, you may be a perfect match to adopt a waiting child. Adoptive parents can be single, married, or partnered; experienced or not; renters or homeowners; LGBTQ singles and couples.

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.mareinc.org. The sooner you call, the sooner a waiting child will have "a permanent place to call HOME."



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Members of the Betty and Beazy staff take a quick break during the busy fair.



Linda Pronto, of Holland, offers an array of items.



Guests take a journey to faraway lands thanks to Mark Jordan's creations. The artist lives in Auburn.



Mark Mitchell, 8, of Worcester, shares his love of sports with guests.



Carl and Sarah Gamache, of Auburn, have plenty of fun activities for guests to enjoy.



Jessica Sangrones, left, and Katie Chaffee greet guests.



Michelle Sargent, of Worcester, left, introduces her creations to Mary Ellen Newsom, also of Worcester.



# **OPINION/COMMENTARY**



<u>A Stonebridge Press Weekly Newspaper</u> 25 Elm Street, Southbridge MA 01550 Tel. (508) 764-4325 • Fax (508) 764-8015 www.StonebridgePress.com

FRANK G. CHILINSKI Stonebridge Press President and Publisher

> BRENDAN BERUBE EDITOR

### Editorial

# Breaking the ice

It's holiday party season, and for most of us, that means enjoyable times ahead. We get together with friends and family, enjoy some eggnog and a plethora of our favorite appetizers. Oftentimes, however, we find ourselves invited by our significant others to attend a work soiree, invite them along to one at our own place of work. Being in a room where you only know one or two people can seem like a daunting task for our introverted readers, but have no fear. We have some ways for you to have memorable conversations that you may end up actually enjoying.

Instead of discussing the weather or asking the mundane questions such as 'Where are you from?' why not shakes things up and make the conversation interesting by asking, 'What's your story?' Other conversation starters include, 'How do you know the host?', 'What was the highlight of your week?' or 'Are you working on anything exciting?'

If you're shy or feeling a bit awkward, you can keep the conversation going by talking about the food being served or the venue where the event is taking place. Asking a person what they have tried so far, and how they liked it is an easy conversation starter. If you research the history of a place, you can always begin with the 'Did you know?' questions. We know everyone loves a good history story and bits of local trivia.

If the person you are speaking with is from the area, ask them what they do for entertainment in town, including where and what their favorite restaurants are. Looking up recent sports standings is never a bad idea, even if you don't particularly care for sports. This way when you nod and smile, you can have some confidence in knowing that you are at least somewhat in the loop. If you've bumped into a fellow skier, discussing snow conditions and ski hills is an easy topic. Look up a recent odd news story that is interesting and humorous — that way, during a lull, you can say, 'So I was reading about a man who appeared before a Dutch court and requested that he legally be made 20 years younger.' (Yes, that actually happened. If you see one of us out and about at a holiday gathering, tell us you read about it here and we'll give you the details.) Most conversations remain on the surface which is appropriate when you don't really know someone. However, if you feel comfortable and are enjoying the conversation don't be afraid to go a bit bolder. Generally, most people like to talk about themselves, not necessarily for selfish reasons, but who doesn't want to be known and appreciated? We all have unique personalities that are worth sharing. Such questions that go beneath the surface may include, 'What is your biggest fear?' 'When you were growing up, what was your dream job?' 'Have you been to any interesting places lately?" 'Have you learned anything this week, that you weren't aware of last week?.' The easiest thing to do while in conversation this month is to ask how a person celebrates the holidays. Asking about traditions and the best holiday a person has ever had brings up fond memories and positive energy. These questions tend to snowball naturally and voila a solid, meaningful conversation has been had and you could even make a new comrade along the way.

# Hints to Fix Holiday Hassles

TAKE

THE

HINT

KAREN

TRAINOR

Decking the halls, trimming the tree, and prepping for the holidays is a seasonal tradition - but the tasks are not always the joyous chores of Christmas carols. If the hustle and bustle of the holiday has you frazzled as you rush to get everything done

right and on time - take heart. The following problem solvers offer quick and inexpensive fixes to save precious time and money this holiday season.

Problem: Christmas light strings are a tangled mess!

Solution: First make sure you have lots of room to spread out the snaking lights; the floor is an ideal space. Locate the plug and work your way from there to the other end. Gently spread the strings and work the plug in and out of the tangles. Using a chopstick, bamboo skewer, or pencil, work any knots out of the strings. Untangled lines should be laid straight along the floor.

To prevent this hassle next year. Wind each string around a stiff cardboard; tape the end and place into a plastic grocery bag. Place into a plastic grocery bag (only one string per cardboard) and stack to store.

Problem: Wreaths are a fire hazard, especially when hot lights are strung around it.

Solution: Here is a flame retardant that can help prevent a fire on your decorative wreath and boughs. It does not totally fireproof the fresh greens, so continue to use standard fire precautions. To make: Mix together five tablespoons Borax and four tablespoons Epsom salts in two quarts of water. Fill a spray bottle and spritz the tree or wreath completely, then allow to dry.

Problem: Christmas dinner requires perfect gravy, but it's a challenge to get it right.

Solution: Why not go to the source of "foolproof" gravy, Betty Crocker? After all, the cooking icon's recipe has been at America's holiday table for decades! hips; 2 tsp orrisroot; 2 drops pine-scented fixative or oil. Mix the bayberry, balsam, pine cones and rose hips in a large bowl. Add the orrisroot and fixative and stir gently. Store in a jar with a tight fitting lid. Note: To rejuvenate and

extend your pine potpourri, try this economical trick: Put some ground corn cob material (sold as cellulose or litter material at the pet store) in a jar. Add several drops of essential oil, place lid on jar and shake. Shake the jar every day for about a week or so. Add it to your potpourri, to give it body and hold the scent.

Problem: You want to give a holiday present to your mail carrier, but heard there are strict gift regulations:

Solution: For reference: Mail carriers working for the United States Postal Service are allowed to accept the following items during the holiday season:

Snacks and beverages or perishable gifts that are not part of a meal.

Small gifts that have little intrinsic value (travel mugs, hand warmers, etc...) and are clearly no more than \$20 in value.

Perishable items clearly worth more (large fruit baskets or cookie tins) must be shared with the entire branch.

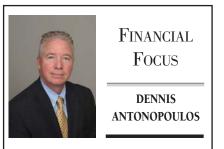
Mail carriers working for the United States Postal Service may not accept the following:

Cash gifts, checks, gift cards, or any other form of currency.

Problem: Old fashioned flaming pinecones for fireplaces are not readily available and when found are costly.

Solution: Make your own! The traditional firestarters of days of yore are easily crafted. Best of all, pinecones not only add a great seasonal scent to a  $\operatorname{cozy}$  fireplace , they can also add some delightful color with the addition of a few pantry ingredients. Here's how to make your holiday hearthside flames fabulous: Dip pinecones in wax (recycle candle stubs) and roll in table salt for bright yellow flames; If you use a no-salt substitute, you'll be treated to violet flames. For green flames, dip the pinecones in borax (found in the laundry aisle). Baking soda will reward you with bright yellowish orange flames, and Epsom salts will result in white flames. For hot pink flames, dip or roll pinecones in plaster of Paris. For more economical and natural looking pinecones without the wax properties, simply marinate the fire flashers. Dissolve eight ounces of one activator(salt, borax, etc) in a half gallon of water. Soak pine cones for about six hours. Dry them in a warm, dry place for a few days. For giftgiving, fill up a cellophane bag, add a bow, and attach a tag with the color codes. Pinecone Pointer: To prompt tight pinecones to open fully, heat them in a 220 degree oven on a foil lined cookie sheet. Caution: Make and use firestarters and flamers with care and at your own risk. Do not mix activators.

Financial moves for life's 'Inflection Points'



You've probably heard or read about inflection points. The term has a specific definition in mathematics, but it's also used widely to describe historical or technological events, such as the Industrial Revolution or the creation of the internet – events that changed human existence in some important way. However, you have personal inflection points, too – and when they occur, you'll need to make the right financial moves.

Here are four of the most important of these inflection points, along with suggestions on dealing with them:

Marriage - When you get married, you and your spouse will need to discuss a variety of financial issues: What assets and liabilities do you each bring to the marriage? Should you combine your finances or continue with separate accounts? Is one of you a "saver" while the other is a "spender?" Do you share similar investment philosophies, or is one of you much more aggressive than the other? You don't necessarily have to agree on everything, but you should at least try to gain enough knowledge so you can avoid unpleasant surprises, such as hidden debts, and find enough common ground so your household can advance toward your common financial goals.

New child – When you welcome a new child into your family, you'll need to make sure you have adequate life insurance. You'll also want to review the beneficiary designations on any existing insurance policies, as well as on your IRA and 401(k). And if you can afford it, you may want to start contributing to a college fund, possibly using a 529 savings plan, which can provide you with tax advantages as you put money away for your child's higher education.

Divorce – It's unfortunate, but true:



www.StonebridgePress.com

Ingredients: 1/4 cup turkey drippings (fat and juices from roasted turkey); 1/4 cup all-purpose flour; 2 cups liquid (juices from roasted turkey, broth, water); 1/2 teaspoon salt; 1/2 teaspoon pepper.

Directions: Pour drippings from roasting pan into bowl, leaving brown particles in pan. Return 1/4 cup drippings to roasting pan. (Measure accurately because too little fat makes gravy lumpy.) Stir in flour. (Measure accurately so gravy is not greasy.)

Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until mixture is smooth and bubbly. Stir in liquid. Heat to boiling, stirring constantly. Boil and stir 1 minute. Stir in a few drops of browning sauce. Stir in salt and pepper.

Problem: Commercial spray on "snow" for windows is messy and expensive.

Solution: This DIY version of artificial snow is inexpensive and easier to clean up! Best of all this faux frost can create a crystal ice painting on even the most insulated windows!

Ingredients: A few tablespoons of Epsom salts; one can flat beer; cotton balls.

Instructions: Use a cotton ball to dab the mixture onto clean windows. Treat only the corners for a realistic look.. As the mixture dries, it crystallizes.

Problem: You love that delightful pine scent of your Christmas Tree and wish you could extend the fragrance throughout the season.

Solution: You can! This homemade Pine Potpourri offers a fresh, evergreen scent any time of year! To do: Mix together: ½ cup bayberry leaves; ½ cup snipped balsam needles ; ½ cup miniature pine cones; ½ cup rose

#### Win Dinner for Two

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!

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 publications? Send questions and/or hints to: Take the Hint!, c/o Stonebridge Press, P.O. Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550. Or e-mail kdrr@aol.com. Hints are entered into a drawing for a three course dinner for two at the historic Publick House Inn! Divorce is still pretty common, and it's neither pleasant nor cheap. You might not be able to avoid some of the costs, such as lawyers' bills, but if you and your ex-spouse can work together amicably, you both may be able to avoid serious financial disruptions. You'll need to work out how to divide your financial assets, paying attention to beneficiary designations, which you may well need to change. Also, as a newly single individual, you may need to review and revise your long-term investment strategy to accommodate changes in your goals and your retirement income.

Retirement – By the time you retire, you will have hopefully been investing in your IRA and 401(k) or other retirement plan for several decades. But once you do retire, you'll need to determine how much you can afford to withdraw each year from your various retirement accounts. Your withdrawal rate will depend on your age, your asset level and your retirement lifestyle. And you'll also want to consider other issues: Are you prepared to deal with health care costs? Even with Medicare, these costs may be higher than they were when you were working. And how about your estate plans? Are they up to date? Have you protected your family from the possibility of your estate going through the time-consuming, expensive and public process of probate? You may need to work with your financial, tax and legal advisors to develop an effective estate strategy.

By making smart decisions following your own inflection points, you can ease the transitions in your life – wherever life takes you.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Dennis Antonopoulos, your local Edward Jones Advisor at 5 Albert St., Auburn, MA 01501 Tel: 508-832-5385 or dennis.antonopoulos@edwardjones. com.

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# Reflections on bare bunting



THE GREAT OUTDOORS RALPH TRUE

With the shotgun deer season over, hunters that still have antlerless deer permits to fill are finding many opportunities to use their deer tags. The snow that was predicted for this past Tuesday made tracking conditions ideal. The final few days of the shotgun deer season had great tracking conditions and resulted in a huge harvesting of deer, making up for the slow start at the beginning of the deer season due to heavy snow.

Because hunters did not need to bring the harvested deer to a checking station during the second week of shotgun season, but reported the deer online, results will not be available for a few weeks. The two week black powder season for deer in Massachusetts requires all deer harvested to be reported on line also.

A local sportsman and his buddies reported on a piebald buck they shot this past hunting season. The inherited genetic problem can leave a deer with numerous problems. The genetic



mutation which can leave a deer with spots of white on their coat, sometime having almost a one hundred percent white They are often coat. called albino which they are not. Piebaldism is a rare genetic abnormality in whitetails that can include a range of potential deformities, from coat coloration to skeletal alignment, which can be mild to severe. Over the years, numerous piebald deer have been harvested in the valley area by

hunters.

In talking with a few archers this past week from the Petersham area of the state, I found that hare hunting in the area was still being enjoyed by a few hunters that own beagles. This is the time of year, back 40 or 50 years ago, hare (rabbit) hunting was enjoyed by many local sportsmen. Local sportsmen's clubs in the area bought hare from a trapper in Canada. The rabbits were transported live to

the valley area, and were distributed to local woodlands and swamps.

The rabbits did very well and provided local sports the opportunity to run their beagles throughout the summer months. It was a great pastime listening to the hounds trail the elusive rabbit through the swamps and woodlots for hours. We often had as many as 15 hounds trailing the hare, which provided us with music only a rabbit hunter could

enjoy.

Every hound had a different bark or yodel as they trailed the rabbit, allowing each dog owner the opportunity to know where his dog was. As the hounds came close to our group of hunters, the hare often crossed a path or road allowing us to visually see the hare and observe which dog was leading the pack. The rabbit seemed to enjoy the hunt as much as we did, often running down the road and quickly run-

ning back over his track trying to mislead the hounds. It often worked, but it was not long before one of the hounds picked up the trail baying loudly and the others soon joined in, and the hunt was on again.

Unfortunately, the hare program was stopped by anti-hunting groups, and now the valley has lost another species of wildlife in our forest, not to mention the great pastime local sportsmen enjoyed for years.

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holiday season.

It is hard to believe that there are only a few days left till Christmas, and shoppers are trying to finish their Christmas shopping for that special sportsman or woman. A Massachusetts hunting or fishing license makes a great idea, but gift cards are the easiest way to get the shopping done fast. The gift cards will also allow that special sportsman to do his own shopping after Christmas during huge sales at most all stores, making the gift card worth a lot more.

Take A Kid fishing & Keep Them Rods Bending.

Wishing all of our servicemen and women a very Merry Christmas and thank you for keeping us safe.

We auction many antique and vintage musical instruments found in local homes and estates. Musical instruments are often overlooked by the owners, but some can be very valuable. Rare violins can sell for six figure sums and Stradivarius violins have sold for millions. We sold a Hawaiian steel guitar that brought figures in the low thousands. A cello fetched \$1,300. A sterling silver flute sold even better when it brought a figure in the mid-thousands.

Flutes have a very long history. In 2008, a flute was discovered at Hohle Fels Cave in Germany that WAYNE TUISKULA a contracting or parabolic dates back at least 35,000 years, according to Britannica.com. The flute has five finger holes, is eight and a half inches long, and was made from the bone of a vulture. Other flutes of similar age have also been discovered in Southwestern Germany. Britannica.com notes that the flute we typically see in Western music is the "transverse flute held sideways to the right of the player." They were used in Ancient Greece and Etruria in the second century BC. They were then played in India, followed by China and Japan. 16th century flutes combined a tenor flute, descant flute, and bass flute. In the 17th century, the Hotteterre family of Paris created a conical flute "made in



#### ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES

& ESTATES . . . .

# **Silver flutes**

separate joints, the head joint being cylindrical, the others contracting toward the foot." There were some other advancements before Theobald Boehm replaced "closed chromatic keys with open-standing keys, devising for their manipulation a system of ring keys on longitudinal axles" in 1832. Boehm continued his work to refine the instrument. In 1847 he created a flute with a "cylindrical bore (having head)" which is the design that has been used since.



Flutes made from silver can be very valuable. The silver flutes look similar to common nickel-silver flutes. You can look to see if it is marked sterling (92.5 percent pure silver) or Ag 998 which are 99.8 percent pure silver.

Many craftsmen and manufacturers have made silver flutes that have sold well at auction. A silver flute made my Wm. A Haynes sold for \$3,000 in 2008. A Verne Q Powell flute went for \$4,250 in a 2014 auction. A John Lunn flute sold for \$5,600 in 2011. A Louis Lot silver flute reached \$8,000 at an auction in 2011. A Boehm system silver flute also sold for \$15,000 in 2011.

even more valuable materials. William S. Haynes of Boston currently offers flutes made of silver and 5 percent gold, 10-karat, 14-karat and 19.5-karat gold along with platinum. A 9-karat antique gold European flute struck a note with a bidder and sold for \$18,000 at auction in 2013.

A Lillian Burkart 99.8 percent silver flute will be among the offerings in our Jan. 30 antique estates auction in Worcester. I'll be teaching

Custom flutes can be made from my "Evaluating your antiques" class on March 3 at the Bay Path Adult Education program in Charlton. Other events are being scheduled. Please see www.centralmassauctions.com for details on these and other events.

Contact us at: Wayne Tuiskula Auctioneer/Appraiser Central Mass Auctions for Antique Auctions, Estate Sales and Appraisal Services www.centralmassauctions.com (508-612- 6111) info@centralmassauctions.com

# Affordable gift ideas for anyone on your list



MELINDA **MYERS** 

The holidays are upon us and busy schedules often send us into a panic when looking for the perfect gift for those on our list. No matter your budget, there are affordable gift options your friends and family will love.

Tools are always a welcome gift. Most gardeners are reluctant to invest in that cool new hand trowel, shovel or rake. And that's what makes them a great gift. Or create a starter kit from your extra tools for a new homeowner or gardener. Clean them up, sharpen the blades and bundle them with a bow. Add a gift card from a nearby garden center if your budget allows.

Help your favorite gardener avoid skin cancer and protect their hands when working in the garden by creating a garden basket with gloves, a hat and sunscreen.

Clean up a corner of the basement or spare bedroom to create a seed starting station. Purchase the lights and fixtures or set a table in front of a sunny window. And if your budget is limited, scour the garage and shed or talk to gardening friends to secure items that can be cleaned and reused.

Or give your favorite gardener all they need to start a windowsill herb garden or terrarium. Purchase or recycle the containers and take cuttings, make divisions or purchase the plants vou need.

A trip to the basement or thrift store may provide the perfect vessel for your terrarium. Convert an old aquarium into a tropical biodome. A large clear glass serving dish, salad bowl or vase may make a unique terrarium sure to intrigue the recipient and their guests.

Help your favorite indoor gardener dress up their favorite hanging plants. Macramé is back in vogue and adding flare to indoor gardens. Create a few plant hangers from jute



Melinda Myers Photo

Create a tropical paradise in a terrarium as a unique gift for a loved one.

and beads.

Preserve a garden memory with a photo of your or the recipient's garden or favorite plants. A collection of photos can be made into a calendar for a gift that keeps giving all year long.

Share a bit of your garden. Pass along some seeds you saved or start a few cuttings from your favorite heirloom houseplant. Dress up your gift with a painted pot or basket.

And don't forget to share some dried herbs and flowers or preserves made from your garden harvest. Nothing tastes better or is more beautiful than when it's homegrown. Don't have extra this year? Make a note on next year's calendar and plan ahead.

Give the gift of time. Most of

us can use an extra set of hands at certain times of the garden season. No dusting required and it's a great way to ensure time together.

Put your artistic skills to work and create a garden journal. A simple notebook dressed up with some photos, artwork or stickers can provide an attractive and inviting place for your favorite gardener to record their gardening successes, failures and other useful garden information.

As you can see, the possibilities are endless. And getting friends and family involved in creating these gifts is a great way to enjoy time together while preparing for the holidays.

Melinda Myers has written numerous books, including 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 and her web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

# **SPORTS**

# Bartlett starters shine, beat Bay Path to open season



Bay Path's Cam Hafner lines up a straightaway 3-point attempt.

#### Nick Ethier photos

Dylan Cotton of Bay Path keeps his eyes glued to the basket while dribbling toward it.

#### BY NICK ETHIER SPORTS STAFF WRITER

WEBSTER — After the first few minutes had passed in the Bartlett High boys' varsity basketball team's season opener versus Bay Path Regional on Friday, Dec. 13 — the Indians held a slim lead of 5-3 — their starting five of seniors Wilson Aybar and Logan Paranto, juniors Brandon Boucher and Dylan Grandmaison, and sophomore Colin Minarik really began to click.

In the blink of an eye Bartlett embarked on a 25-4 run to lead after the opening quarter, 30-7. The Indians then won second-quarter scoring, 35-9, to lead, 65-16, at the half.

Bartlett won in convincing fashion, 93-57.

"We've got a veteran team coming back," said head coach Tony Paranto, who returned four starters from last year's squad. "We shot the ball well. We finally got our tempo going. We picked it up and figured out our pace."

Coach Paranto was also pleased to see his team come away with numerous turnovers, which led to transition offense and easy baskets.

"Defense will dictate our offense this year," he said. "We know we can score, we can score with anybody, we've got a lot of kids that can put the ball in, but for us to go any place this year we've really got to concentrate on our defense."

The camaraderie shown by the Indians was the same exhibited over the summer when they won the league in Auburn.

"That's what sports are all about, especially in basketball: it's about how you can create chemistry," Tony Paranto said. "These kids played a lot of basketball over the summer and bought into it."

Boucher was the first Bartlett player to get hot versus Bay Path. He finished off an inside basket, buried a 3-pointer, converted a three-point play and made a lefty layup for 10 points in the first quarter. He then scored 11 more points in the second period to finish with a game-high 21 points. He didn't play in the second half due to foul trouble and the game's outcome having already been decided.

Grandmaison and Minarik had matching stat lines of 17 points and 8 rebounds. Grandmaison did the bulk of his work early, scoring 15 of his points and pulling down 7 of his rebounds in the first half.

"He's a main cog in our offense, and our defense. He's our biggest kid at 6-foot-2...he's a stretch player that will create more space," Paranto said of the importance of Grandmaison, who emerged as a rising star over the summer.

Aybar added 14 points for the Indians, and while Logan Paranto scored just 5 points, he added 8 rebounds and was an efficient facilitator of the ball.

Add all that up and Bartlett's starting five was lethal versus Bay Path.

"To me, they're one of the best teams in Central Mass. this year. They're an all-around, complete team," said head coach Al Greenough. "They've got guys that can shoot, penetrate off the dribble, their bigs can play, they play well as a team — so we knew this was going to be a tough task." To make matters worse for the Minutemen, their team lacked the experience that Bartlett had with just three seniors and two juniors.

"We lost seven seniors last year. It's going to take some time to get to where we want to get," said Greenough. "We have a lot of individual talent, but whether we can bring it together as a team will be the test."

Cory Cotton, the Minutemen's leading scorer from a season ago, has graduated. But his brother Dylan, a sophomore, stepped up and led the team with 13 points in a starting role.

Bay Path's bench, though, impressed Greenough the most in the second half. They outscored the Indians over the final two quarters, 41-28.

"I was looking for something to take solace in tonight, and that was definitely it," said Greenough while pointing out the play of sophomore Jomar Torres (13 points), sophomore John Schramm, junior Ty Millette and the entire second team. "That whole unit that was out there at the end, I give them credit."





Bay Path's Xavier Edmonds takes control of the ball and heads down the court.



Evan O'Malley of Bay Path reaches out to grab the ball before it can bounce out of bounds.

Wilson Aybar of Bartlett lays the ball in for two points.



Bartlett's Brandon Boucher dribbles the ball behind his back at the top of the key.

# **SPORTS**

# Murphy, among others, gets hot late to lead Auburn past Pirates



Auburn's Zoe Picard sprints down the court while Micaela Perry of Oxford guards her.



Hanorah Murphy of Auburn drives into the paint, looking to hoist up a shot.







Auburn's Michaela Sampson creates some space between her and an Oxford defender.

Liv Matthews of Auburn drives toward the basket at a fast pace.

#### BY KEN POWERS SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

OXFORD — Talk about having an encouraging debut.

Freshman Hanorah Murphy made the most of her first varsity game, scoring a teamhigh nine points, five in the fourth quarter, to help lead the Auburn High girls' varsity basketball team to a come-from-behind victory over Oxford High, 31-28, at the Roger D. Bacon Gymnasium on Thursday, Dec. 12.

The game was the season-opener for both teams.

Murphy hit a left-side 3-pointer nine seconds into the fourth quarter to pull the Rockets, who had trailed throughout the second and third quarters (the game was tied, 11-11 after the first period) to within two, 22-20. The basket seemed to send a we-can-do-this wave of confidence through the entire Auburn team.

Oxford extended its lead to 24-20 with 5:55 to play on a pair of free throws by sophomore Olivia "Liv" Clarkson (a gamehigh 10 points), but the Rockets came right back, junior Emily Turcotte canning a jumper from the right side with 5:20 left to make it a 24-22 game.

The Pirates again answered the Auburn challenge, pushing their lead to 26-22 on a foulline jumper by senior Isabella Rosario (four points) with 4:15 remaining. Rockets' senior Olivia "Liv" Matthews (eight points) then drove the lane for a basket with 4:01 to play to keep Auburn to within one possession of the lead, 26-24.

After an Oxford miss on its next possession Auburn tied

the game, 26-26, with a pair of free throws by Murphy.

"Hanorah played very well tonight," Rockets' head coach Nicole LePrevost said. "She stepped up; she had a big game for us."

The Rockets' harassing defense then forced the Pirates into one of their 21 turnovers in the game and on the ensuing possession went ahead, 28-26, on a pair of free throws by sophomore Meg Stevens (three points). It was Auburn's first lead of the game since the final minute of the first quarter, when it led, 11-9.

"Our overall team defense is something we've worked very hard at," LePrevost said. "I have a team of athletes and it shows. Every girl on this team will dive on the floor and they all play great help defense. I'm confident in our man defense because they play so hard."

Oxford pulled to within a point, 28-27, on a free throw by junior Chloe Davis (three points) with 2:24 remaining, but Auburn pushed its lead to 30-27 on a pair of free throws by Matthews with 35 seconds remaining.

The Pirates got to within two points of the lead, 30-28, with 18.8 seconds to play on another free throw by Davis, but Rockets' junior Zoe Picard (four points) gave Auburn a three-point lead with a free throw with 14.6 seconds to play.

"Once we got the lead several girls stepped up and hit important free throws and made plays," LePrevost said.

Oxford senior Michaela Perry (nine points, three 3-pointers) attempted to tie the game at the buzzer with a leftside trey, but her shot hit the side of the rim and fell away.

"I'm very proud of the team and I told them that in the locker room after the game," LePrevost said. "There were a lot of momentum shifts in the game; they hit some big 3's and we could have put our tails between our legs and given up, but we didn't. The girls fought back and I was really, really proud of them for the way they did that."

Oxford head coach Joe Pietrzak acknowledged after the game that it's going to take time for the Pirates to find their identity this season. The last four year's Oxford's identity has largely consisted of Gina Parmenter, the Pirates No. 2 all-time leading scorer, who finished her Oxford career with 1,603 points.

"Yeah, I do think it will take time, I saw a lot of encouraging things tonight. I thought we moved the ball well," Pietrzak said. "We're transitioning here. We've lost some players, and obviously some talent, and now we're going to have to scratch and claw. I thought we did a good job for our first time out.

"But give Auburn credit; they battled for the whole four quarters," Pietrzak added. "I thought for three quarters we carried the play and then in the fourth quarter we just didn't finish. That comes from having seven kids that have never played a minute of varsity basketball until tonight. Auburn definitely deserved the win tonight. In the fourth quarter we could just feel it slipping away and we couldn't get it back."



Oxford's Micaela Perry keeps the ball tucked away from the Auburn defender while driving into the lane.

# <u>SPORTS</u>

# Led by Duval, Oxford finds a way to get by Rockets





Justin Skaparas of Auburn pulls up for a jump shot.



Auburn's Coleman Picard attempts to drive into the paint while Oxford defender Alex Duval stands in his way.

scored five points in the run, while freshman Lucas Lambert added four, Elijah Williams (16 points) three and sophomore Will Owusu two.

Duval, who scored 14 of his 16 second-half points in the final 12 minutes of the game, scored nine of Oxford's 15 fourth-quarter points. He pulled the Pirates to within a point of the lead, 45-44, with 6:55 remaining on a leftside jumper.

After forcing Auburn into a miss and a turnover on its next two possessions, the Pirates scored seven straight points — the run capped by a Duval 3-pointer from way in front of the top of the arc — to take a 51-45lead with 4:52 remaining in the game.

Senior Justin Skaparas

Senior Cam Bolduc scored all 13 of his points in the first half for Auburn. Classmate Coleman Picard scored all 12 of his points in the first 16 minutes as well. Skaparas scored nine of his 21 before intermission.

"That third quarter, you've got to give a lot of credit to Oxford," Auburn head coach Dan Koen said. "They picked up their intensity on their man defense and they executed their plays.

At times their energy and intensity got us out of whack and forced us to rush some of our stuff a little bit.

"And then we had a few stretches where we couldn't find the bottom of the rim for a little bit," Koen continued. "It's the first game of the season, and it's a long season, but we're very excited for this year. This is a game that we've got to learn from to get better from."



Auburn's Cam Bolduc tries to inch closer to the basket on an Oxford defender.

#### BY KEN POWERS SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

OXFORD — Led by senior Alex Duval, who scored 16 of his game-high 26 points after halftime, the Oxford High boys' varsity basketball team outscored Auburn High 29-9 over the final 12 minutes of the game and rallied to defeat the Rockets, 57-54, on Thursday, Dec. 12, at the Roger D. Bacon Gymnasium.

"We're not quitters, we know we're young and we know we're rebuilding, but we also know we have one of the best players in Central Mass. in Alex Duval," Oxford head coach Dave Aldrich said. "We know they're going to try to take him out of the offense, but Alex is learning to move without the ball. As he gets smarter and becomes a more complete player, moving the final frame. Duval

without the ball will help him with his offense. I thought this was a great team win."

The game was the season-opener for both teams.

The Pirates trailed, 45-28, with four minutes remaining in the third quarter. At that point Oxford went on a 14-0 run to cut the Auburn lead to 45-42 heading into



JB Whittemore of Auburn passes the ball down low and into the paint.

(a team-high 21 points) stopped the bleeding for Auburn, hitting a left-side 3-pointer with 4:02 remaining to cut the Oxford lead to 51-48. Before Skaparas' trey the Rockets had not scored a point in 8 minutes, 25 seconds of game time.

Duval, however, answered the Skaparas triple with a three-point play, alertly driving to the basket and laying the ball in off the glass while being fouled, to push the Oxford lead back to six, 54-48, with 3:40 to go.

Duval's Following three-point play Auburn scored six straight points to tie the game, 54-54, with 1:33 remaining. Senior Mike Breen (four points) scored the Rockets' first basket in the run on a short jumper in the lane, JB Whittemore (four points) added a put-back of an offensive rebound and Skaparas hit a rightside jumper.

Oxford then re-gained the lead, 55-54, with 45.6 seconds to play when freshman Evan Remington hit one of two free throws. Duval added a free throw with 15.2 seconds to play to extend the lead to 56-54, and junior Tyler Jacques closed out the scoring and sealed the win with a free throw with 7.3 seconds remaining to make it 57-54.

Auburn committed three turnovers in the game's final 65 seconds. The Rocket had 14 turnovers in the game, 12 coming in the second half.

"We decided at halftime, after playing a lot of different defenses in the first half, that we were a man-to-man team and that's what we were going to live and die with," said Aldrich, whose team trailed, 38-23 at the break.

Oxford's Elijah Williams leaps high during the opening tip versus Auburn.



Alex Duval of Oxford readies himself for a free throw.

# **OBITUARIES**

### James D. Melanson



MILLBURY- James D. Melanson, 41, away passed on Dec. Wednesday, 11th, in the UMass Memorial Medical University Center, Campus, Worcester, after a sudden illness. He leaves his wife

Jessica L. (Stratton) Melanson and their two sons, Kael M. Melanson and Finnian J. Melanson; his parents, Richard J. and Nancy B. (Welton) Melanson of Warren; his two sisters, Belinda Melanson and her husband Kevin Barrette of Auburn and Melissa Melanson of Warren; his paternal grandmother, Jeanette Melanson of Marlboro; several aunts and uncles; and several nieces and nephews. He was born in Framingham on August 19. 1978. James installed sprav foam insulation for All In One Insulation in West Boylston for many years. James was an avid New England Patriots fan and loved fishing. He also enjoyed the ocean and camping - especially near Misquamicut Beach, RI. He enjoyed playing golf and eating the spiciest foods

possible. Most of all he loved spending time with his boys and Jessica.

Calling hours for James were held on Thursday, Dec. 19th, from 5:00 to 8:00pm in the Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge, followed by a service at 8:00pm in the funeral home. Burial will be held at the convenience of the family.

www.morrillfuneralhome.com

# **COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

### Tuesday, December 24

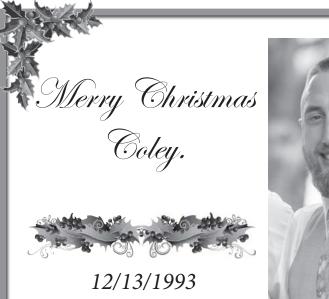
CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE: The First Congregational Church in Auburn, 128 Central St., invites you to their Christmas Eve Services: a 5 p.m. Family Service with Children's Christmas Pageant and an 11 p.m. Candlelight Communion Service. All are welcome.

### **ONGOING EVENTS**

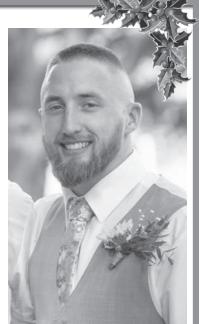
12 STEP PROGRAM: Christian 12 Step Program for Men and Women 7-8:15 p.m. every Tuesday at Faith Baptist Church, 22 Faith Ave, Auburn. Do you feel your life/relationships/habits are spinning out of control? A Christian 12 Step Program is the key to Christ and life providing abundance, blessing and grace. Come as you are or contact (508) 832-5044 x 155 for information.

SUICIDE PREVENTION: Attempted Suicide Prevention Group. Held each Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. at St Bernard's Church, 236 Lincoln St., Worcester Gym Entrance Side, second floor meeting room. Parking & T services. Weekly facilitator, inspirational speaker, founder Dan Pelly, two time attempted suicide survivor. Your life matters, never give up. No charge. More info at (617) 592-5081.

STORY TIME: Have a little one in the house? Looking to get out and do something? The Auburn Public Library may have just the thing for you. Mother Goose Story time is for children ages 6-15 months. It's a great place for children and their grownups to listen to stories, share nursery rhymes and have time to connect with others during musical free play. Mother Goose Story Time is held Tuesdays at 10 a.m. Please stop by and join us. For information. you call the library at (508) 832-7790.



Cole WilliamVictor 12/14/2018



MUSEUM HOURS: The Auburn Historical Museum, 41 South St. is open Tuesday, 9 a.m. to noon, and Saturday 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Admission is free to see a variety of artifacts and memorabilia concerning Auburn as far back as when it was known as the town of Ward. All are welcome to come. For more information contact Sari Bitticks at sarilb@verizon.net.

NEW GROUP FORMING: If you're separated or divorced, you don't have to go through it alone. DivorceCare meets weekly, you'll receive practical support and find healing and hope for the future in a friendly, confidential setting. We meet Thursdays, 6:30-8 p.m., beginning Feb. 1 at Faith Church, 22 Faith Ave., Auburn. Call (508) 832-5044 or email divorcecare@faithauburn.org for more information.

NUMISMATICS: Looking for a new hobby? Come learn about the hobby of Coin Collecting. Or maybe you are an old time collector. Our club, the Nipmuc Coin Club, has both. We learn from each other through our monthly guest speakers, show and tell presentations, monthly coin auctions and free attendance prizes. Our group loves to share their knowledge with each other. About half of our members also like to eat. Each month we have a simple dinner with dessert and refreshments just prior to our meeting, which allows us time to socialize too. We meet the fourth Wednesday of each month starting at 6:30 p.m. in the Oxford Senior Center located at 323 Main St. in Oxford. It is the building directly behind the Oxford Town Hall building. For more information, please contact Dick Lisi at (508) 410-1332 or lisirichard15@yahoo.com.

STORY TIME: Open Story Time will be held 4:30 p.m. every Thursday at the Auburn Public Library. No registration required. Please drop in. Open to all ages. For information, call (508) 832-7790.

8:45 p.m. Thursdays at the AYFS, 21 Pheasant Court, Auburn. This is where members will learn that peers their own age share similar concerns. Group members will be able to discuss ways to cope with their concerns as well as receive positive feedback. Each week will center around a particular topic for discussion. No cost to join. For information, call Brandon Pare (508) 832-5707 x 16 or Dan Secor (508) 832-5707 x 14. Free food available.

PUMPKINS, GET YOUR PUMPKINS HERE!: The Pumpkin Patch at the First Congregational Church, 128 Central Street, Auburn will be open daily 10 a.m. (11 a.m. on Sundays) 'til dusk Sept. 28 through Oct. 31. There will be gourds and pumpkins of all sizes and prices – one for every need; be it for your fall decor, carving, baking - you name it! Taking in the beautiful sight of the pumpkins, in combination with the changing leaves and the backdrop of the church steeple - makes it worth the trip! If you have any questions, feel free to call the church office at 508-832-2845. See you there! Where do these pumpkins come from? The pumpkins are raised and harvested by the Navajo Indians on their reservation in New Mexico. The money they receive helps their schools and other programs and a percentage of the sales helps our church as well.

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS: Is food a problem for you? Have you been worried about the way you eat? Do you resolve to go on a diet tomorrow, only to fail again and again? Is your weight affecting the way you live your life? You are not alone. Overeaters Anonymous can help. No dues, no fees, no weighins. Meetings are held Sundays in Worcester (St. Michael's On-The-Heights, 340 Burncoat Street) at 7 p.m., Mondays in Auburn (Bethel Lutheran Church, 90 Bryn Mawr Ave.) at 7 p.m. and Wednesdays in Putnam, Conn. (Day Kimball Hospital, 320 Pomfret Strett) at 6 p.m. want more information? Call of text Bruce P. (508) 864-0593, email him at brucep.oa@charter.net or visit oa.org.



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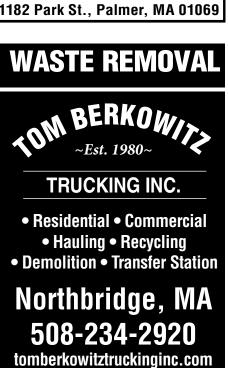
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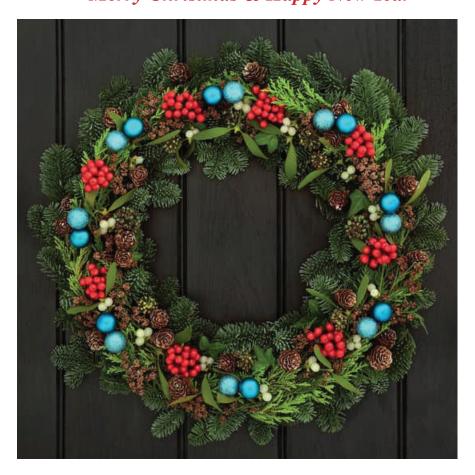




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## 4 tips to simplify cooking for a crowd this boliday season

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At some point during the holiday season, celebrants who host family and friends will no doubt prepare a homecooked meal for their loved ones. Cooking

for a crowd can seem like a daunting task, especially for first-time hosts. However, there are various ways for hosts to simplify cooking

for a crowd this holiday season.

1. Prepare a familiar dish. Hosts may agonize over their holiday menus, and some may feel compelled to prepare a family specialty or the same dishes their parents or grandparents prepared for holiday dinners when they were children. But holiday hosts can make things easy on themselves by choosing dishes they've made in the past. regardless of their place in family history. Chances are the ingredients for hosts' own specialties are already in the

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pantry, saving a potentially time-consuming trip to the grocery store. And thanks to the familiarity factor, hosts' own specialties likely won't require as much time to prepare.

2. Share some cooking duties.

Another way to simplify cooking for a crowd is to invite guests to bring along a side dish or dessert. Guests who live nearby can make something in advance of the big meal, while hosts can hand over their kitchens to overnight guests who express a willingness to contribute their own homecooked dish to the party. Sharing the cooking duties gives hosts more time to connect with friends and family and serves as a great way to plan the menu in advance.

3. Only make what guests are likely to eat.

Hosts also should not feel pressured to cook more food than is necessary. Holiday meals have a tendency to be lavish, but hosts don't have to spend all day in the kitchen preparing food that will likely end up as leftovers or trash. Get a final headcount in the days before everyone comes over and adjust your recipes accordingly.

4. Start early.

If the big is on Christmas Day, that does not mean hosts have to start cooking while everyone unwraps their presents. Hosts who are uncertain about what to cook can look for meals that can be prepared in advance so come the big day all they need to do is turn on the oven and let meals cook while the family spends time together.

Hosts can employ various strategies to simplify the process of cooking for a crowd this holiday season.





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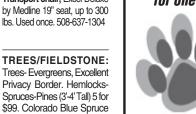
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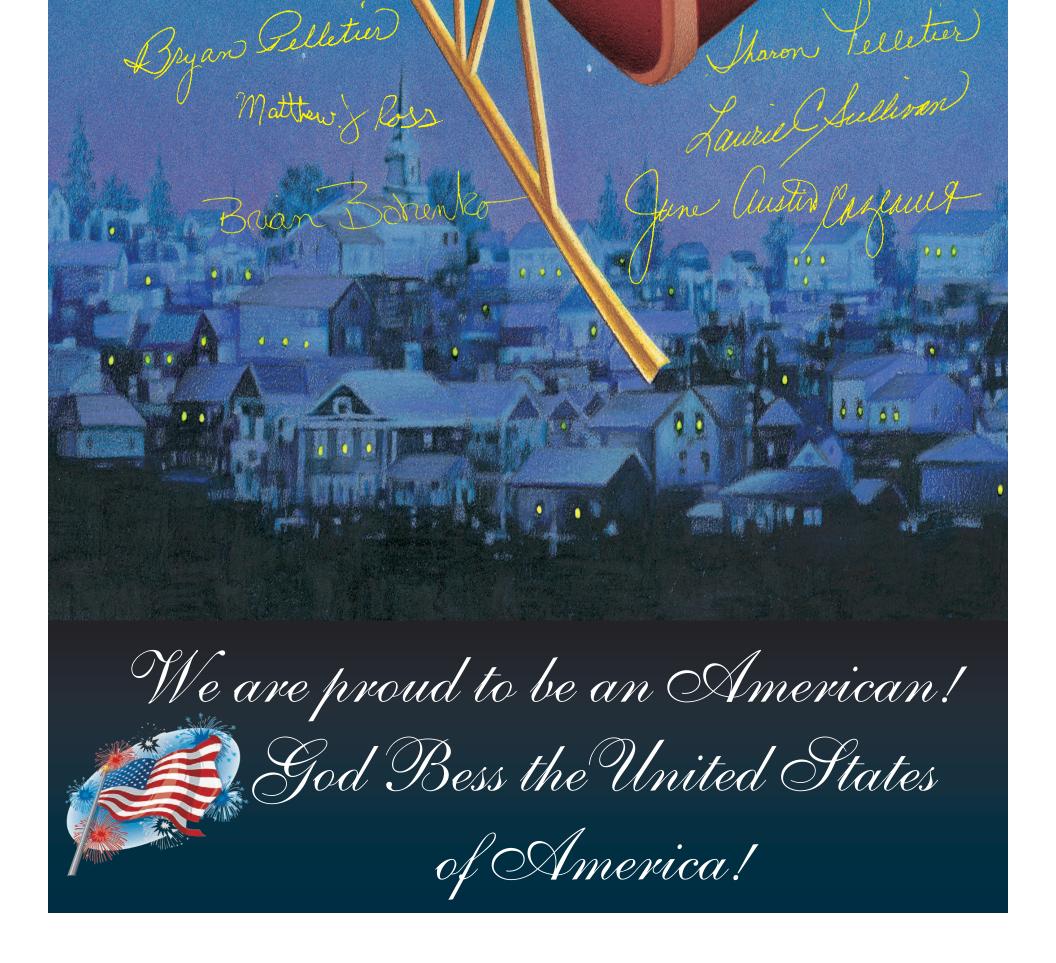
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