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Friday, September 3, 2021



Photo Courtesy

Former selectmen Deborah Noble, John McGrath and Karen Spiewak were recognized by the current Board of Selectmen for their service to Charlton.

Selectmen honor past members

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON – Charlton's current Board of Selectmen took time to honor previous members during an Aug. 10 meeting, with former selectmen John McGrath, Deborah Noble and Karen Spiewak all present to be acknowledged by their peers.

Selectman Bill Borowski started the brief ceremony noting that all three selectmen had exited their positions during the pandemic and had not received a "proper goodbye." McGrath chose not to run for reelection in 2020 after years of service to the town, Noble chose to run for Town Moderator instead of maintaining her selectman seat in 2020 and Spiewak relinquished her seat earlier this year as she planned to move out of town.

Borowski and his fellow sitting selectmen saw fit to finally give these three public servants a proper "thank you" for their dedication to the town.

"From the bottom of my heart, I can't thank all of you enough. When I first came on all three of you took me under your wings to teach me more about what the most important things were for the town. I know we didn't always get along, but the reality is you were all great mentors," Borowski said. "You all dedicated a tremendous number of hours to the town, and we are in the better place because of you three. The town owes you a thank you for all your years of service."

Selectman David Singer, currently the longest tenured selectman on the board, who, along with Borowski, served with all

three prior selectmen, also took a moment to recognize his former colleagues noting that the job of a selectman is often thankless, but it is an important job nonetheless that all three dedicated themselves too proudly.

"I don't think the public really knows what you did behind the scenes, the selfless acts and in some cases the abuse when all you ever did was fight for what you believe is right for this town," said Singer. "I don't think we can thank you enough for putting yourselves out there and doing what you did for as long as you did."

Selectmen capped off the brief ceremony with a break from their meeting to enjoy cake and welcome other present to share in celebrating the work of the three former town leaders.

Study puts focus on voter turnout

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON – Over this past summer, the town of Charlton has hosted an intern, Shepherd Hill Class of 2021 graduate Henry Weiland, who has worked on a special project geared towards helping improve voter turnout in the town.

Weiland, who also served as a student representative on the Charlton Board of Selectmen during his senior year, called his project the Charlton Civic Engagement Initiative. Spurred by the curiosity and interest he obtained in town politics from his time working with Charlton's highest elected body Weiland wanted to find ways to help improve voter participation realizing that recent numbers have been an all-time low for the town even when considering the 2020 pandemic. Weiland presented his finding to selectmen at a meeting in early August. When comparing the turnout for the November 2020 election Weiland found that nearly 79 percent of voters in Charlton took to the polls even under pandemic limitations. In the 2021 local elections, however, only 7.16 percent cast their ballots, and only 1.44 percent of registered voters took part in the 2021 annual town meeting. The data showed 2021 as among the lowest, if not the lowest, turnouts for the local election and town meeting in modern recorded history in Charlton. His research also showed that the numbers had been steadily declining over the past two decades despite certain hot-button issues and highly publicized elections serving as successful outliers. Overall, Weiland felt the problem wasn't isolated to any one year. Consistent voter participation in Charlton has been falling for some time.

"It's a yearly occurrence, and we have to look at what we do and how we do it to

change that and get more voters to turn out," Weiland told selectmen. "A lot has changed in the past 20 years. We didn't have cellphones. It was a completely different society. Sometimes the local government is a little bit slower than the changes in society so it's a little bit of a call for us to do better and that progress exists."

Weiland's research also sought input from the public through a Google forum poll, although that only resulted in 174 participants. Still, the results provided a consistent perspective. Most of the participants said they partake in local elections or meetings, and just over 60 percent of them felt they were informed of town meetings and elections while 68 percent felt they were informed of the place and time of these events. The survey also sought input on how communication can be improved and increased signage informing of elections and meetings and the use of a push notification system to remind voters of these events were among the most popular options.

"This led me to conclude that there is a large percentage of people who don't know where and when we vote. That should lead us to improve our communication between the town and our citizens and that the town election meeting days can be moved around a bit to increase accessibility to the town," Weiland said.

Some of his recommendations were increasing physical signage around town, especially in heavily trafficked areas like Route 20, and considering using the TurboVote system which allows individuals to register for reminders without risk of their personal information being sold off.

While Weiland felt his report provided some insight into how the community can improve, he acknowledged that the goal isn't to get every-

Turn To **STUDY** page **A4**

Incoming president to strengthen Bar Association's role as partner to legal profession

BOSTON — Attorney and Charlton native Thomas M. Bond has been elected president of the Massachusetts Bar Association for the 2021-22 membership year, which begins on Sept. 1. In his year as president, Bond will lead the bar's efforts to strengthen its role as a partner to members of the legal profession, with a focus on diversity and inclusion.

"If you're a lawyer in Massachusetts, there is no better home for you than the Massachusetts Bar Association, regardless of who you are, where you're from or what kind of law you practice. I am looking forward to working with and being a resource to all communities," said Bond. "We need the depth and breadth of what diverse people can bring to our organization, and I feel strongly that their voices, perspectives and experiences will make our organization stronger."

Bond is a founder and managing partner of the Kaplan/Bond Group in Boston. A trial lawyer and admiralty lawyer who has specialized



Thomas Bond

in maritime and construction personal injury litigation for 35 years, Bond's trial practice includes admiralty and maritime law, construction, product liability, automobile, personal injury, and general liability. He has tried many cases and has argued or briefed more than 25 cases before various courts of appeal, including the U.S. Supreme Court (reversing a First Circuit holding that the dredge digging the Ted Williams tunnel was not a

"vessel"), the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, the Supreme Judicial Court, the Massachusetts Appeals Court, and the Supreme Courts of Connecticut and New Hampshire.

In addition to serving as MBA president, Bond is a member of the MBA's Executive Management Board and Budget & Finance Committee. Bond served as co-chair of the MBA's COVID

Turn To **BOND** page **A4**

Grant to fund upgrades to Bay Path veterinary program

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON – Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School is among 47 educational organizations receiving grants through the Skills Capital Grant Program.

Gov. Charlie Baker, Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito, Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Rosalin Acosta and Education Secretary James Peyser announced the awards on Aug. 16, revealing that \$9.7 million was being split among the different schools across the commonwealth to update equipment and expand student enrollment in career education programs. The grants bring the total funding through the program to \$102 million since 2015.

"The Skills Capital Grants have helped give thousands of young people opportunities in high-demand jobs, and the grants have had a tremendous impact on students, schools and local businesses," said Baker during the presentation at Peabody Veterans Memorial High School who were among the award recipients. "These significant investments made over the past six years in this

program with our partners in the Legislature will help train students to adapt to the changing needs of our economy."

"As we continue to address economic disparities across the Commonwealth and provide solutions to employment gaps in high-demand industries, the Skills Capital Grants play a significant role in training students of all ages for successful long-lasting careers," added Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Rosalin Acosta. "The impact of these grant funds on students, educational institutions, and local business partners is incredibly positive and moves us toward a more equitable economy."

Bay Path will receive a \$250,000 grant, which will help update equipment in the school's veterinary technology program. The school will renovate the veterinary hospital where students train and work alongside industry professionals in the fully operational veterinary hospital. The money will further help Bay Path develop after school and evening programs for adult learners to earn a veterinary assisting certification.

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Country Bank announces promotions

REGION — Country Bank, a full-service financial institution serving central and western Massachusetts, is pleased to announce recent staff promotions.

Julie Yi has been promoted to Senior Vice President, Controller and Operations. She has extensive experience in finance and operations and serves on Country Bank's senior management team. Yi holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Accounting from the University of Nevada Las Vegas and is a Certified Public Accountant.

Justin Calheno has been promoted to Assistant Vice President, Retail Lending. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Management from Westfield State University and is a graduate of The New England School for Financial Studies. Calheno serves as a Board Member for the Ludlow Boys and Girls Club.

Lisa Saletnik has been promoted to Assistant Vice President, Business Systems. She holds an Associate's Degree from Baypath University in Health Science and is a graduate of The New England School for Financial Studies.

Mackenna Hogan has been promoted to Commercial Banking Administration

Officer. She holds a Bachelor of Finance Degree from UMass Amherst.

Antonio Palano has been promoted to Assistant Vice President, Retail Lending. He holds an Associate's Degree in Business Administration from Springfield Technical Community College.

Newly appointed officers include Sam Pursey, Erin Skoczylas, Ashley Swett and Sarah Yurkunas.

Sam Pursey has been promoted to Relationship Management Officer. Pursey holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Finance from UMass Amherst.

Erin Skoczylas has been promoted to Assistant Controller. She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from Western New England University, an Associate's degree in Business Administration from Springfield Technical Community College, and is a graduate of The New England School for Financial Studies.

Ashley Swett has been promoted to Customer Care Center Officer. She is a graduate of The New England School for Financial Studies.

Sarah Yurkunas has been promoted to Relationship Management Officer. Sarah holds a Bachelor of Science in Business from Baypath

University, a certificate from the Massachusetts Bankers Association in Fundamentals of Credit Analysis: Intro to Commercial Lending, and is currently enrolled in the New England School for Financial Studies Program.

"I am thrilled to congratulate Julie, Justin, Tony, Lisa, Mackenna, Sam, Erin, Ashley and Sarah on their promotions and all of the accomplishments that got them here; they are a key part of our success. We're pleased to provide the opportunities for our people to develop not only within their roles today, but into new opportunities tomorrow. These team members embody our corporate values of iSTEP – Integrity, Service, Teamwork, Excellence and Prosperity," stated Miriam Siegel, First Senior Vice President of Human Resources.

About Country Bank

Country Bank is a full-service mutual community bank serving central and western Massachusetts with 14 offices in Ware, Palmer, West Brookfield, Brimfield, Belchertown, Wilbraham, Ludlow, Leicester, Paxton, Charlton, and Worcester. Country Bank is a member of FDIC, DIF, and the SUM network. Country Bank can be reached at 800-322-8233 or online at countrybank.com.



QCC and MWCC collaborate on new program partnerships

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College (QCC) President Luis G. Pedraja, Ph.D. and Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) President James L. Vander Hooven, Ed.D. have forged a new transfer agreement between the two Central Massachusetts community colleges, strengthening an already strong partnership.

The agreement will enable QCC students to seamlessly transfer to MWCC after they have completed their general education courses, in order to earn an Associate Degree in either Physical Therapist Assisting or Veterinary Technology. MWCC students will have a similar reciprocal transfer opportunity with QCC. MWCC students interested in an Associate Degree in Radiologic Technology or Respiratory Care can transfer into QCC's programs once their general education courses are completed.

"We serve the community and our communities are not defined by rigid boundaries; they blend into one another," President Pedraja said. "I think it is critical to create partnerships such as

this one that will allow us to provide services to a greater number of students."

"One of the areas in Massachusetts that all community colleges are looking for are ways to partner with one another so that we are not duplicating all of the services we offer. I think the proximity of QCC and MWCC offers us an opportunity for unique partnerships and this is a perfect example of how we can do that," said President Vander Hooven.

Both presidents see these types of agreements only increasing in the future to meet the needs of a diverse student population that community colleges such as MWCC and QCC historically serve.

"It can't be about competing against one another. We're all part of the Commonwealth and we are all working to help our students to ensure they are successful," said President Pedraja.

Visit QCC or MWCC to learn more about these new program partnerships.

For more information about QCC, contact Josh Martin, Director of Institutional Communications at 508.854.7513 or jmartin@qcc.mass.edu

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Expert says forest health needs citizen scientists

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

REGION — Area forests face a wide range of assaults, and the state can't keep track of them all.

To Department of Conservation and Recreation forester Felicia Hubacz, that's a call for citizen scientists to come forward and help.

"By giving everyone else the same knowledge I have, I hope you can take it and run," she told a few dozen participants of her MACC "Lunch and Learn" talk last week.

Hubacz's talk was primarily focused on updating the impact of several insect and other attackers on the Bay State's forest health, but there are countless citizen science opportunities available. One New England-specific website, naturegroupie.org, lists everything from monitoring Maine beaches or New Hampshire water quality to cataloging invasive plants, counting various kinds of animals, identifying vernal pools, and documenting the effects of climate change. The federal citizenscience.gov website lists 491 operational or planned projects nationwide; some are recruiting volunteers, others are not. Mass.gov specifically has a Web page for "coastal citizen science" seeking people to do a variety of things to "advanc[e] scientific knowledge about the Massachusetts coast."

"Community-based data collection helps fill gaps left by government, private, and nonprofit groups with limited funds to research, explore, and protect vast natural systems," the mass.gov page states.

In Hubacz's case, such assistance would fill gaps in understanding the effects and outbreaks of such things as beech leaf disease, which she said is new in this area but "we're seeing it all over the place." The illness afflicts all kinds of beeches; it's most noticeable symptom is dark bands on the leaves that later become distorted.

She said it's caused by a nematode, and was first observed two or three years ago. DCR has "no idea how it's being spread," but suspects birds.

A similar relative newcomer is the emerald ash borer, but that has become so common it's "no longer a priority for the DCR," Hubacz said. She showed a map which indicated the insect's first pocket was in the Berkshires in 2012,

but "we're just considering it everywhere" today. It's too new in our area for the trees to have developed a resistance, but she noted foresters are seeing resistant trees in Michigan. The agency uses three kinds of parasitic wasp as biocontrol, with five test sites in progress.

By contrast, the gypsy moth – sometimes now termed "LDD" after the abbreviation of its Latin name – has been well-known for decades, but still strikes in cycles. This year, "almost all gypsy moth damage is in the Berkshires," where it's causing "lots and lots of defoliation," Hubacz said. Trees thus weakened tend to fall prey to various kinds of beetles and other attackers, and the moth's annual range is typically determined by weather.

Temperature also affects the wooly adelgid, a tiny insect that's been particularly harmful to hemlocks. Hubacz said they saw a "heavy dieoff" in the winter of 2017-8, but last winter did not get "enough of a temperature drop to see these guys drop in population."

Ironically, she noted, these insects are almost all asexual female clones because our area doesn't have the spruce species they normally breed in. A few of the species' winged males have been found in Massachusetts, though.

One troublesome insect DCR is "making good progress" against is the asian longhorned beetle. That has required cutting down a large number of trees, especially in the Worcester area, which was hard hit. Last year DCR found one infested tree on an Auburn golf course, but it did not seem to spread to others nearby. This year, they found one in Worcester, but the damage "looks older." The agency set many ALB traps in the Worcester area, "but we haven't found an ALB in a trap since 2015," she said.

DCR is tracking several tree diseases, particularly white pine needle-cast disease and red pine scale, both of which have become more common due to climate change. The agency is also watching a few "possible future threats" that are not yet in our area, but have been reportedly relatively nearby. One is the spotted lanternfly, a southern insect that feeds on tree of

heaven (itself an invasive), but also several kinds of fruit trees or vines. According to a map Hubacz showed, the closest infestation was in southwestern Connecticut as of August 2020, although individual insects have been spotted in Massachusetts. Part of the problem here is that the insect "will lay eggs anywhere" – on trees, on rocks – and its egg masses can be mistaken for lichens in early stages of development.

Similarly, DCR is concerned about the possible arrival of oak wilt infection, a systemic fungal disease that can spread both by a beetle attracted to the spores and by root contact. It's now in New York, and she said, "If it's found in Massachusetts, it's going to be a real pain in the butt."

Despite all these threats, she noted, "We'll always have trees, even if they're maybe not the ones we really want."

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



ACCURACY WATCH

The Charlton Villager is committed to accuracy in all its news reports. Although numerous safeguards are in place to ensure accurate reporting, mistakes can occur.

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Cornerstone Bank named among most charitable companies in Massachusetts by Boston Business Journal

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank, a community bank with 12 locations throughout Central Massachusetts, has been named as an honoree in the Boston Business Journal’s 2021 Corporate Citizenship Awards, a recognition of the region’s top corporate charitable contributors. The Business Journal annually publishes this list to showcase companies that promote and prioritize giving back to their communities.

“We are honored to have been recognized for our charitable contributions throughout 2020,” said Cornerstone

Bank CEO Todd Tallman. “Our giving efforts last year included nearly \$400,000 in donations to local organizations. This included funds to purchase PPE for Harrington HealthCare System, donations to three local United Way chapters, the Worcester County Food Bank and the Worcester Community Action Council, 16 scholarships to graduating seniors and many more.”

This year, only 98 companies qualified for the distinction by reporting at least \$100,000 in contributions to Massachusetts-based charities last

year. The honorees this year include companies from such industry sectors as financial and professional services, health care, technology, retail and professional sports.

“During a year filled with unprecedented events and change, it’s incredible to think that so many companies, as represented by those on the Boston Business Journal’s Corporate Charitable Contributors list, still gave so generously to charities in Massachusetts,” said Boston Business Journal Market President and Publisher Carolyn Jones. “These companies give back at least \$100,000 to the local community, and now we are in a time when giving back and helping one another is more important than ever. The philanthropic companies prioritize the welfare of our communities, and we are excited to be able to honor them.”

Cornerstone Bank and other honorees will be celebrated at the Boston Business Journal’s 16th Annual Corporate Citizenship Awards on Sept. 9, a commemoration of honorees that will be virtual to ensure everyone’s health and safety.

“With the hardships many faced in

2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was more important than ever for us to continue to find ways to give back,” continued Tallman. “Despite restrictions on gatherings, in-person events and other traditional opportunities for volunteering, we were still able to help better our own backyard, a commitment we will continue to pursue in 2021 and in the future.”

About Cornerstone Bank

Cornerstone Bank is an independent, mutual savings bank serving residents, businesses and communities throughout Central Massachusetts. Our customer promise, Built on Trust, is not just a brand, but also a corporate focus. Whether a business or personal partnership, Cornerstone Bank rests on the foundation that relationships are built on trust. Deposits are insured in full by a combination of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Depositors Insurance Fund. The Bank is an Equal Opportunity Employer, Equal Housing Lender and SBA Preferred Lender. To learn about Cornerstone Bank’s personal and business banking offerings, please visit cornerstonebank.com or call 800-939-9103.

Socially Speaking...

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Secret clique

6. Earliest in and out

10. Ancient Egyptian symbol of life

14. Olfactory property

15. Kidnapping

17. Golf prize

19. Helps little firms

20. Cast a spell on

21. Panama is one

22. Dishonorable man

23. Sea eagle

24. Part of the healing process

26. Vin’s last name

29. Wings

31. Made older

32. Political device

34. Looks like a rabbit

35. Gurus

37. Philippine Island

38. Not or

39. Hindu model of ideal man

40. Exam

41. Making less difficult

43. Without

45. Dravidian ethnic group

46. A baglike structure

47. Buenos Aires capital La __

49. Dab

50. Singers who perform together

53. Pirates’ saying

57. OK to allude to

58. Somaliland diplomat

59. Has to pay back

60. Felix is one

61. Intestinal pouches

CLUES DOWN

1. Harsh cries of a crow

2. Type of horse

3. __ fide: authentic

4. Doctors’ group

5. Fugitives are on it

6. Forged

7. Wild goat

8. Influential American president

9. Calls for help

10. Repents

11. Palm tree with creeping roots

12. Black powder used in makeup

13. Happy New Year

16. Stretched out one’s neck

18. Whale ship captain

22. Atomic #20

23. Border

24. River that borders India and Nepal

25. After B

27. Fencing swords

28. Where researchers work

29. Expression of satisfaction

30. Broadway actor Nathan

31. Heavy, heat-retaining stove

33. A way to eliminate

35. Type of tree resin

36. Russian river

37. Children’s TV network

39. Troublemaker

42. Averts or delays

43. Self-immolation by fire ritual

44. It cools your home

46. Satisfy to the fullest

47. Stinks!

48. Popular board game

49. Attack by hurling

50. A vale

51. Type of acid

52. Tasmania’s highest mountain

53. No seats available

54. Licensed for Wall Street

55. Family of genes

56. Constrictor snake

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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CHURCH LISTINGS

- **Charlton Federated Church**, 64 Main St., 248-5550, Sunday worship 10:30 a.m. www.fedchurchcharlton.org
- **Charlton Baptist Church**, 50 Hammond Hill Road, 248-4488, www.charltonbaptist.org, Sunday worship 10 a.m.
- **Charlton City United Methodist**, 74 Stafford St. 248-7379, web site: CharltonCityUMC.org Sunday worship and Children’s church 10am
- **St. Joseph’s Church**, 10 H. Putnam Ext, 248-7862, www.stjosephscharlton.com, Saturday Vigil Mass 4:30 p.m., Sunday Mass 8 a.m., Sunday Family Mass 10 a.m., Sunday LifeTEEN Mass 5 p.m., Weekday Mass Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 a.m.
- **Hope Christian Fellowship**, 6 Haggerty Road, 248-5144
- **Assemblies of God Southern New England District Headquarters**, Route 20, 248-3771, snedag.org, Office hours Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Living Word Church of Charlton**, 10 Main Street - Grange building 1st Floor, Charlton, Ma 01507, Pastor Craig Bellisario, (508) 233-8349 Sunday Service 10:00am. www.livingwordhcharlton.com info@livingwordcharlton.com
- **New Life Fellowship A/G, SNED Chapel**, 307 Sturbridge Road, Rt. 20, Charlton, MA, Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.

BOND

continued from page A1

Response Task Force, which worked with the courts and the bar to establish guidelines for the operation of the courts and provided daily notifications to the legal community of rules and court changes during the pandemic. He has also served as a chair of the MBA’s Judicial Diversity Task Force and as chair of the MBA’s Judicial Administration Section, where he also chaired the section’s Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Diversity, which successfully introduced a resolution at the MBA’s House of Delegates supporting efforts to increase diversity in the court system. Over the past year, he has continued his efforts to improve the legal system by bringing judges and lawyers together, moderating a bench-bar forum with the Flaschner Judicial Institute and also a question-and-answer forum with the chief justices of the Trial and Superior courts and other judges on reducing stressors in the courtroom.

Outside the MBA, Bond is a member of the Massachusetts Academy of Trial Attorneys (MATA), where he has served on its executive committee and board of governors. He received MATA’s President’s Award in 2014. He is also a member of the

STUDY

continued from page A1

one to the polls. It’s simply to make sure people are informed and can be involved if they choose.

“Obviously, you can’t get everyone. You’re not going to be able to force everyone to vote. Not everyone is going to be interested. It’s unrealistic. The fact that 80 percent of people participated before in a town election and only 7 percent participated this year shows that there is room for improvement. We’re never going to hit a hundred – It’s

American Association for Justice. A frequent lecturer on admiralty law at Suffolk University Law School, Bond has also lectured locally at Massachusetts Continuing Legal Education (MCLE), the Boston Bar Association and the New England School of Law, and nationally before the Tulane Admiralty Law Institute in New Orleans, the American Association for Justice and the American Trial Lawyers Association.

Bond graduated summa cum laude from Northeastern University in 1982, and from Suffolk University Law School in 1985. Bond grew up in Charlton, and graduated from Shepherd Hill Regional High School in 1977. A life-long Massachusetts resident, he has lived in Hopkinton for 26 years, where he still resides with his wife of 36 years. They have two grown daughters and one chocolate rescue lab.

The MBA’s leadership team for the 2021-22 year includes President Thomas M. Bond, President-Elect Grace V.B. Garcia, Vice President Damian J. Turco, Treasurer Victoria Santoro Mair and Secretary Michael H. Hayden. Martin W. Healy is the MBA’s chief legal counsel and chief operating officer. Full officer bios are available at www.massbar.org/officers.

not really about fixing the issue entirely, but improving what we have,” said Weiland.

The Board of Selectmen said they will take Weiland’s data and recommendations under consideration including examining and investment in TurboVote and considering the possibility of forming a committee to help built off of the foundation Weiland provided in his research. The Board also discussed the possibility of starting informational welcome kits for new citizens to town helping to introduce them to Charlton’s governmental processes.




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\$325,000, 21 Leland Dr, Dabrowski, David W, to Dabrowski, Joseph D.
\$207,000, 52 Carpenter Hill Rd, Blanchard, Scott E, and Blanchard, Michelle M, to Morse, Jody, and Morse, Kimberly.
\$150,000, Osgood Rd #5, Lemansky, Robert F, to Isakson, Matthew M, and Isakson, Justine C.



P.E.O. Sisters' Meeting includes Bay Path PN Director

PAXTON — P.E.O. Chapter R met recently at the home of Pamela Thomas-Nielsen. A delicious lunch was provided by the hostess. The P.E.O. sisters shared many interesting facts and explained the many wonderful fundraising activities as well as the equally wonderful scholarship recipients they have worked with in the past. Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN of Douglas, Academy Director for Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy attended along with her daughter Lilly A. Bolandrina of Boston, a sophomore at Boston University, major in econom-

ics. The Bolandrinas admired the many accomplishments and philanthropic work of the P.E.O. sisters. P.E.O. is a philanthropic organization where women CELEBRATE the advancement of women; EDUCATE women through scholarships, grants, awards, loans, and stewardship of Cottey College and MOTIVATE women to achieve their highest aspirations. The P.E.O. Sisterhood is a U.S.-based international women's organization of about 230,000 members, with a primary focus on providing educational opportunities for female students worldwide.



Photo Courtesy

P.E.O. Chapter R met recently at the home of Pamela Thomas-Nielsen.

The Sisterhood is headquartered in Des Moines, Iowa, with chapters throughout the United States and Canada (www.Peointernational.org). The sisters in attendance who shared their stories include the hostess, Pamela Thomas-Nielsen of Paxton, Jane Flynn,

Beverly Kruger and Eleanor Brockway, all of Worcester, Barbara Cotoian and Chris White, both of Shrewsbury, Katy Todd of North Andover, Joan Clauson and Sheila Ansley, both of Charlton. For more information about P.E.O., visit www.peointernational.org.

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State officials reverse course on masking in schools

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION – Less than a month after authorizing local school boards to approve their own mask policies for the upcoming year, state leaders have reversed course and mandated masking in schools.

At a special meeting held on Aug. 24, the state’s Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted 9-1 to give Commissioner Jeffrey Riley the authority to mandate masks in all K-12 public schools through at least Oct. 1.

When students left school in June for the summer break, they assumed they were also leaving mask mandates behind. COVID-19 conditions were rapidly improving at the time, but the highly contagious Delta variant caused a significant reversion over the last month.

Now, as students head back to school, they’ll once again have to include masks in their daily preparations.

“In light of the current rise of COVID-19 in Massachusetts, I believe a mask mandate will be an important additional measure to keep students in school safely at this time,” Commissioner Riley

said. “Masks remain a simple and effective mitigation measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19. A mandate will also provide more time for students and staff to get vaccinated, as we know vaccination remains the single most important tool in mitigating the impact of COVID-19.”

The late changes in policy at the state level frustrated local school officials, parents, and students. Many school committees had already voted on masking guidance for the fall of 2021, only to have state leaders override local policies at the last minute. Governor Charlie Baker had even supported the DESE’s previous recommendations that individual school districts determine their own masking regulations.

“Giving the locals the opportunity to own the decisions they make is a big and important issue,” Baker said during an Aug. 16 press conference. “If you look at what has played out in other states where the government has taken away the authority for locals to make their own decisions, that’s not the right way to play this game.”

Despite the vacillation among state educational lead-

ers, many local school officials and parents are pleased with the eventual change back to mask mandates. Officials had been concerned about how to ensure continued safety in schools without firm policies in place, especially with unvaccinated students, staff members, and visitors returning to school buildings this fall.

The state’s latest mask mandate applies to all public school students in grades K-12, as well as staff members. It includes an exemption for individuals who cannot wear a mask for medical or behavioral reasons.

At the end of September, Commissioner Riley will reassess COVID-19 conditions and determine with medical experts whether the mask mandate should be extended. With cases and hospitalizations sharply rising nationwide over the last month, many experts are predicting that conditions will worsen with the return of colder weather.

State officials said all decisions related to masking, however unpopular, are made with the goal of keeping students in class full-time this year. Riley and his team have faced pressure all summer from parents and educators on both sides of the debate.

“At the forefront of my recommendation is the best interest of students and staff

as they return safely to full-time, in-person instruction this fall,” Riley said. “While we have already put in place significant measures to support schools and districts in this regard, I am recommending this additional measure in light of the increasing case rates, and to further encourage and provide additional time for more students and staff to get vaccinated.”

State officials said the mask mandate complements additional safety measures that were implemented jointly by the DESE and the Department of Public Health (DPH). These include guidance for schools on hosting vaccination clinics, establishing plans for COVID-19 testing in schools, and improving health screening for students and staff.

State officials are also utilizing the mask mandate as a tool to incentivize vaccination. In an August 20 memo released by Riley, the Commissioner indicated that, as of Oct. 1, all schools with a vaccination rate of 80 percent or greater for students and staff will be able to lift the mask mandate for vaccinated individuals only.

“Schools would be able to submit an attestation form provided by DESE to demonstrate they have met this threshold,” Riley wrote. “Once schools reach the 80 percent thresh-

old and receive approval to lift the mask mandate, vaccinated students and staff may remove their masks. In alignment with statewide guidance, unvaccinated students and staff would be required to continue wearing masks.”

The latest mask mandate from DESE aligns with similar orders in schools and workplaces across the country. Now that the Pfizer vaccine has gained full FDA approval, the nationwide push for increased vaccination rates received a major shot in the arm. Last week, several companies and agencies joined the list of employers requiring staff members to be vaccinated.

For Riley and his team, the push for increased vaccinations will continue through the fall. Officials are heavily promoting vaccination clinics as the cold and flu season looms. For now, state leaders are relying on the mask mandate to maintain safety.

“I believe having these measures in place will allow for a strong start of the school year and provide additional safety measures until more students and staff are vaccinated,” Riley said. “As always, we will continue to monitor developments, consult with medical experts and public health officials, and adjust requirements as appropriate.”

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Legally freed for adoption, Jayven is looking for a loving and patient family of any constellation, with or without other children in the home. Jayven is very close with his younger brother and has expressed a desire to be a role model for him. An ideal family for Jayven will be open to helping him maintain this relationship.

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



Local students enroll at College of the Holy Cross

WORCESTER — The College of the Holy Cross congratulates 822 new Crusaders who will be starting at the College in Fall 2021. The following local students will be part of the Class of 2025:

Benjamin Johnson of Uxbridge
Khushi Patel of Uxbridge
The Class of 2025 includes students from 33 states and 15 nations across the globe. This year's incoming class is made up of 54 percent women and 46 percent men, with 23 percent of students coming from ethnically diverse backgrounds and 16 percent as proud first-generation college students.


These newly minted Crusaders have distinguished themselves through community service, leadership roles, and diverse participation in areas like the arts, music and athletics.

The new Crusaders will arrive on campus and move into the residence halls starting at 8:30 a.m., Saturday, August 28th, where they will be welcomed to Mount St. James by an enthusiastic purple crew of current students, staff, faculty and alumni. Fall classes are set to begin Monday, September 6th.


“I am thrilled to welcome Holy Cross’ Class of 2025 - a vibrant and diverse group of exceptional students who are also one of the most academically accomplished classes in the College’s history. I can’t wait to see what you do and how you will grow ethically, spiritually and intellectually on The Hill,” said Holy Cross President Vincent Rougeau.

About Holy Cross

The College of the Holy Cross, in Worcester, Mass., is among the nation’s leading liberal arts institutions. A highly selective, four-year, exclusively undergraduate college of 3,100 students, Holy Cross is renowned for offering a rigorous, personalized education in the Jesuit, Catholic tradition. Since its founding in 1843, Holy Cross has made a positive impact in society by graduating students who distinguish themselves as thoughtful leaders in business, professional and civic life.



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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
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BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

Get a hobby

Although we typically hear the phrase ‘get a hobby’ as a sarcastic way of putting someone down, there is also some truth to it. It’s important, especially for students to get involved in extracurricular activities.

Even as adults, when looking for work, it’s important to showcase experience as well as other aspects of your life. Most employers are looking for candidates who have a range of skills.

We learn this from a very young age. Striking a balance between work, school and taking time for yourself is key to a happy life. These days however, time seems to be something there is just never enough of. In fact, over the past several years, there has been a decline in civic engagement including neighborhood get togethers and leagues such as bowling, softball etc. Time seems to get eaten by social media or bingeing tv shows. Experts say the term ‘busy’ has been used as a badge of honor to make us feel important, not that we need to be busy, to actually be important.

Hobbies tend to make us more efficient. If we have a meeting to attend, or workout class to go to, we will check things off the list for work, to make time for what we want to do. When we feel like we have more time ahead of us to finish work, with nothing else to do, that time will get eaten up by work.

People tend to be more energized by active leisure, as opposed to watching movies or scrolling through social media. Active engagement allows us to be more present.

Hobbies are great for both students and adults alike in that it creates a chance to make friends and create new connections. We all know that social connections are key to creating happiness. People want to feel like they’re a part of a community.

Further, learning new things gives you more to talk about it, therefore making you more of a unique person. It makes you a more well rounded. Whether you hunt, mountain bike, play music, collect stamps, or Doors memorabilia, you’ll always have an interesting story to tell.

Being involved in other things besides school and work does relieve stress. Experts say to allocate one hour per day or a few hours per week to do something you feel inspired by. If there’s something you’ve always wanted to do, don’t wait for ‘someday’ do it now.

In our office, there are all sorts of conversations that take place because we all have different hobbies. We have history buffs, runners, musicians, hikers, snowboarders, actors, artists, movie buffs, podcasters and so much more.

As Dale Carnegie said, “Make the most of today. Get interested in something. Shake yourself awake. Develop a hobby. Let the winds of enthusiasm sweep through you.”

LETTERS

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We think you’re important enough to tell all our readers to turn to the Opinion pages and read your Letters to the Editor.

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Mail your letters to the Charlton Villager, P.O. Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550.

Or e-mail your letters to the editor at news@stonebridgepress.news


You’ll need to provide your name and place of residence, along with a phone number, so we can verify the letter is yours.

We don’t have a set limit, but if you keep it around 600 words or so, you’re going to have a better chance at seeing all your words in print.

If you want to write a bit longer about a particular issue, maybe a guest Your Turn column is your cup of tea. If you do that, try to keep it between 700-800 words.

R e m e m b e r, libelous remarks and/or personal attacks are a no-no and could lead to your letter not being published.

So, what are you waiting for? Start writing!



OPINION

VIEWS AND COMMENTARY FROM CHARLTON, CHARLTON CITY, CHARLTON DEPOT AND BEYOND

You are not your past

Many people feel like they can’t have the life they want because of their past limitations or failures.

Maybe your family wasn’t there for you; you didn’t get the proper education, you’ve been fired from multiple jobs, or mistreated in relationships.

Many things aren’t fair and can cause a chain reaction of events that may take us far off course. There are also many bad choices we make, and as a result, we end up missing out on the life we want.

You may have made mistakes, gotten into trouble, fired from a job, lost a relationship, but that doesn’t mean it always has to be that way.

George Washington Carver said, “Where there is no vision, there is no hope.”

I agree with his quote completely. George Washington Carver was a more brilliant man than I will ever be. For today’s column, I would like to modify the selection to say, “Where there is no positive vision of the future, there is no hope.”

It seems most people’s vision of the future is dictated by the failures and limitations of their past, and therefore, they do have a vision, but it’s a negative one.

One trait of a successful person is they don’t allow themselves to be defined by their failures or their present unfavorable circumstances. Instead, they define themselves by a positive vision of their future.

That seems odd when you think about it. They define themselves by something that hasn’t even happened yet.

It’s easy to look at a great person and assume they had everything handed to them or that somehow life was much easier on them than it was you.

I have many fond memories of my parents taking me to Disney World. I’ve been on the rides, seen the movies, and heard about the man who built it all, Walt Disney. I’ve driven past the

POSITIVELY
SPEAKING
.....
TOBY
MOORE

Disney skyscraper in Burbank, California, hundreds of times; I’ve auditioned at Walt Disney Studios dozens of times. When surrounded by all that accomplishment, it’s hard to imagine that Walt ever faced any hardship.

Most don’t know that Walt Disney was fired from his job at the Kansas City Star after his newspaper editor told him that he didn’t have enough imagination or creativity!

What if Walt Disney allowed himself to be defined by that moment, and for the next 20 years, he wandered from job to job, telling himself, “I’m not creative, I don’t have a good enough imagination...”

If he would’ve, he never would have created Laugh-O-Gram. Laugh-O-Gram was an animation studio that Walt was contracted to run. The studio was supposed to make twelve cartoons. Although the company started promisingly, it wasn’t long before Walt was living at the office, taking weekly baths at Union Station in Kansas City, and finally bankrupting the studio; what a disaster.

He sold his camera, which gave him enough money for a one-way train ticket to Hollywood, Calif., and the rest is history.

I wonder how many potentially great people never accomplished their vision because they believed in their failures more than their vision of the future. They accepted what their present circumstances were telling them, rather than what their future vision was telling them.

If Walt Disney was one of those people, we’d have missed out on one of the most creative minds of the 20th century. Most obviously, he chose not to allow those negative experiences to define him because he became one of the most influential people of all time.

Like all great people, Walt Disney didn’t allow his future to be dictated by the failures or limitations of his past.

Fantasy football



BEYOND
THE PEWS
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REV. JOHN H.D.
LUCY

We’re a few weeks into the NFL season, which means we should talk about fantasy football. Fantasy sports is a huge industry but especially fantasy football. I myself play in two leagues. For the past eight years, I was the commissioner of my family’s league because I have always found meaning in the game.

For instance, even though we’re playing with family, one of our members has always acted as if winning is the most important reason to play. So, when one time that person accidentally dropped a player that someone else picked up, he exploded when I wouldn’t give him back the player. He took that to mean I was out to ensure he lost but, really, I just didn’t think the situation mattered much, as the whole reason we formed the league was to stay in touch with family in a fun way. My family member’s reaction was outrageous enough, however, that a number of family members decided never to play again.

Could I have handled the situation better? Probably. But it taught me that we can learn a whole lot about ourselves and others from even the most trivial of activities and habits. Do we give up on one another when there’s a bit of conflict? Do we place relationships above success? Are we capable of having fun while losing? What do we think the purpose of competition is?

In my other league, of former seminary friends, there are a few who, if they lose in the first few weeks, they stop playing. Well, that teaches us a lot, too, and it’s rather annoying to everyone else. Winning against a non-player should not be fun.

At the end of the day, I think God cries a little when we try to win at all costs, whether at something without much meaning, like fantasy football, or in school, business, church or other social group. I think God gave us these things so that we might find greater meaning and joy in life.

So I encourage us, as we win or lose in our fantasy football leagues, to monitor ourselves. Better to notice harmful character traits and habits over fantasy football than in some more significant situation. Let’s do our best to use something silly like fantasy football to make sure we’re using our lives meaningfully and joyfully.

Are your loved ones prepared to be caregivers?

Once you’re retired and your children are grown, they are likely “off the books,” as far as your financial responsibility for them is concerned. Yet, you’re probably still prepared to do anything to help them – but are they ready to take care of you if the need arises?

Consider this: Almost half of retirees say that the ideal role in retirement is providing support to family and other loved ones, according to the Edward Jones/Age Wave study titled Four Pillars of the New Retirement: What a Difference a Year Makes – and a slightly earlier version of the same study found that 72 percent of retirees say one of their biggest fears is becoming a burden on their family members.

So, if you are recently retired or plan to retire in the next few years, you may need to reconcile your desire to help your adult children or other close relatives with your concern that you could become dependent on them. You’ll need to consider whether your loved ones can handle caregiving responsibilities, which frequently include financial assistance. If they did have to provide some caregiving services for you, could they afford it? About 80% of caregivers now pay for some caregiving costs out of their own pockets – and one in five caregivers experience significant financial strain because of caregiving, according



FINANCIAL
FOCUS
.....
JEFF
BURDICK

to a recent AARP report.

One way to help your family members is to protect yourself from the enormous expense of long-term care. The average cost for a private room in a nursing home is now over \$100,000 a year, according to the insurance company Genworth. Medicare won’t pay much, if any, of these costs, so you may want to consult with a financial advisor, who can suggest possible ways of addressing long-term care expenses.

Even if you don’t require a long stay in a nursing home, you still might need some assistance in the future, especially if your health or mental capacities decline. So, start talking to your loved ones about their possible roles if you should ever need caregiving. You may want to create a caregiving arrangement that specifies payment for caregiving services and outlines the expenses to be reimbursed if paid out of pocket by a caregiver. Also, you may want to create the appropriate legal documents, such as a durable power of attorney for health care, which enables someone to make medical decisions on your behalf should you become incapacitated, and a durable power of attorney for finances, which allows you to name someone to make your financial decisions if you become unable to do so yourself. A legal professional can help you make these

arrangements and incorporate them into your overall estate plan. A financial advisor can suggest ways of preparing for the costs involved with caregiving and can direct you to relevant resources, such as social services provided by your city or county.

Clearly, there’s much you can do to help shield your family from the financial strain of caregiving. But you are not alone: By drawing on other resources and outside help, you can ease the burden on your loved ones. And everyone will feel more secure when you have your arrangements in place.

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.

Harvest Canning Tips

It’s harvest season and Farmer’s Markets are selling tomatoes and cukes in bulk, workshops on preserving produce are filling up fast and canning jar manufacturers report double digit hikes in sales. There’s no doubt about it, canning continues to make a comeback!

Whether canning in bulk to use up garden vegetables or filling a few jelly jars for holiday gifts, the following information is geared toward helping your preserving efforts pay off in both financial and “feel good” benefits.

Not sure if canning is worth the work? Consider the many “perks” of processing food at home, which include:



*The ability to control the salt, sugar and additive content of the foods you intend to preserve.

* Studies show foods canned at peak ripeness offer superior nutrition and flavor despite the typical loss of vitamins during the heating process.

*Processing foods also allows seasonal fruits and vegetables to be enjoyed throughout the year.

*Since the canning process doesn’t rely on refrigeration for preservation, canned foods are readily available and safe during power outages or appliance shut downs.

One of the joys of canning is the ability to literally put the fruits of your garden labor on the dinner table. For those who don’t grow their own foods, a trip

to a farmer’s market or neighborhood farm stand can reap bushels of freshly picked produce. Don’t be afraid to ask for “seconds” and/or discounts on less than perfect but perfectly fine produce. Just be sure to overlook those with obvious bruises or major imperfections.

Common backyard garden vegetables such as tomatoes and cucumbers are popular candidates for canning as they offer a variety of finished products from condiments to side dishes. Best of all, a few old fashioned canning recipes can transform the versatile garden favorites into glistening jars of pantry staples. For example, tomatoes can be prepped to be canned as tomato sauce, tomato soup, tomato juice, salsa, ketchup, and more. Cucumbers transform into sweet gherkins, dill pickles, chow chow and a variety of relishes. Orchard fruits such as

Fall means trout fishing



THE GREAT
OUTDOORS
.....
RALPH
TRUE

As we enter the month of September, many freshwater anglers are thinking about the fall trout fishing season in Massachusetts. As the waters start to cool from the extremely warm temperatures of this summer, anglers need to be aware that Massachusetts Fish & Wildlife will not stock trout until the waters are suitable to sustain the freshly stocked trout. It may be until October before the waters are cool enough to see a trout stocking. It is hard to believe that the Gulf has 90 Degree surface water temperatures this past week, prior to Hurricane Ida!

Saltwater fishing continues to improve on all fronts in both Massachusetts and Rhode Island, with schools of mackerel along the South shore of the Island. Fluke & seabass fishing also remains very good at the Island. Tuna were being caught around the Gully! Albi are showing up in both Mass. & Rhode Island waters. These hard fighting fish provide some great fishing for anglers using light tackle and fly rods. They do not provide good eating; however, some anglers do take a few home for table fare. Saltwater fishing should explode with action on all fronts in the coming weeks.



Photo Courtesy

This week's picture shows nine-year-old Payton fishing with her grandfather Charlie this past Saturday on the Meadow Pond in Whitinsville. He takes her fishing as often as he can. She still will not handle the fish, but that will come in time.

Ten local sportsmen left for Maine this past weekend to enjoy a bit of bear hunting that opened up this past Monday statewide. Bear hunters are allowed to set up bait hunting spots prior to hunting season. Hunters are allowed to use crossbows, compound bows, shotgun, etc. to harvest their bear in Maine. It should be a good year for hunting bear in Maine, if

the weather cools off. Hunting bear in Massachusetts is open in all zones again this year, and a permit that costs only \$5 is required. Be sure to check all hunting regulations before the season opens on Sept. 7. Second season opens Nov. 1, and the third season opens for shotgun Nov. 29.

Have you checked your status for an antlerless deer permit? Go to the

Mass. Fish Hunt Web site to see if you have won a permit. If you did, you will need to pay a \$5 fee. If you did not win a permit, you can still apply for an antlerless deer permit starting on September. The antlerless surplus deer permits go fast. The permits will be in zones 9, 10, 11, 13 & 14. Zone 11 will go on sale Tuesday, Sept. 28 at 9 a.m. It will be a staggered system. Zone 10 will go on sale Wednesday, Sept. 29 at 9 a.m. Zone 9, including 13 & 14, Tuesday, Sept. 30 at 9 a.m. Number of surplus deer permits available in zone 9, 1,410 - Zone 10 - 9,092 & Zone 11 7,770 Zone 13 2,526 and Zone 14, 2,619.

This week's picture shows nine-year-old Payton fishing with her grandfather Charlie this past Saturday on the Meadow Pond in Whitinsville. He takes her fishing as often as he can. She still will not handle the fish, but that will come in time.

Last week's picture of a huge whale cod was caught a number of years ago, prior to the recreational cod fishery being shut down ,causing numerous charter boats to close. Starting Sept. 15, recreational anglers can retain one cod daily with a minimum length of 21 inches. Fifteen haddock can now be caught daily by recreational anglers.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all of our servicemen & women, and with those affected by Hurricane Ida, fires in the West, and floods in many parts of the country.

Take a Kid Fishing & Keep them rods Bending!

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GARDEN
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Create a colorful year-round garden filled with flowers, greenery, colorful fruit, fall color, winter interest and a few surprises. Consider seasonal interest when planning a new garden or landscape. Adding a few key plants to existing gardens can help boost your landscape's seasonal appeal.

Include a variety of plants with multiple seasons of interest as well as bird and pollinator appeal. You will look forward to the change of seasons as your landscape transforms throughout the year.

Use trees and shrubs to provide the framework and longevity in your landscape. Serviceberries, crabapples,

dogwoods, and many others have flowers, fruit, pollinator, and bird appeal and add winter interest with their bark or form. Look for those with colorful exfoliating bark like paper-bark maple, heptacodium, and river birch for a beautiful statement in the winter garden.

Include a few summer blooming shrubs like St John's wort,

buttonbush, panicle hydrangeas and Rose of Sharon. They add an unexpected fresh look to your summer landscape.

Perennials combine nicely with trees, shrubs, and annuals, adding seasons of color and texture. Include those that also attract songbirds, bees, and

Turn To MYERS page A11

TRAINOR

continued from page A8

apples and peaches can be processed as jelly, butter, chutney, pie filling, syrups and sauces.

Before choosing a preferred method of processing be sure to study the options, all of which are available in canning "how to" books or online. For safety's sake be sure your resources are up to date, since processing recommendations have changed in the past several years. A new edition of the classic Ball Blue Book is always useful. Online, a reliable and free resource titled "U.S. Department of Agriculture's "Complete Guide to Home Canning," is available and can be accessed by visiting www.uga.edu/nchfp/publications/publications_usda.html.

Here are some simple canning "tips from the pros" worth noting:

*Never use overripe fruit. A good rule of thumb to remember is that canning can't improve the quality of food, so always begin with top quality fruits, ripe and free of bruises.

* Don't be tempted to over do the celery, peppers, onions and other low acid ingredient in pickles or other recipes. Stick to the recipe to avoid creating an unsafe product.

*Never add considerably more spices or seasonings than a recipe calls for.

Some spices can be high in bacteria and too much of a good thing can put your safety at risk.

*Be sure to wash hands and all food prep surfaces and all canning supplies thoroughly before starting the canning process,

*Always wash and examine all foods to be canned. Be sure to cut out any bruises and discard any overripe fruits and vegetables.

*Never reuse canning jar lids. Be sure to seal jars with a new, clean lid each and every time.

*Do not store filled jars above 95° F or near hot pipes, a range, a furnace, in a non insulated attic, or in direct sunlight. Under these conditions, food will lose quality in a few weeks or months and may spoil.

*Don't store jars in damp areas such as a basement. Dampness may corrode metal lids, break seals, and encourage spoilage.

Pepper Jelly

This jelly, which uses up the last of the season's garden peppers, makes a festive holiday gift.

Ingredients: 3 green bell peppers, minced; 2 (4 ounce) cans diced jalapeno peppers

1 1/2 cups distilled white vinegar; 6 1/2 cups white sugar; 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper; 1 (6 fluid ounce) container liquid pectin; 5 drops green food coloring.

Directions: In a large, stainless steel

saucepan, combine peppers, vinegar, sugar, and cayenne pepper. Cook over medium high heat. Stir frequently until mixture begins to boil.

Stir in pectin; boil 5 minutes longer, stirring constantly, and mix in food coloring. Skim off foam, and remove from heat.

Ladle into sterilized jars. Seal and process in a boiling-water canner for 5 minutes.

Apple Chutney

It's apple season in New England and this chutney, made from freshly picked fruit, will be the perfect accompaniment to upcoming holiday feasts.

Ingredients: 2 quarts chopped, cored, pared tart apples (about 10 medium); 1 cup chopped onions; 1 cup chopped sweet red bell peppers (about 2 medium); 2 hot red peppers, seeded and chopped; 1½ pounds seedless raisins; 4 cups brown sugar; 3 tablespoons mustard seed; 2 tablespoons ground ginger; 2 tablespoons ground allspice; 2 teaspoons canning salt; 1 clove garlic, crushed; 1 quart white vinegar (5%).

Directions: Combine all ingredients; simmer until thick, about 1 hour and 15 minutes. As mixture thickens stir frequently to prevent sticking. Pour boiling hot chutney into hot jars, leaving ½ inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace if needed. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean paper towel; adjust two-piece metal canning lids. Process in boiling water

canner according to the altitude recommendations below. Makes about six pint jars.

Recommended process time for Apple Chutney pints in a boiling water canner (altitude chart): 1-1,000 ft, 10 minutes; 1,001-6,000 ft, 15 minutes; above 6,000 ft, 20 minutes.

Win Dinner for Two at the Publick House – Contest has resumed!

Your tips can win you a great three course 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 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.



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OBITUARIES

Robert A. Reid, 77

CHARLTON – Robert A. Reid, 77, passed into eternal life on Sunday, August 22, 2021 with family at his side. He leaves his wife of 52 years, Anita N. (Nowak) Reid; 3 sons, Bruce Reid of Chatham, Rev. Mark Reid, pastor of Most Holy Trinity Church in Huntingdon, PA, and Rev. Adam Reid, pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Webster; 2 daughters, Sara Reid of Salem and Heather Bousquet and her husband Jayson of Spencer; 2 grandchildren, Peniel Reid and his wife Camiel, and Moriah Reid and her husband David Pedraza; 4 great-grandchildren, Andrea, Micah, Benjamin and

Matthew; and several nephews and nieces. He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother. As he wished, services will be held privately and there are no calling hours. Donations in his name may be made to either the St. Vincent de Paul Society, c/o Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 18 East Main St., Webster, MA 01570, or to Visitation House, 119 Endicott Street, Worcester, MA 01610. Arrangements are under the direction of Scanlon Funeral Service, 38 East Main St., Webster. www.scanlonfs.com

David H. Trevarthan II, 47, passed away August 11, 2021 in the comfort of his home with his family by his side, after battling sarcoma for 4.5 years. He leaves behind his wife of 27 years, Roxanne M. (Doyle) Trevarthan their children; David III, Lukas and Kara. Parents David and Carol, sister Shain and Michael Marbut, brother Jason and sister Jackie and Gregory Murray, his in-laws; William and Claudia Doyle, brother-in-law William and his wife Michaela, nephews; Benjamin, Alexander and Aydan; aunts uncles and cousins. When David graduated high school in Vilseck, Germany he joined the U. S. Army as a Military Police officer.



After serving his country, David began working for Maines Paper and Food for two decades. David enjoyed coaching football while his boys played as well as watching other activities his children were in such as lacrosse, gymnastics and softball. He liked to take his kids fishing. When David was not working or at his kids activities he enjoyed playing computer games with his friends as well as monthly poker nights. A Celebration of David's Life with Military Honors will be Friday, August 27, 2021 from 4-6pm at the ROBERT J. MILLER-CHARLTON FUNERAL HOME, 175 Old Worcester Rd. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to: Charlton-Dudley Youth Football League. To send an on-line condolence, please visit: RJMillerfunerals.net

Electronics may have surprising effects on health



According to the latest annual visual networking index forecast from Cisco, there will

be four networked devices and connections per person across the globe by 2021. While there

is no denying the many positive attributes of electronics and global connectivity, research indicates that some health concerns may be tied to our devices. **Cancer from phones** Smartphones, flip phones and their predecessors give off a form of energy known as radiofrequency, or RF. As the amount of time spent on phones has increased, concerns have been raised as to the possible health ramifications of RF exposure on the body. The American Cancer Society says RF waves are a form of non-ionizing radiation. They are different from the stronger, ionizing types of radiation that can affect the chemical structure of DNA in the body. But there is some concern that RF may contribute to the formation of cancer in the body. A large study by the US National Toxicology Program (NTP) exposed large groups of lab rats and mice to RF energy over their entire bodies for about nine hours a day, starting before birth and continuing for up to two years. Results indicated an increased risk of tumors called malignant

schwannomas of the heart in male rats exposed to RF radiation. The International Agency for Research on Cancer has classified RF fields as “possibly carcinogenic to humans.” Although cancer risk is very low and not undeniably linked to phone use, it is something for people to keep in the back of their minds, and limiting phone use may help reduce risk. **Mobile device use and social media addiction** Increased use of technology may be linked to decreases in attention and increases in behavior and self-regulation problems for adolescents already at risk for mental health problems, says a study from Duke University. One hundred fifty-one adolescents were studied using digital technologies for an average of 2.3 hours a day. The researchers found that, on days when adolescents used their devices more, both when they exceeded their own normal use and when they exceeded average use by their peers, they were more likely to exhibit conduct problems such as lying and fighting.

Also, as published in Psychiatric News, time spent on multiple social media outlets is considered a risk factor for mental health problems. Researchers found people who reported using the greatest number of social media sites (seven to 11) had more than three times the risk of depression and anxiety. **Other health concerns** Neck pain, wrist and elbow strain, eye strain, and other fatigue factors have been linked to computer use. A study published in the U.S. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences showed that people using tablets for at least four hours before bedtime took longer to fall asleep than people who hadn't used them. And recently, popular exercise tracker FitBit® came under fire when people were shocked while wearing the devices, and these types of trackers may cause people to micromanage their fitness, detracting from the psychological benefits of exercise. Electronics are important components of daily life. But devices may contribute to serious health problems.

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A closer look at the autumnal equinox

Each September, the Northern Hemisphere experiences the autumnal equinox, which marks the official beginning of fall. In the Southern Hemisphere, spring is arriving at this time. Each year there are two equinoxes, the vernal and the autumnal (March and September, respectively). Shortly after the autumnal equinox, days begin getting shorter and the nights get longer. The autumnal equinox always occurs between September 21 and September 24. In 2021, the autumnal equinox takes place on September 22.

The word equinox is from the Latin “aequi,” meaning “equal,” and “nox” or “night.” That means that during each equinox the hours of day and night are nearly equal in length across the planet. During the equinox, the part of the Earth that is closest to the sun is the equator, explains History.com. That helps make night and day equal in length. According to the Farmer's Almanac, the Autumnal Equinox on September 22, 2021, arrives at 3:21 p.m. EDT, 2:21 p.m. CDT, 1:21 p.m. MDT, and 12:21 p.m. PDT.



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Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy welcomes new professor

Local residents named to Simmons University Dean’s List



Ana Olivar

CHARLTON — Professors and students of the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy gave a warm welcome to Ana Olivar, MSN Ed, RN of Rutland as full-time faculty for the 2021-2022 academic year.

Professor Olivar joined the Practical Nursing Academy as adjunct faculty in 2016. Professor Olivar will be the lead faculty for Medical-Surgical Nursing SIM laboratory with her expertise in high-fidelity and low-fidelity simulators.

Academy Director, Gretheline Bolandrina, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN said, “We welcome Professor Olivar to Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy as full-time faculty. We are happy that Professor Olivar joined the practical nursing department of Bay Path and are excited to work together towards the Academy’s nursing accreditation.”

Professor Watson obtained her Master of Science in Nursing degree from Walden University in Nursing Education track (2013). Professor Olivar began her nursing career as a Registered Nurse earning her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Cebu City Medical Center College of Nursing (1996) in the Philippines. She is a candidate for Doctor of Education specializing in Nursing Education from the Northcentral University.

Prior to joining Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, Professor Olivar’s professional experience included faculty positions at the Blackstone Valley Technical School, Quinsigamond Community College, and Massachusetts Bay Community College. Her past clinical affiliations include RN manager, nursing supervisor at the Neuro Rehabilitation Center at Worcester, Whittier Rehabilitation Hospital, and West Side House.

BOSTON — The following local residents were named to the 2021 spring semester dean’s list at Simmons University in Boston.

- * Katarina Senckowski, Brimfield
- * Alyssa Cameron, Brimfield
- * Lindsay Albright, Charlton
- * Olivia Panagiotou, Webster
- * Victoria Lavelle, Webster

To qualify for dean’s list status, undergraduate students must obtain a grade point average of 3.5 or higher, based on 12 or more credit hours of work in classes using the letter grade system.

About Simmons University Located in the heart of Boston, Simmons is a respected private university offering more than 50 majors and programs for undergraduate women and

graduate programs open to all on campus, in blended formats, or entirely online in nursing and health sciences, liberal arts, business, communications, social work, public health, and library and information science. Founded in 1899, Simmons has established a model of higher education that other colleges and universities are only recently beginning to adapt: the combination of education for leadership in high-demand professional fields with the intellectual foundation of the liberal arts. The result is a Simmons graduate prepared not only to work, but to lead in professional, civic, and personal life - a vision of empowerment that Simmons calls preparation for life’s work. Follow Simmons on Twitter at @SimmonsUniv, and on LinkedIn at <https://www.linkedin.com/school/simmons-university/>.

Charlton residents to participate in Boston Marathon® Jimmy Fund Walk

CHARLTON — Four residents from Charlton will choose their own route on October 3 for the Boston Marathon® Jimmy Fund Walk: Your Way presented by Hyundai. Participants are encouraged to “Walk Your Way” from wherever they are most comfortable—whether that be from their neighborhood, favorite trail, or from a treadmill in their own home.

Emily Clifford, Maui Clifford, Shaun Moriarty, and Jamie Zeveska, along with thousands of other walkers, will participate in virtual programming during the

Walk that aims to recreate the most inspiring elements of Walk day. While the event will not physically bring walkers together along the famed Boston Marathon® course, it will unite the community to raise funds to support all forms of adult and pediatric care and cancer research at the nation’s premier cancer center, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. The event has raised more than \$150 million for Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in its 30+ year history.

“While we can’t see every-one in person this year, we

are excited for the virtual programing which will give participants the opportunity to support breakthroughs in cancer care and research at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute,” said Zack Blackburn, Director of the Boston Marathon Jimmy Fund Walk. “Together, from a safe distance, we will take critical strides in the journey to defy cancer.”

This year’s event will have a lower fundraising requirement, \$100 for adults and \$25 for those under 18, with a \$5 registration fee. All registered walkers will receive a bib and

medal and the first 5,000 to register will receive a Jimmy Fund Walk T-shirt.

Anyone interested in additional information can reference the Jimmy Fund Walk: Your Way frequently asked questions or can send an email to JimmyFundWalk@DFCI.harvard.edu. Funds raised from the Jimmy Fund Walk support all forms of adult and pediatric patient care and cancer research at the nation’s premier cancer center, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. The Boston Athletic Association has supported the Jimmy Fund

Walk since 1989, and Hyundai has been the presenting sponsor since 2002.

To register to walk (#JimmyFundWalk) or to support a walker visit www.JimmyFundWalk.org or call (866) 531-9255. All Jimmy Fund Walk participants are encouraged to utilize the Charity Miles App to help with training and fundraising, engage with Dana-Farber patient stories and podcasts, and much more!

MYERS

continued from page A9

butterflies by creating a beautiful habitat. Blue star (**Amsonia**), Siberian iris, sedum, Rudbeckia, coneflower, and grasses are just a few that can brighten any garden with several seasons of color, provide homes for beneficial insects and food for the birds.

End the season with fall bloomers like goldenrod, asters, and hardy mums. These provide food for late season pollinators. Leave healthy plants stand, providing homes for many beneficial insects, winter interest in the garden, and food for the songbirds.

Use annuals to fill any voids, add season long color and yearly changes in the landscape. Containers on steps, decks and patios help bring the garden to your front and back door.

Include spring flowering bulbs like tulips, daffodils and hyacinths planted in fall for a colorful welcome to spring. These and many of the earliest bloomers like winter aconites, grape hyacinths, and crocus provide needed

nectar for early season pollinators.

Evergreens are always a welcome addition to any landscape. They provide shelter for the birds and year-round greenery. Find new and interesting ways to include them in your landscape.

Use taller evergreens for screening bad views, buffering traffic and other noises, or creating privacy. Use evergreens with interesting form and texture to create a focal point in a garden bed or landscape. Combine them with perennials and flowering shrubs for added seasonal interest.

Then keep your landscape looking its best by protecting key plants from hungry critters like deer, rabbits and voles. Skip the fencing and scare tactics by applying a rain resistant, organic repellent like Plantskydd (plantskydd.com) at planting. You will need fewer applications and the odor-based repellent sends animals dining elsewhere before taking a bite out of your plants. Apply repellent before animals start feeding and follow the label directions for best results.

Continue to gather ideas with visits to public gardens and partaking in garden tours. Be sure to take notes and pictures that you can reference later. Creating a year-round landscape is an ongoing process that is part of the fun and adventure of gardening.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening 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 was commissioned by *Tree World Plant Care* for her expertise to write this article. Myers’ Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.



Photo Melinda Myers

Include shrubs like this Blue Satin Rose of Sharon to add color and interest to the garden.

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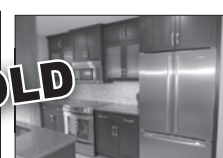
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How to effectively freeze vegetables

To say that COVID-19 transformed daily life would be an understatement. Few, if any, aspects of life were untouched once the virus hit.

One aspect of daily life that changed considerably is the way people shop for food. As recommendations to remain home and out of crowded places spread, many people felt that shopping in bulk, or at the very least, meal-planning and buying necessities for a few weeks at a time, would reduce the number of trips they needed to make to supermarkets or small food stores. In addition, due to shortages on popular foods, many people have purchased items they did not necessarily need in anticipation that such foods may not be available in the coming weeks or months.

Large packages of meat and poultry can be broken down and frozen easily. But what about the fresh produce that many people rely on for important nutrients? Fresh vegetables only last so long, so people need to learn how to safely freeze fresh vegetables to avoid throwing them out. To freeze vegetables properly so they retain their flavor and texture, it is important to freeze them within a few hours of picking them from a garden or taking them home. Certain vegetables can be frozen in their raw state. The texture might change slightly upon thawing, but they will remain flavorful. Other vegetables may require blanching before freezing. Blanching requires scalding vegetables in boiling water or steam for a brief time. Blanching helps stop the enzymes that cause vegetables to decay, a process that can occur even in frozen storage. Items that do well with blanching include spinach, kale, winter squash, and broccoli, according to HGTV.com.

Another way to freeze produce is to remove the air that

can compromise the food. You can do so by filling containers or bags and pushing out the extra air. Vacuum sealers can work to remove the air and help preserve items in the freezer longer; otherwise, use a tray pack method to freeze items. Place chilled and drained blanched vegetables in shallow trays or pans. Freeze them until the vegetables are firm and then quickly fill freezer bags or containers, says the National Center for Home Food Preservation.

Remember to label and date containers so items can be used in the order in which they were packed. Most vegetables maintain high quality for eight to 12 months at 0 F or lower, according to the University of Georgia.

Freezing fresh vegetables is an option when stocking up on essentials. Flavor and texture can be retained and items will not need to be discarded before they can be eaten.





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Spencer – Smithville Road – Quick Occupancy- Incredible 4 bedroom, 2 bathroom antique farmhouse on the market for the first time! Home offers lots of rustic charm with chestnut beams and wide plank pine flooring. Features a detached 2 car garage and plenty of space with 10 rooms. Situated in a beautiful, quiet setting, just a minute away from shopping, parks, walking trails and only 15 minutes from the Mass Pike. **\$349,900**



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Applications are also available on the Town of Auburn website
www.auburnguide.com.
Applications must be returned to the DPW by October 1, 2021.
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Weekend Pass	\$30

For more information
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FRI., SEPT. 3RD

ON THE GROUNDS

9am Draft Horse & Oxen Obstacle Course (Grandstand)
1pm Giant Pumpkin Weigh Off (Cattle Show Tent)
10-4pm Farmer's Market at Agricultural Center
3pm Lawn & Garden Tractor Pull (Pulling Area)
6:30pm Chicken Flop/Poop Bingo (Agricultural Center)
7pm JM Motorsports Productions, Inc. (Grandstand) "Worlds Largest Demolition Derby"

MAIN STAGE

NOON National Anthem
1-4 Brookfield Rythm
5:30-7 Kevin Herchen
8pm Rose Porter & The Neon Moons

SAT., SEPT. 4TH

ON THE GROUNDS

7:30am Tractor Pull on Concrete (Pulling Area)
10-4pm Farmer's Market at Agricultural Center
10am Beef Cattle Show (Cattle Show Tent)
1pm Open Poultry Show (Agricultural Center)
6pm Tractor Pull (Grandstand)

MAIN STAGE

NOON National Anthem
1-3 Holdin' Back Band
8pm Vynnye Skynyrd

SUN., SEPT. 5TH

ON THE GROUNDS

10am Draft Horse Pull (Pulling Area)
10am Dairy Cattle Show (Cattle Show Tent)
10-4pm Farmer's Market at Agricultural Center
1pm Youth Poultry Showmanship (Agricultural Center)
1pm Youth Rabbit Showmanship (Agricultural Center)
5pm Demolition Derby (Grandstand)
6:30pm Chicken Flop/Poop Bingo (Agricultural Center)

MAIN STAGE

NOON National Anthem
3-4 April Cushman
5-8pm Crossing Kelley
8pm Alya Brown & Rob Riley

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