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COMPLIMENTARY HOME DELIVERY

Friday, December 22, 2017

Single minded and generous describe goals of foundation

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
NEWS STAFF WRITER

NORTH BROOKFIELD — Nothing can divert Richard Fiske’s focus from assisting children and families in need — not even a life-threatening case of pneumonia.

Though Fiske was sidelined earlier this year by complications from his illness, which ultimately caused him to have surgery, he couldn’t wait to get back to North Brookfield and help the community as he’s done for decades after founding the Heart to Heart Foundation.

“Just a few months after he got home, he was already out there, mowing lawns again for people,” said Reverend Richard Jakubauskas, of St. Joseph’s Parish, who has seen Fiske’s kindness take many forms over the years. “He is the ultimate steward, and his greatest satisfaction is the ability to help people out.”

This year, Fiske’s foundation made donations of \$200 each to St. Joseph’s Parish, Christ Memorial Church, and First Congregational Church of North Brookfield. The donations are vital for churches around the holidays,

Turn To **FOUNDATION**, page **A11**



Kevin Flanders photo.

The Heart to Heart Foundation recently made donations to assist three area churches this holiday season. Pictured from left to right, Heart to Heart Foundation founder Richard Fiske, Sr., his son Richard Fiske, Jr., and Reverend Richard Jakubauskas, of St. Joseph’s Parish, whose church is one of the recipients of the donations.

New system at senior center keeps automated statistics

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
NEWS STAFF WRITER

NORTH BROOKFIELD — Seniors are about to check out a new way to check in, as the North Brookfield Senior Center prepares to unveil an automated system next month.

The new check-in and registration system, called My Senior Center, will soon be installed at the reception desk. All visitors and volunteers will receive a small key tag, which will be swiped at the scanner upon entry. The touchscreen will then display a list of programs and services for which guests can register on a given day, and it will also allow new guests to enter their names and programs of interest.

For the senior center staff, the new system will facilitate easy statistical analyses of various programs. With the click of a button, staff members will be able to review enrollment for all activities, track trends, and identify programs in need of improve-

Turn To **SENIOR CENTER**, page **A11**

Successful toy drive brings together disparate groups

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
NEWS STAFF WRITER

LEICESTER – A local organization once again teamed up with area businesses to assist the U.S. Marines with an important mission this holiday season: brightening Christmas for families in need.

For the third straight year, Central Mass. Jeepers members held a Toys for Tots drive to bolster the Marines’ annual effort to give back. Toy collection boxes were set up at several drop-off locations throughout the area, including Barnstorm Jeeps (Spencer); Patriot Auto Glass (Holden); Hanna Devine’s Restaurant (Ware); D&D Fitness Factory (Ware); RT’s Welding and Auto Repair (Ware); Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company (Holden); and Karol’s Corner Take-Out (Leicester).

Residents once again donated toys in copious amounts, and Central Mass. Jeepers members formed a convoy on Dec. 10 to

Turn To **TOY DRIVE**, page **A11**



Kevin Flanders photo.

Rochdale VFW Post 7556 Commander David Rice celebrates the completion of another successful local Toys for Tots Drive. Rice joined members of Central Mass. Jeepers, who hosted the collections drive, at Karol’s Corner Take-Out, which served as one of the drop-off locations for the event.

Local activists form own lobby

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
NEWS STAFF WRITER

BROOKFIELD — Area residents concerned about the effects of climate change aren’t waiting around for others to advocate for new legislation. Led by veteran researcher Dr. Gene Fry, the Central Massachusetts Chapter of Citizens Climate Lobby recently formed.

A handful of members braved the first snowstorm of the season on Dec. 9 to attend the chapter’s inaugural meeting. Held at Fry’s home in town, the meeting included member introductions and an overview of Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) goals and methodologies.

The CCL is a nonprofit, nonpartisan grassroots advocacy organization focused on advocating for national policies to address climate change. With chapters throughout the country, CCL’s main legislative goal is to pass a revenue neutral carbon fee and dividend system which puts a price per ton on fossil fuels. Members hope to see the funds raised through this legislation dispersed equally to households as a monthly energy dividend.

For Fry, who has conducted extensive research on climate change for nearly 30 years and attended countless conferences, it is important to see participation expanding at the local level. By reaching out to state senators and representatives, as well as media and constituents, local chapters are creating positive

Turn To **ACTIVISTS**, page **A17**

McDonalds incident closes playscape

SPENCER — First responders acted fast last week to prevent further injuries to a distressed child in a fast food restaurant playground structure.

Just before 8 p.m. on Dec. 10, members of the Spencer Fire Department responded to the McDonald’s restaurant at 59 West Main St. Responders from the Spencer Police Department, Spencer Rescue Squad and a mutual aid ambu-

lance staff from Leicester were already at the restaurant, attempting to rescue an injured child from an indoor play place climbing structure.

Firefighters on scene used specialized equipment to remove a piece of the climbing structure and allow access to the 10-year-old girl, who was trapped 12 feet in the air within the equipment. Firefighters then lowered her to safety

via stokes basket and a ground ladder.

The Spencer Rescue Squad provided further assistance to the girl, who suffered a dislocated knee and was taken to the hospital.

Restaurant officials did not respond by press time on whether safety upgrades will be made to the play place equipment following this incident, which remains closed.

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Car Buying Tips

Customers ask place: When is the best time to buy a Car or Truck?

The RIGHT answer: There are many opinions regarding this question. Sometimes our personal situations may dictate the best time to buy. Maybe you want to wait for a tax return or maybe you get a bonus at work. Coincidentally the holiday season is a good time to buy a car or truck. As a general rule the last month or two of the year is a good time to buy. The model year change has occurred so leftovers have strong incentives. Rebates and low finance rates are among the best of the year. With some models getting in short supply we will do our best to get what you want and in many cases we find folks can get a better car for less money because of the dealers desire to move what they have. It is also the time of year for many small businesses to make purchases to improve their tax positions. The need for capital expenditures and the write offs for depreciation can help keep a business from paying too much to the tax man. We all want to keep our taxes to a minimum. Please consult with your accountant to discuss these potential benefits. Lastly many dealers like us are looking to get as many sales as we can for year end. Just like other retailers, car dealers like us want to cash in on the shopping season. We know we are competing against jewelry stores, toy stores, and just about every kind of gift seller. We want to meet sales goals, reach contest objectives, and make it so that our families may have a wonderful holiday season too. Place Motor wants your Holiday season to be special so when you come get your new car or truck, if you want us to, we will even put a bow on it for you. Happy Holidays!

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Sheriff's workers take on Senior Center

BY AMY PAUL
NEW LEADER CORRESPONDENT

Spencer's Senior Center has been the recipient of some very helpful free labor thanks to the Worcester County Sheriff's Office Community Service Program. Four inmates overseen by Officer Jason Firmin have helped with and completed a multitude of projects at the Center over the past few weeks.

From a low security prison in West Boylston, the inmates have the option to join the program as a way of earning time toward their sentences. To qualify for the community service work program, an inmate must have a nonviolent crime record and meet other specific requirements. The benefits of participating in the program are many. Inmates may earn up to 10 days per month off their total

incarceration, sometimes resulting in about a third of their sentence served in community work versus remaining in prison. They also reintegrate into society and offer constructive skill sets that organizations relying on volunteers don't always have. Finally, inmates gain a strong sense of accomplishment while keeping their minds busy with productive work.

Martha Burnell, a regular patron of the Senior Center, expresses deep gratitude for the men's contributions. "These men have helped with so many projects that we and other volunteers just can't do. They've painted the downstairs and upstairs and moved heavy furniture for us. They work hard and are very pleasant. We couldn't be expanding to the upstairs without them. Now, we're getting closer to that goal," Burnell said.

According to Officer Firmin, a 15-year corrections officer veteran and six-year officer within the program, "Getting the men busy in a way that serves these community non-profits is good for everyone. The inmates get their minds off their sentences and the nonprofits receive free labor from some pretty strong, motivated workers. We enjoy working with the community, interacting with the public, and representing the sheriff's office in this way."

Matt Pare, from Worcester and a participant in the program says, as he paints the soon-to-be craft room, "I like being a part of the program. It keeps me busy and it beats the other place I could be. It's pretty good to be able to work and help in the communities and earn good time credit."

In fact, only two days may be earned while working in the community; the other eight days earned are divided between school and substance abuse counseling, representing a holistic approach to helping inmates prepare for a successful release after serving sentences.

Tim Schoener, another participant in the program whose job it was to paint the future meeting room says, "I enjoy the work and getting out. It feels good to be so productive."

For a non-profit to benefit from the program a letter is first submitted by the non-profit to the sheriff's office. The sheriff's office reviews letters, then reviews the work-site to plan for their own needs. Finally, work dates are set, with supplies and equipment provided by the non-profit. Workers are constantly monitored. Officer Firmin affirms that there has been plenty of work done and still to be done in the county through the program.

Pam Woodbury, director of the Senior Center, is thrilled with the program and results, "The Worcester County Sheriff's Office program is so generous with their time. We've been nothing but happy with the men and their work. They are cooperative and very hard working, well-supervised and reliable. This program is absolutely phenomenal."

For more information on this program please visit the Worcester County Sheriff's Office website at worcestercountysheriff.com or for more information regarding changes at the Senior Center call Spencer's Council of Aging at (508) 885-7546.



Amy Paul photos

Senior Center ladies all smiles in the newly painted library



Officer Jason Firmin and Pam Woodbury



Worker Tim Schoener and Officer Firmin



ACCURACY WATCH

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

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

If you find a mistake, call (508) 909-4130 during normal business hours. During non-business hours, leave a message in the editor's voice mailbox. The editor will return your phone call.



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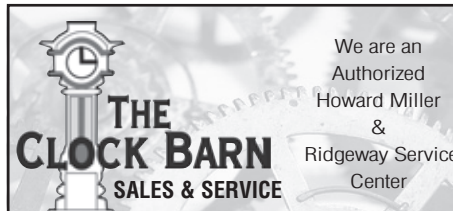
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The Myth of the Spring Market

Many people this time of year will tell me they want to wait till the spring before selling their home. Sometimes it is because they don't want to deal with selling their home during the holidays or having to leave their house for showings when its 10 degrees out or 10 inches of snow. The other major reason people make this decision is due to thinking that if they wait till spring

then they will sell quicker and for a better price. That will sometimes be true but it will not be based on the time of year as much as market factors changing. I also hear people say that no homes sell in the winter which is also a myth. If we look at 12/1/2015

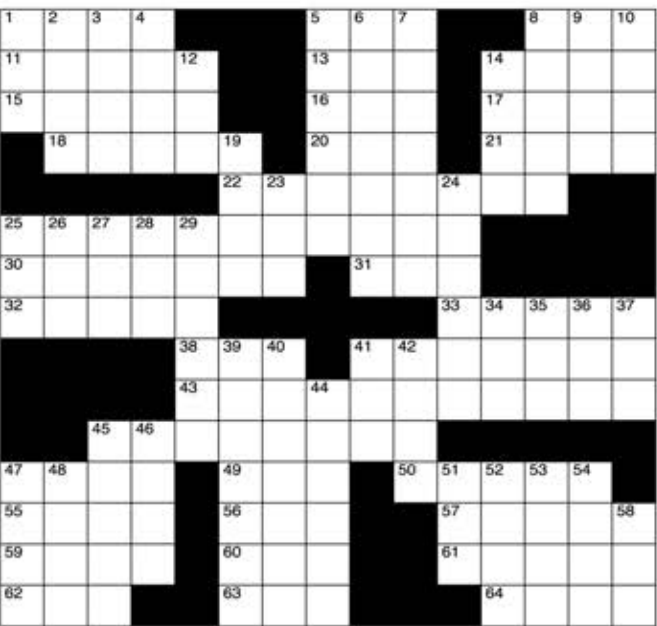


REALTOR'S
REPORT

JAMES
BLACK

were selling at 98 percent of their listing price and the average sales price was \$290,361 in Worcester County. From 12/1/2016 through 2/1/2017, the average days to offer was slightly lower at 56 days, also homes were still selling at 98 percent of listing price and the average sales price was up almost 1% to \$292,770. Approximately 14.3% of

homes sold that year sold in those 3 months. This number is significantly lower than the other 3 quarters of the year. However, if less homes are selling that time of year then your chance of getting a higher price is much better. I suggest consulting with a local Realtor to see how your specific market and town performs in the winter months as not every area has this same data. Your home may have limited off street parking, a steep driveway or a be a waterfront home which all can be affected more greatly by the winter.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Member of a Semitic people

5. Certified public accountant

8. Residue

11. Sayings attributed to Christ

13. The products of human creativity

14. Listen to

15. Longed

16. No (Scottish)

17. Descriptor

18. Yankees' sensation Judge

20. Zero

21. Comics legend Lee

22. Honorary title holder

25. "Uncle Joey"

30. Graceful and stylish

31. Pitching term

32. Former Mets outfielder Jones
33. One who avoids animal products

38. Quick to learn

41. Mechanism in an organ

43. Redo with new materials

45. Epics

47. Wings

49. Extrasensory perception

50. Cavalry sword

55. Bangladeshi monetary unit

56. Not the bottom

57. Afflicted

59. Bound

60. One who is highly skilled

61. Jewish spiritual leader

62. Tall, rounded vase

63. Liturgical language of Hinduism (abbr.)

64. Cheek

CLUES DOWN

1. Pie ___ mode

2. Portuguese cape

3. Ottoman military title

4. Movable frame used in burials

5. Type of coal

6. A treeless grassy plain

7. Artist's workroom

8. Assists

9. Protein-rich liquids

10. A song of praise to God

12. Much ___ about nothing

14. Japanese city

19. Atomic number 10

23. Egyptian goddess

24. Go places

25. Having ten

26. Complete

27. Automotive belt

28. Psyche
29. Melodious bird

34. Medical personnel

35. Acquired

36. Type of beverage

37. Neither

39. Spanish monetary units

40. Small area of grass

41. Your

42. Diana __, singer

44. Salt's partner

45. Made of wood

46. No longer alive

47. Alaskan island

48. Wild animal's resting place

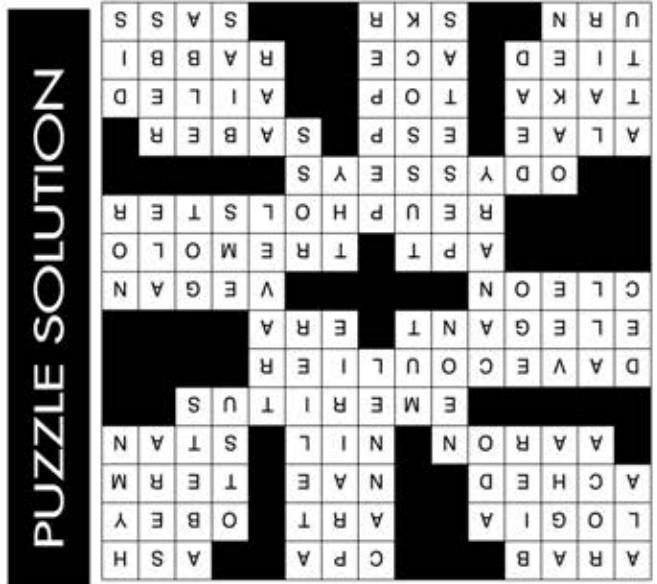
51. Swiss river

52. Partiality

53. "Luther" actor Idris

54. UNLV's "Runnin' ___"

58. Criticize



through 11/30/2016 it was taking on average 57 days to get an offer, homes

at 56 days, also homes were still selling at 98 percent of listing price and the average sales price was up almost 1% to \$292,770. Approximately 14.3% of

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The First Congregational
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mon) would like to announce they
have changed the Christmas Eve
Service time to 5 p.m.

It is hoped this earlier time will
allow many families with children
to come enjoy the lessons and car-
ols of the Christmas season.

We will hold our normal Sunday
service at 10 a.m. the same morn-
ing.

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Lamoureux Ford recognized for exceptional service



Courtesy photo
Pictured from left: Mark Rogowski (Boston Regional Manager- Ford), Lionel Lamoureux, Marc Lamoureux, and Vince Talia (Regional Manager- Ford Credit).

Lamoureux Ford was among a select group of Ford dealerships, less than 10 percent of all dealers nationwide, to be recognized with the 2016 President's award by Ford Motor Company. The prestigious award honors dealerships that have excelled in automotive retailing in 2016 by providing exceptional customer sales and service satisfaction.

"Earning this award is a reflection of our entire staff's commitment to delivering the best customer experience possible," say Lamoureux Ford's owners Marc and Lionel Lamoureux.

"We couldn't be more proud to receive this recognition, especially since it comes from the people we value most – our customers. They're the reason we were able to achieve this award."

The President's award was established in 1998. Dealers become eligible through survey responses from the customers related to their sales and service satisfaction.

Lamoureux Ford has won the President's Award for the 20th year in a row and 23 times overall.

Reminder about scammers at holidays

LEICESTER – After receiving several reports of incidents last week, police are warning about phone scammers targeting Leicester residents.

On Dec. 15 alone, the Leicester PD received numerous complaints reporting scam phone calls. On each occasion, the caller told residents that one of their relatives was being held against their will by the caller. The relative would only be released if a ransom was paid, the suspects threatened.

If you get a similar call, hang up and contact police. Phone scams and virtual kidnapping incidents throughout the country have resulted in significant financial losses in recent years, as scammers often target the elderly, officials said. According to FBI statistics, virtual kidnapping fraud has been on the rise for at least two decades. Between 2013-15, federal investigators tracked hundreds of such calls to Mexican prisons with minimal oversight from guards. Because these scams often originate in other countries, the suspects are difficult to pinpoint.

"These criminals no longer target specific individuals," said FBI Special Agent Erik Arbuthnot in a statement.

"Now they are choosing various cities and cold-calling hundreds of numbers until innocent people fall for the scheme."

Although virtual kidnapping takes many forms, it always involves an extortion scheme intended to trick victims into paying a ransom to free a loved one they believe is being held hostage. Unlike traditional abductions, virtual kidnappers have not actually kidnapped anyone, instead relying on deceit and coercion.

On several occasions, the incarcerated scammers in Mexico bribed guards in order to acquire cell phones. They often dial numbers in sequence, which explains why dozens of police reports can come on a specific day in a given town, as the scammers call one person after another with the same area code.

"If you make hundreds of calls, the crime will eventually work," Arbuthnot added.

Scammers typically instruct victims to wire ransom payments. For more information on how to protect yourself from scammers, visit www.fbi.gov and follow the appropriate links.

Jette steps down after 23 years at Jewish Healthcare

WORCESTER — Jewish Healthcare Center has announced longtime director of clinical services Anne-Marie Jette, will retire the end of December after over 23 years of service.

Jette started out at Jewish Healthcare as director of nursing, and expanded her role to head up the following very successful divisions: sub-acute rehab unit in 1995, hospice in 2006, homecare in 2010, and private care in 2014. Under her guidance, working with Steven Willens, executive director, and the JHC staff, board and auxiliary volunteers, the non-profit has thrived and grown, serving thousands of people of all ages, cultures, faiths and backgrounds in the Worcester community.

Jette's wish is to leave a legacy for Jewish Healthcare, and she certainly has. Anne is truly adored by staff and those in the community.

Sister Pat Foley, RN, BSN has worked with Jette for the past five years and described Anne as follows, "When I think of Anne Jette, what comes to mind is a woman who possesses wisdom, understanding, compassion, counsel, strength and knowledge. She uses her own inner strength to see the needs of the times in the healthcare field, and the foresight to establish new programs for the growth of JHC. For me it has been a blessing and gift, these past five years to work with her."

Jette is from Spencer, with deep connections in Worcester. She attended Becker College, where she received her RN before working at the Jewish Healthcare Center. She continued her schooling at Anna Maria College and obtained a Bachelor of Science in nursing. Anne and her husband Ronald "John" raised two children and now have two granddaughters, Bethany and Julianne.

"We are incredibly grateful to Anne



Anne Jette

Marie for the leadership and direction she has given us," said Willens. "Thanks to her clinical services acumen and financial skills, we have truly expanded into many more services. We have also had an incredible five star rating and low incident report year-after-year. There is no doubt that she has been an integral part of our success."

Vincent Librandi, longtime director of Eisenberg Assisted Living, will move over as the chief operating officer. He will be taking over many of Jette's responsibilities and planning the next steps for JHC, overseeing the Jewish Healthcare Center, Eisenberg Assisted Living, JHC Home Care and JHC Hospice.

Chris Gillisen will be taking Librandi's place as director of Eisenberg Assisted Living.

The Jewish Healthcare Center, a non-profit organization, offers highly specialized programs for post-hospital rehabilitation, home care services, as well as long-term care, Alzheimer programs, hospice and more.

Friday's Child



Kelsey is a loving sixteen year old girl of Caucasian descent. Kelsey's foster mother describes her as a "giggle puss". If you spend time with her you will quickly see why! She has the biggest smile and an infectious laugh. Kelsey likes to do karaoke, read, and listen to music. One of her favorite singers is "Pink"! Kelsey is in the high school where she receives support in school to help her succeed. Kelsey is diagnosed with Down Syndrome and is thriving in school! Kelsey enjoys horse back riding, swimming, cooking class, and doing art activities.

Legally freed for adoption, Kelsey has shared she is looking forward to having a mom and a dad. She may want contact in the future with an adult sibling so a family should be open to maintaining this connection. She also will need contact with her brother.

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 617-54-ADOPT (617-542-3678) 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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Overlook helps people reunite with their past



Polly Traina with her photos.

BY GUS STEEVES
STAFF WRITER

CHARLTON — For many people, a reunion is a way of reconnecting with people you knew 25 or 50 years ago in college or high school. But the Reunion Project now gracing the walls of Overlook is a little different — it’s a way for the participants and those visiting it to reunite with themselves as they once were.

“You don’t often have the opportunity to re-see yourself in your youth and see yourself now,” said resident and participant Polly Traina.

Like the other 39 participants, Traina provided an old photo — in her case, in her wedding dress — and sat for a new one, plus spending some time with photographer/interviewer Lora Brody, talking about her life. The two photos are displayed together, while the comments are interspersed on long scrolls, in both cases anonymously.

“You think you remember, but somehow seeing one of those wedding photos again

brings back really sharply how young you were and your expectations and hopes,” Traina said.

When asked what her hopes then were, she added they weren’t very specific “because Dick [her husband] was going to grad school to get a Ph.D.”

She, in turn, got her bachelor’s, with a lot of credits in English and history that prompted her to ask an advisor, “What’s the shortest route between this pile of credits and graduation?”

She was told “theater,” and that’s where she went, becoming a costume shop manager, although not an actress herself, for several years while having four kids.

Eventually, the Trainas moved to Massachusetts, where her husband became president of Clark University. When he retired, they moved to Overlook 11 years ago, and he passed away from cancer a few years ago.

She recalls that as the biggest change in her life, but still takes it with a touch of humor.

“If he was still alive, I’m sure I’d be saying ‘If he does that one more time...,’ and he’d say the same of me,” she noted.

Still-active people like Traina were the reason Brody started the Reunion Project in the first place.

“I find joy in being around people who own their aging,” Brody said, noting the idea came from her own 50th high school reunion in Hartford. She thought about some of the women she hadn’t seen in all those years, wrote them to say she was interested in taking their photos “and having a conversation about what our lives are like now and what we expected,” she told several dozen exhibit-opening attendees at Overlook last week.

When she did it, she expected they’d take her surveys home and fill them out later, but what happened was that the women did it right there and started talking, while the men hung out at the bar.

“People shared the most extraordinary stories,” Brody recalled. Among them: the popular prom queen told her she got pregnant prom night, gave up her baby for adoption, and never had another one. Out of the blue 10 years ago, the daughter found her mother and “now [she] has a family,” Brody said.

Brody’s own memory was of being “a bottom-feeder because I was an artist; it had no credit at all.” After she left, she went to college because of a mistake in her favor on the SAT, but “flunked out almost immediately.”

She tried again later, and this time was required to take remedial classes in her own high school basement. Times had changed by then; the teacher noticed her struggling and asked if she’d ever heard of dyslexia. She hadn’t, got tested, “and that’s how I found my brain,” Brody said.



Sue Hagberg takes a look at some of her fellow residents’ comments.

As a guidance counselor, participant Sue Hagberg probably saw quite a few students like Brody. But her most vivid memories were of a very different place — her years in Las Vegas, the cultural difference between there and here, and a pair of cowboy boots.

“In the West, people’s boundaries are much wider than in the East,” she recalled, noting people there often think we’re distant and stand-offish. By contrast, though, she also recalled “In New Mexico, people painted their doors blue to keep the witches out.”

She also remembered surviving her dad’s death when she was 8, her four “siblings pounding on me,” getting “a new boyfriend every year,” and her mother’s very wise observation about life: “You can laugh, or you can cry.”

“Then, I saw life as a series of things you had to do and have fun,” Hagberg said. “Today, I see life as a series of problems to solve and, despite them, to have fun, experience life and culture. Life is ever-changing.

Accepting that has helped me float my boat through the whitewater.”

Most of the facility’s women weren’t part of the project, for various reasons. For Barbara Howard, she wasn’t there the day of the photo shoot, but she still sees the display as “very interesting, [especially] seeing some of the things most important in their lives.”

As a young person on Cape Cod, Howard said her family really wanted her to follow in the footsteps of her father, grandfather and great-grandfather, all of whom had been state representatives. But she never really wanted to, moved to Connecticut, “and now I’m too old,” she added.

“The project itself, and [Brody’s] motivation for doing it — she stumbled on some universal truths,” Hagberg said. “Once they’re out there, published, we say ‘Of course,’ but don’t really think about it because were struggling to survive. Being mindful in the moment, it’s hard to remember being mindful at age 17.”

On the streets where they lived: riches in town records

The January meeting of the Worcester Chapter of the Massachusetts Society of Genealogists, Inc. will be held the first Saturday, on Jan. 6 at 10 a.m. in the Banx Room at the Worcester Public Library. Contact: Reference Department at (508) 799-1655 or mywpl.org, located at 3 Salem Square in Worcester. You can arrive beginning at 9:30 a.m. to attend an earlier half hour of socialization

time. The day will begin with a short business meeting followed by the “On the Streets Where They Lived: Exploring the Riches Hidden in Massachusetts Town Records” presentation by Joy Hennig and Charlene Sokal.

Hennig is Worcester Public Library’s local history and genealogy librarian. Sokal is the former Worcester Public

Library’s reference supervisor and genealogist.

The meeting is open to anyone interested in this presentation. Attendees are encouraged to bring along a friend(s), as well as your own non-alcoholic beverage, munchies will be provided. Anyone bringing goodies to share will receive an extra door prize ticket. Membership is encouraged for anyone pursuing the hobby, passion, or profession of genealogy. Yearly membership is only \$25 for an individual and \$30 for a family living in the same household.

Please note that parking isn’t allowed

in the “green” areas (further from the door). Note your space number and pay for parking at the outdoor kiosk (credit cards accepted) before entering the library. Arrive early to avoid the lines at the parking kiosk. Some on-street parking may be available as well.

Questions? Contact: Nancy Schultzberg, publicity chairperson, at (774) 573-9529. For more information about the Worcester Chapter of the Massachusetts Society of Genealogists, visit our website: www.massachusettsocietyofgenealogists.org or www.msoginc.org.

THE WRITE STUFF

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1. Write a letter to Santa (students & adults)
2. What are your family’s holiday traditions?
3. Write a poem or short story about a snowman, reindeer, or Santa.
4. Share your neighborhood memories.
5. Topic of your choice

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We reserve the right to not publish essays for inappropriate content or to hold for a future publication. Early submissions are greatly appreciated.

Update for Toys for Joy

The following is a summary of the donations to date for the East Brookfield/Brookfield Toys for Joy program.

Thank you for your support.

John Cove: \$ 10; Brenda Caron Parish: \$20; Donna Neylon : \$25; In Memory of Mary-Lou Delisle by Ray & Dot Delisle: \$50; Christine/Edward Carey: \$50; Robert & Jean Bain: \$50; Daniel & Margaret O’Leary: \$50; Lex T. Varney : \$50; Women’s Alliance Unitarian Universalist Church: \$75; Morin Family: \$75; James Tolles: \$100; Bay Path Golf Course: \$100; Harold Chesson: \$100; Steve & Maryellen Brunnelle: \$100; E.B. Flatts: \$250; North Brookfield Savings Bank: \$250; TipTop Country Store: \$256; Lamoureux Ford: \$500; East Brookfield Elementary Student Council sponsored Toy Drive & Chrissy Lavin; North Brookfield Savings Bank Toy Drive.

Toy Donations

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To our shopping super heroes:

Peter & Patti O’Neil, Elizabeth Doherty

To our distribution day helpers:

Tim & Cody Josti, Elizabeth Doherty

To our Toy Room organizers:

Heather & Jordan Gablaski, Deb Silliman, Mary Wyne.

Toys for Joy Committee of East Brookfield/Brookfield

Donna & Roger Lafleur

Debbie Morgan

Overlook seeking volunteers

Overlook Hospice Services is seeking volunteers to provide companionship and support to hospice patients and their families. Volunteer activities include reading to patients, watching movies, playing cards, walking dogs, fixing meals, running errands, providing short term respite and offering support to caregivers.

No special skills are required other than an open heart and 3-4 hours/week.

In addition to general patient care volunteers, we are seeking veterans to visit our veteran patients, musicians, dog therapy teams and those interested in providing bereavement support to our families.

Our 12 hour training begins on Saturday, Jan. 6 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information please contact Susan Fuller, Volunteer Coordinator, at (508) 434-2200.

“Every Town Deserves a Good Local Newspaper”

CLASSROOM CORNER

Memorial race organizers honored for their work

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
NEWS STAFF WRITER

SPENCER – Athletes are accustomed to forming intense rivalries on the field, but a pair of David Prouty High School student-athletes recently teamed up with opponents from throughout the area for a common cause.

Aidan Joyce and Hanna Rybicki, who both compete on Prouty's cross country teams, were recently chosen as Panthers of the Month for their involvement in a memorial race. The event united runners from multiple schools as they honored the lives of three Quaboag Regional High School students who were killed in a car accident last month.

DPHS teachers were impressed by the bond they saw from students in several schools, who came together as a family of athletes. One of the students killed in the wreck was a cross country athlete at QRHS, and it meant a lot to her family to see dozens of athletes from area schools at the event.

"Even though the season was over,

they participated in the run and represented our school," DPHS English teacher and cross country coach Nancy Gingras said of her students. "After the race, they introduced themselves to the father of one of the victims and gave their condolences. This is a task many adults have trouble with. It has been a great honor to watch these two students develop into poised young adults who are supportive and compassionate."

Rybicki, a senior from Spencer, has made community involvement a staple of her high school career. In addition to her roles on the cross country, indoor track, and outdoor track teams, she represents her school as a member of The 84 movement, which opposes youth tobacco use. She is always striving to improve in the classroom and in athletics, teachers said.

"My favorite subject at the moment is psychology. I love learning about how the brain works and how we behave as people," Rybicki said. "I like learning about why we do things and what

causes our actions. Mrs. Gingras has had the biggest impact on my high school career. She taught me how to become more independent and helped me become the person I am today."

A sophomore from East Brookfield, Joyce is also a member of the cross country and outdoor track teams. He described Mr. Miller and Mr. Delongchamp as a few of his favorite teachers.

"History is a good class. Mr. Delongchamp has had a great impact on me throughout my learning career," said Joyce, who listed Eddie Murphy as one of his favorite actors.

For Rybicki, meanwhile, college is right around the corner, where she will study to become a nurse. Looking back on the journey through high school, she has plenty of unforgettable memories with teammates and classmates.

"My favorite memories can all be associated with my time doing track and cross country. It's impossible to pick my favorite memory – my teams have



Courtesy photo.

David Prouty High School students Aidan Joyce and Hanna Rybicki were selected as the latest Panthers of the Month.

given me so many great memories," Rybicki said before providing advice to incoming freshmen at Prouty. "Don't be afraid to try new things. You'll meet so many great people by joining clubs and sports teams."

LEICESTER MIDDLE SCHOOL ANNOUNCES HONOR ROLL

LEICESTER — The following students have earned a place on the first trimester honor roll at Leicester Middle School.

GRADE 8

High Honors: Kayla Alves, Evan Benoit, Nicole Berard, Riley Boisvert, Sarah Brouillard, Arah Chmielowski, Maria DiMeglio, Victoria Ditaranto, Breana Escobar, Rian Fadden, Morgan Flodman, Erin Gerber, Alexis Goodney, Grace Guinee, Abigail Johnson, Ja'nya Johnson, Seth Larson, Allyson Mahoney, Morgan Merrell, Sydney Merrell, Xavier Morales, Kailyn Orrell, Olivia Rosado, Lindsey Salek, Jada Smith, Timothy St. John, Julianna Torres, Shannon Tuson, Brady White, and Lindsey Wickson.

Honors: Lexie Arcouette, Erin Arsenault, Nicole Bahingire, William Bellows, Amelia Benware, Erin Brown, Bryson Bujak, Paiten Bulak, Ava Butkiwicus, Timothy Cehon, Richard Cichowski, Emily Connolly, Anthony Direnzo, Makayla Donaldson, Varissa Esposito, Randy Ethier, Alyssa Fling, Abigail Gahagan, Paige Gaudet, Liliana Glass, Matthew Heffernan, Thomas Heffernan, Deanna

Herbert, Sean Johnson, Jason LaBombard, Zoe Langlois, Madison Leith, Madelyne Libby-Toler, Kristopher Lopriore, Casey Macaruso, Michael Mero, Nicholas Michaelian, Theodore Miller, Abigail Morrison, Shannon Moynagh, Jenna Nelson, Meghan Niddrie, Jahmaira Pye, Eden Riel, Xavier Rosado, Morgan Smith, Kyle Stapel, Joseph Tivnan, Jane Toohil, Taylor Torres, and Andrew Zawalich.

GRADE 7

High Honors: Sofia Acero, Johnathon Beford, Abigail Bernabei, Danielle Birchett, Ayva Connor, Cole Delage, Abby Doku, Nikolas Gillaspie, Nakita Grammatic, Annalisa Hair, Tyler Herron, Annie Hunt, Devin Kularski, Hailey Lazarevic, Molly Ledbetter, Ariana Levitan, Derek Mahoney, Jacob McGrail, Victor Moisan, Lily Peterson, Ana Ruggieri, and Haley Soden.

Honors: Ayden Beique, Nicole Blais-Bennett, Jack Bullock, Kathy Cai, Emilia Casello, Fiona Catledge, Katie Choquette, James Cosper, Joely Fontaine, Emma Fournier, Sophia Gallati,

Maura Granville, Olyvia Gustafson, Eleanor Hills, Alliance Johnson, Steven Jyringi, Izabella Kulla, Sean Le, Jaedyn Levine, Juliana Linehan, Stephen Matavao, Jason Milgate, Kathleen O'Brien, Stephanie Pierce, Erick Portillo Munoz, Deegan Powers, Grace Reinke, Emmelia Shippey, Ainsleigh Spaulding, Ethan Torres, Andy Vega, Tiffany White, Jacob Whitworth, and Samuel Witkowski.

GRADE 6

High Honors: Jacob Altman, Molly Baker, Chloe Bouchard, Anthony Coll, Hannah Collette, Owen Collette, Michael Conny, Charolette Libby-Toler, Austin Muturi, Jasmine Ngo, William Panepinto, Logan Potter, Elizabeth Price, Destiny Rivas, Khariene Rivera, and Adam Skoglund.

Honors: Aiden Baillargeon, Caden Birtz, Allie Blair, Shawn Bloniasz, Andrew Boisvert, Jack Brady, Grace Bujak, Jaelyn Conley, Sadie Connery, Michelle Dacri, Ashlyn Deary, Matthew Direnzo, William Fox, Elizabeth Gallagher, Michael Gerber, Gia Gully, Noah Hallen, Nicklaus Hellstrom, Selena Ho, Ireland Huff, Jasmine Hunter,

Zachary Jackson, Peyton Knott, Hannah Kularski, Abbi Lane, Chloe LaPierre, Ethan Le, Meghan Le, Brody Lembo, Madelyn LoVerme, Joshua Lucier, Logan Mandella, Morgan Maxwell, Jessica McCarthy, Jillian Morrison, Jayla O'Neal, Nora Oliver, Eric Ortiz, Gregory Pappas, Connor Parke, Kassandra Peloquin,

Alex Pennymann, Gabrielle Pietri, Jackson Ricarte, Kyle Rice, Patrick Richards, Amandah Rivera, Paige Robidoux, Samara Rodas, Tyler Ross, William Sawicki, Hunter Senior, Julia Soden, Gabrielle Stuart, and Laylah Summers.

EAST BROOKFIELD ELEMENTARY HONOR ROLL ANNOUNCED

EAST BROOKFIELD — The following students have earned a place on the honor roll for the first trimester at East Brookfield Elementary School.

GRADE 4

High Honors: Willow Anderson, Keegan Blood, and Martina Ethier.

Honors: Idella Luukko, Lilyan Meteucci, Aubrey Messier, Mathew O'Donnell, Caroline Pataky, Cole Pattee, Taylor Richard, Lillian Spahn, Ryan Strzelewicz, and Hannah Wood.

GRADE 5

Honors: Kaitlyn Allen, Emma Cayer, Ethan Collette, Andrew Gentili, Abigail Normand, and Nicholas Russo.

GRADE 6

High Honors: Madison Ethier.

Honors: Zachary Anderson, Madison Barnett, Tyler Downs, Logan Josti, Maddox Kennedy, Ayla Messier, Mathew Morrow and Mya Routhier.

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RUTH DeAMICIS
MANAGING EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Let there be peace...

We are here just three days before the biggest holiday in the Christian calendar, the birth. It is a joyous time, and meant as time for families to unite (or reunite), for good will toward one another, for charity, for hope, and also for meditation and prayer; for reflection and perhaps even repentance.

The end of the cyclical year, the dead of winter; the end of days for those who go by the seasonal year as the Solstice ends the solar calendar with the shortest day of the year and begins a slow climb toward more light.

Those who live in an even darker, colder climate than New England were the ones who lit a log in commemoration of this, the hope the light would come back, that the people would stay warm enough through the rest of the dark winter to survive.

Many traditions are based on even older traditions, adapted to new uses.

We don't mind at all, but we would like to see some revived.

The one that says for just a few days, we forgive one another our differences, no matter what they may be. We don't need to know what it is we fear about one another that makes it an "us" and a scary "them." We just need to be a people. A single entity. Just for now.

We need to erase imaginary lines drawn on maps and globes. We need to forget anyone actually "owns" dirt. Or air. Or water.

We don't. We borrow for a few years. It then reverts or moves on to another form and to another "owner." We carry more dust that belongs to us on the soles of our shoes that we can claim ownership to than the acres we fight over on man-drawn papyrus.

We need to learn to say...enough. We own enough, we have enough, we've had enough, that's enough...

The wealth of the world is skewed true, and no, we don't expect it ever to be equalized; nor should it be spread about without someone doing their fair share to earn a bit of it; work is rewarded not existence. But on the other hand, when the world is producing enough food to feed itself easily yet there are people starving, when there are people without housing or clothing in a world as rich as ours, there is something wrong with the economies of the countries.

Health care, education, food, basic needs, are not rights true, at least not now in our country at this time in history (and before you hit us with the education one, re-examine the criteria now being set for voc-tech schools, charter schools and public schools and tell us again how we all have a right to basic education).

A lot of it has to do with the gap between the costs of goods and services and the wages that have not risen had the same rate as those costs. A person making \$1 an hour in 1957 was living better than his counterpart at \$10 an hour now.

Our expectations of having someone else do the hard stuff is skewed too. We have attempted to give our power to the politicians, the ones in charge, the Powers That Be, the bosses. We want to keep our heads down, do our thing and not take any responsibility. It's someone else's problem, so we can just complain, not be part of the solution.

Which brings us full circle.

If we aren't responsible, if we aren't the ones to reach out first, to say we will help, we will talk, we will ask, we will find out, we will fix, we will try... who will?

And if we want a bit of peace, we first need a bit of disturbance, of our own conscience.

DON'T MISS A BEAT

CHECK OUT THE SPORTS ACTION!



VIEWPOINT

OPINION AND COMMENTARY FROM SPENCER, LEICESTER AND THE BROOKFIELDS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Blais: Inappropriate touching

To the Editor:

What is modest? [Modesty] It is behaving to a standard of what is proper, decent and pure, moderation not extreme, a quiet and humble appearance, propriety, respect for one self, one another and for God who created us.

I believe what excites, encourages inappropriate touching is immodest dress and behavior.

The Bible, God's Word Jesus is a good start for a better understanding, information, knowledge and the ultimate authority as to how we should conduct our self, how we should behave and live. It doesn't matter what I have to say on this subject or what the world tries to encourage you to do. The ultimate truth is what Scripture, God's Word the Bible teaches that matters.

All Bible scriptures are God's teachings. God's Word is truth, teaching us how to live, parenting, work, ethics, morals and how to dress. The Bible does not go into details about the hemline or how loose or tight, however, the general principles are made clear.

Modesty is as much a man's responsibility, actually it is more a man's responsibility, we have been appointed by God as husbands to be the spiritual head of our family, home. [Genesis 3: 16] [1 Corinthians 11: 3] [Ephesians 5: 23] now don't get carried away men being the head does not mean you're the boss, your family is to be subjected to you, it means you are to be loving and caring with your instructions because you come under the headship of God, Jesus.

Modesty is contrary to provocative, extravagant and seductive. Modesty does not draw sexual attention to one self.

Men; inappropriate touch needs to start with us, we need to make an honest effort to discipline our self not to look with lust which can excite us to touch.

Women need to be more cooperative and not dress seductive which would restrict the eye appeal, lust that may provoke touching.

The Bible commands us not to be a stumbling block to someone or one another [1 Corinthians 8: 9] we must not be the cause of another to lust. The Bible makes it very clear we must not compromise, we need to turn away, we need to resist any temptation any invitation that could lead to lust. [Colossians 3: 5]

Unfortunately, our modern fashions and clothing are designed for just that "sex appeal" we must be careful not

to let our self be influenced into those fashions, causing a brother or sister or another to stumble into lust.

Modesty means propriety and humility in our dress, contrary to provocative, provoking sensuality. Men and husbands, women and wives, God wants us to practice modesty, self control in our dress and how we conduct our self, we need to be an example to our family and others. We are commanded not to be stumbling blocks to another by exciting or provoking [1 Corinthians 8: 9] we need to practice dressing that does not excite lust, it starts by not showing cleavage or clothes that is to tight, "tights," what is the purpose of wearing tights, accentuating the body. It is provocative provoking lust, lust provokes touch. "Warning," it does not take much for some men to over react?

I have a suggestion! Women need to make an honest effort not to provoke lust. Men, we need to make an honest effort not to allow our self to lust. We both need to be considerate and respectful of each other.

If we are not convicted by God, the Bible, how to conduct our self we will be convicted by Satan to follow the worlds ways and styles. Those who make an honest effort to follow God's principles, values and standards in the Bible will be blessed.

A godly men, father and husband, women, wife and mother should be excellent sources and examples for modest instructions how to modestly conduct our self.

Those of you who are reading this need to know that men love with their eyes, do the research and do the Biblical study on Biblical modesty [Matthew 5: 28] that looking with lust is adultery, we are warned, commanded to flea from sexual immorality. We have been given free will, control, and authority over our bodies, the choice is ours, either we serve God, Jesus or Satan. 1 Timothy 2: 9 this is specific instruction to women and men, we need to encourage Biblical teaching for women to dress modestly and discreetly, and men; we need to encourage modesty and proper behavior which includes no inappropriate touching and not cohabitating out of marriage, our eternal future depends on our Biblical choices.

Modest behavior and dress begins within each of us in our hearts and conscience, and that comes from a relationship with God, Jesus.

ROLAND C BLAIS
BROOKFIELD

Reid: Merry Christmas

To the Editor:

On a cold wintry night, an old farmer sat in his kitchen sipping on a cup of hot tea with a wee drop of whiskey. He heard some thumps against to widow pains on his back door. He investigated and found that several tiny birds were seeking the warmth of his kitchen. He immediately got up put on his coat, hat and boots and went outside.

The farmer walked across to his barn, opened the barn door, turned on a light and spread some hay in the form of a large nest. He went back to the door and spread cracker crumbs in a path to the barn and left the remaining crumbs next to the nest. He went back inside hoping that the birds would find their way to the warmth they were seeking.

The farmer was a large man and he obviously frightened the tiny birds when he went outside. He looked out his kitchen window but he could not

see any birds — they all flew away. He returned to the kitchen table and his still warm tea.

The farmer thought that it would have been wonderful if he could have transformed himself into a tiny bird so as to help his new friends find their way to what they were seeking. The farmer was never a religious man but always celebrated Christmas in his own way. Suddenly he realized the true meaning of Christmas. God could not have come to earth as God the Father without scaring the people so He sent His only son to live amongst the people to help us find our way.

How much easier would it be to transform a man into a bird than to transform God into a man? This Christmas we should all thank God for the marvelous Christmas gift of his son.

Merry Christmas.

JIM REID
SPENCER

Small: others are sadder

To the Editor:

Perhaps even sadder than women who are afraid to speak up when the target of sexual misconduct are the women who do speak up; in defense of the mis-conductor. Women such as Hillary Clinton, Gloria Steinem, and Nina Burleigh. Mizzzzz Steinem now offers the excuse that those were different times and all. If so, perhaps the

folks who cannot/will not allow white folks to put the past of slavery behind should also understand that back then it was a different time. Therefore, let us leave intact the oh-so-now-objectable statues of racist white guys from the south.

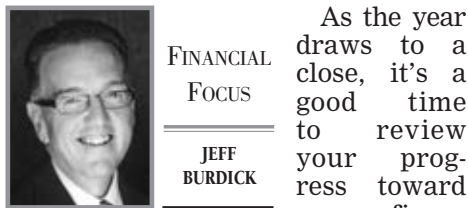
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We hope to see everyone back April 28, 2018 at Quail Hollow

THE TOUR COMMITTEE

Time to review your investment strategy for the year



FINANCIAL FOCUS

JEFF BURDICK

As the year draws to a close, it's a good time to review your progress toward your financial goals. But on what areas should you focus your attention?

Of course, you may immediately think about whether your investments have done well. When evaluating the performance of their investments for a given year, many people mistakenly think their portfolios should have done just as well as a common market index, such as the Standard & Poor's 500. But the S&P 500 is essentially a measure of large-company, domestic stocks, and your portfolio probably doesn't look like that – nor should it, because it's important to own an investment mix that aligns with your goals, risk tolerance and return objectives. It's this return objective that you should evaluate over time – not the return of an arbitrary benchmark that isn't personalized to your goals and risk tolerance.

Your return objective will likely evolve. If you are starting out in your career, you may need your portfolio to be oriented primarily toward growth, which means it may need to be more heavily weighted toward stocks. But if you are retiring in a few years, you may need a more balanced allocation between stocks and bonds, which can address your needs for growth and income.

So, assuming you have created a long-term investment strategy that has a target rate of return for each year, you can review your progress accordingly. If you matched or exceeded that rate this past year, you're staying on track, but if your return fell short of your desired target, you may need to make some changes. Before doing so, though, you need to understand just why your return was lower than anticipated.

For example, if you owned some stocks that underperformed due to unusual circumstances – and even events such as Hurricanes Harvey and Irma can affect the stock prices of some companies – you may not need to be overly concerned, especially if the fundamentals of the stocks are still sound. On the other hand, if you own some investments that have underperformed for several years, you may need to consider selling them and using the proceeds to explore new investment opportunities.

Investment performance isn't the only thing you should consider when looking at your financial picture over this past year. What changed in your life? Did you welcome a new child to your family? If so, you may need to respond by increasing your life insurance coverage or opening a college savings account. Did you or your spouse change jobs? You may now have access to a new employer-sponsored retirement account, such as a 401(k), so you'll need to decide how much money to put into the various investments within this plan. And one change certainly happened this past year: You moved one year closer to retirement. By itself, this may cause you to re-evaluate how much risk you're willing to tolerate in your investment portfolio, especially if you are within a few years of your planned retirement.

Whether it is the performance of your portfolio or changes in your life, you will find that you always have some reasons to look back at your investment and financial strategies for one year – and to look ahead at moves you can make for the next.

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



Ad Libs by June

Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy, and Prosperous New Year to our readers, write stuff authors, and to all the people and businesses below that I had the pleasure to work with this past year. May your blessings be abundant this Christmas, and may they continue to grow in the New Year. Thank you so much for supporting the Spencer New Leader and Stonebridge Press & Villager Newspapers with your readership and your advertising. I look forward to working with you again in 2018!

*June Simakauskas, Account Executive
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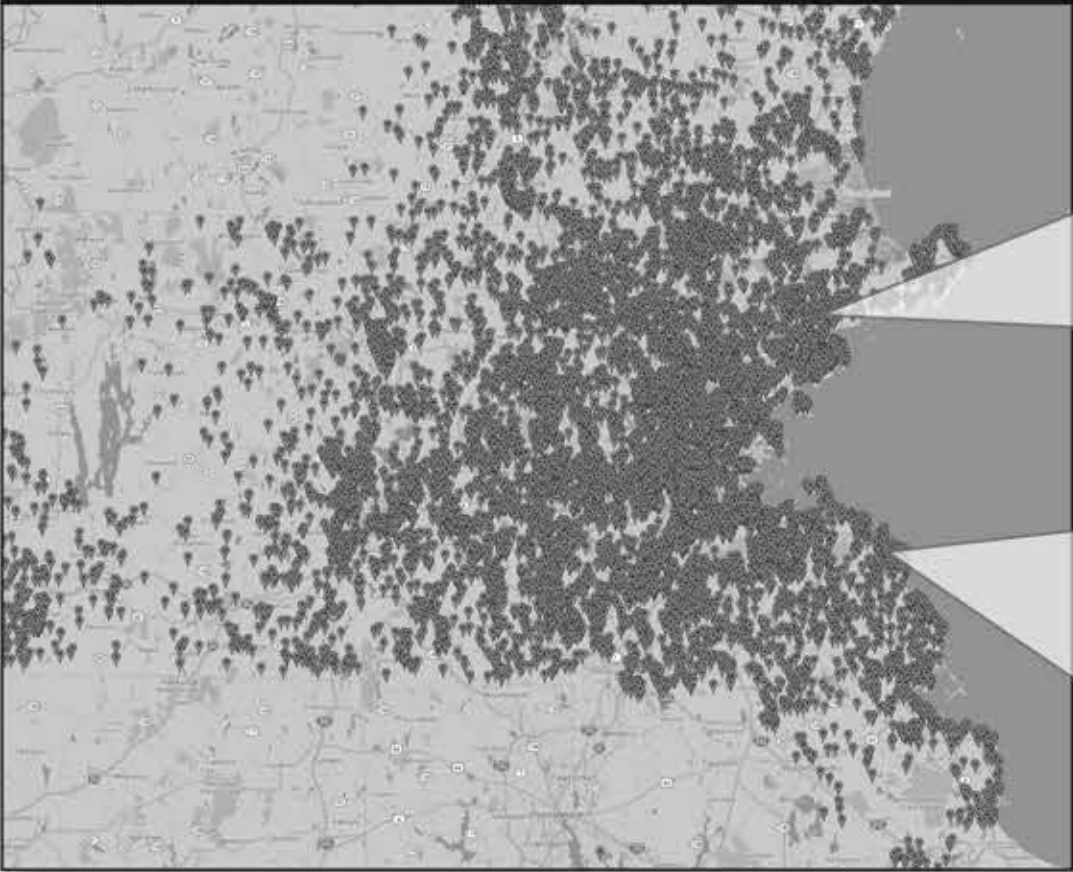
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Wayne Tuiskula
You may not have anything particularly valuable and an auction house may not be interested in selling your items. A charity may have many people who would be thrilled to have your unwanted dining room set, bookcases, household items and clothing.

There are many local charities that accept donations in our area. Many larger chari-



ties have locations where you can drop items off or arrange to have items picked up. The Salvation Army has several donation centers throughout the area that the Stonebridge Press newspapers reach. Local Salvation Army locations include the following:
120 E Main St, Webster, MA 01570 Phone: (508) 461-5207
120 W Main St, Spencer, MA 01562 Phone: (508) 885-8668
135 Providence Rd, Northbridge, MA 01534 Phone:

(508) 234-4439
53 Grove St, Putnam, CT 06260 Phone: (860) 963-7602
8 Union Square, Gardner, MA 01440 Phone: (978) 632-9854
72 Cambridge St, Worcester, MA 01603 Phone: (508) 799-0520
Goodwill also has a Worcester location:
25 Park Ave, Worcester, MA 01605 Phone: (508) 752-4042
Habitat for Humanity website states that they make pickups of many types of furniture. You can find additional infor-

mation at www.habitat.org. There are many other smaller local charities that operate thrift shops or make donations directly to those in need. Please email me if you have any that you'd like me to share with readers in a future column. Along with helping local charities, you may get an additional benefit from your donation. Many of these charities will provide you with a donation slip. Goodwill and Bankrate.com are two of many

sites that offer suggested prices that can be used when you donate items. Some examples from Goodwill's website are \$7 for dresses, \$6 for jeans, \$10 for microwaves and \$75 for a dining room set, assuming they are in good condition. These are estimated prices and it is best to consult with your tax preparer on prices. If you are dropping items off at the donation center now, expect long lines. Many people drop off items near the end of the year to get donation slips for their taxes.

Our next live auction will take place in Worcester on Jan. 25th. I'll be teaching my Evaluating your Antiques class for the Bay Path Evening School on March 3rd. Other events are being planned for after the holidays. See www.centralmassauctions.com for details.

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

Festive fun and holiday help is a click away

Along with the joys of preparing for the most merry time of year, come holiday hassles that prove the festive "hustle and bustle" isn't always that of Christmas carol fame. With so much to do and so little time, it's more important than ever to tap into available holiday resources. And when it comes to helpful ideas and festive fun, there's no place like the internet.

From organizing pre-holiday chores to printing out a letter to Santa, this week's column offers its annual pick of tried and true websites to help you celebrate the season with less holiday hassle.

Holiday Hustle Buster: OrganizedChristmas.com is like having your own holiday life coach. From designating particular weeks for each pre-holiday chore (cooking, cleaning, wrapping, etc.) to offering tools for each task (recipes, printable gift tags, etc.), this site just might help you pull off your yuletide preparations on time this year!

Note: List writers will love the site's printable holiday planner forms.

Name that Tune: You'll never flub up the lyrics to Good King Wenceslas again if you log onto Christmas-carols.net. The site features the words to many classic Christmas Carols and holiday tunes.

Note: Some hard-to-find old fashioned carols are listed here.

Fun with St. Nick: Emailsanta.com is a treasure trove of fun for kids. From

writing a letter to Santa to sending your pet's email to Rudolf, this site is pure holiday joy! Some other free offerings; play Rudolf's Christmas trivia; get Santa's autograph; send Christmas cards; count down to Christmas; laugh at silly elf jokes and more.

Note: This site is educational and fun. Plus it keeps the kids busy for quite a while

Recipe for Success: Can't find a recipe for that cookie you recall from childhood? Searching for a special recipe for a cookie exchange? Whether you're seeking a particular cookie recipe or just want to roll out a tried and true favorite, Christmas-Cookies.com has recipes for everything from Mexican Wedding Cake cookies to classic butter spritz. Plus, the site has reviews and blogs from users, and some great baking tips.

Note: Recipes include ethnic recipes and low carb cookies.

Holiday Heroine: Among the array of activities at www.northpole.com, is the opportunity to print out a personalized holiday storybook for youngsters. You create the book by filling in personalized names, etc., then use step by step instructions to print out and assemble the pages, including cover and back. Choose from: Elf for a Day; Christmas Eve Clean-up; or North Pole Christmas



TAKE THE HINT
KAREN TRAINOR

Party. Note: Check out their Good Deed Calendar to keep kids on track.

Where's Santa?: OK, so this one makes the list every year. But it's one not to miss! Want to know exactly when Santa Claus is coming to town? Log

onto www.noradsanta.org. Fabulous graphics make it festive. Tracking Santa across the globe begins on December 1.

Note: High tech tracking of Kris Kringle might appear a modern marvel, but the premise has been a tradition for more than half a century. Here's the story: Since 1955, NORAD and its predecessor, the Continental Air Defense Command (CONAD) have tracked Santa each year. The tradition began after a Sears Roebuck & Co. store advertisement for children to call Santa on a special "hotline" included an inadvertently misprinted telephone number. Instead of Santa, the phone number put kids through to the CONAD Commander-in-Chief's operations "hotline." Thus, a tradition was born.

Not a Creature was Stirring: From eggnog to Wassail, you'll be able to whip up the best yuletide drinks in style if you log onto the free Online Bartending School at www.cocktailsonline.tv. Over 170 free cocktail recipes and mixed drinks are offered; many with instructional preparation videos from professional bartenders.

Note: The site also offers interesting

cocktail trivia and some entertaining tips.

Crafty Christmas: Want to whip up a homemade hostess gift? Need a craft project to keep the kids occupied? Look no further than www.aboutchristmascrafts.com. This site features an array of interesting crafts which include edible crafts, Christmas gift crafts, kids crafts and much more.

Note: Instructions are easy and projects are impressive. Some have free patterns.

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 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, PO Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550. Or e-mail kdrr@aol.com. Hints are entered into a drawing for dinner for two at the historic Publick House Inn.

FOUNDATION

continued from page 1

helping fund everything from a food pantry to church outreach programs and other services at St. Joseph's Parish.

"Churches do so much for our community, and we always want to help them out," Fiske said.

But churches aren't the only recipients of Heart to Heart Foundation funds this year. After a few

months of recovery from his illness, Fiske and his foundation are getting back into high gear in terms of giving this holiday season — and not just in central Massachusetts. The foundation will award \$500 each to the following locations for disaster relief: Florida, Puerto Rico, and Texas.

Additionally, the foundation has donated over \$3,000 to the Red Cross in the last year alone.

"When we see disasters like that, we try to chip in whenever we can," said Richard Fiske Jr., who has been a member of his father's foundation since its inception.

Looking ahead, the foundation is preparing to award its annual scholarships to students at North Brookfield High School and David Prouty High School, which will be awarded in the spring. Support from the founda-

tion is also ongoing for dozens of local children battling illnesses, and Fiske is always searching for new families to help.

Of course, the foundation wouldn't be able to assist anyone without strong support over the years from residents, organizations and businesses. Fiske thanked everyone who offered support during his recovery, and he is eager to see old friends again and

connect with new donors at upcoming foundation events.

"We are small, but we have a great support system," Richard Fiske Sr., added. "The greatest gift at Christmas is giving back."

Founded in 1995, the Heart to Heart Foundation has supported hundreds of children and families over the years, raising funds, through talent shows,

motorcycle poker runs, community fun days, and direct contributions. To learn more about the organization and how you can help, check out the Heart to Heart Foundation's Facebook page.

To make a donation to the foundation, make checks payable to Heart to Heart Foundation and send them to: PO Box 154, North Brookfield, MA, 01535.

SENIOR CENTER

continued from page 1

ment or expansion. The system will also increase efficiency for seniors, who will swipe their key tags, register for programs, and then be on their way.

"This eliminates the need for pencil and paper registrations, and it also informs seniors of all available activities on a particular day," said Senior Center Director Diane Nichols.

The system's efficient, informative nature is just one of its many benefits. The technology will also enable staff members to tabulate statistics over many weeks and months, compiling the data so it is easy to translate into reports and even grant applications. By quickly and accurately detailing which services are being provided, the system will increase the center's chances of receiving additional grant funding in the future.

The My Senior Center platform is currently being used by more than 900 senior centers across the United States and Canada. Staff members are currently training with the technology, which is set to be launched in January.

Recognizing that some seniors may be nervous about the change, the staff wants to make the transition as seamless as possible. Therefore, a reception-

ist will still be on duty at all times to help seniors with any difficulties. Volunteers will also be available to assist with questions that may arise.

"This is a very easy way for people to sign in, and it gives us up-to-date numbers on exactly how many people are signing up for activities," Nichols said. "The information is right at our fingertips, and we get to review all of that data when applying for grants."

The technology is already in place at senior centers in several area communities, including Sturbridge. Officials are eager to launch My Senior Center and utilize its metrics, as staff members and seniors who have seen the technology at other centers are raving about its benefits.

"Everyone is very excited about it," Nichols added.

The system was funded through monies provided by the Friends of the North Brookfield Senior Center. Additional staff training will take place on Jan. 5 before the technology goes live. Though the system will allow seniors to be recognized upon checking in, the key tags will not contain any personal information.

To learn more about upcoming programs and activities at the senior center, call (508) 867-0220. The center is located at 29 Forest St.

TOY DRIVE

continued from page 1

deliver the gifts to the Marines. The convoy began at Karol's Corner Take-Out, where members of the Jeeperz organization were met by officials from Rochdale VFW Post 7556, including Commander David Rice.

"This has been getting bigger every year, and we are really excited about this year's donations," said Ware's Jim Parker, a member of Central Mass Jeeperz. "I personally received Toys for Tots when I was young, so this means a lot to me. It's a great cause."

Parker's employer, Vibram USA in North Brookfield, also got involved in the giving effort by setting up a collections box. For local businesses that took part, the event is a great way to

show community spirit while supporting an important cause.

"We love giving back, and we are happy to get involved any way we can. Everyone who is doing this is so awesome," said Karol LeBrun, who owns Karol's Corner Take-Out with her husband, Tom LeBrun.

Central Mass Jeeperz members thank everyone who made the event possible this year, from generous community donors to business owners who provided drop-off locations.

"So many people had a hand in doing this for the kids," Parker added.

Founded in 1947 by the Marines, the Toys for Tots program distributes toys to children nationwide whose parents cannot afford to buy them for Christmas. To learn more about the program, or to make a monetary donation, visit www.toysfortots.org.

“Every Town Deserves a Good Local Newspaper”

SPORTS

Tough defense, relentless rebounding enough for Auburn over Prouty



Mathew S. Plamondon photos
Jenna Petruzzi of David Prouty leans back before attempting a shot over Auburn defender Kayley Markvenas.



David Prouty's Brooke Pepin elevates over Auburn defender Isabella Therrien for a shot at the basket.

BY DEAN P. ST. LAURENT
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

SPENCER — Auburn High's girls' varsity basketball team opened its season on the road against David Prouty Regional on Wednesday, Dec. 13. Tough defense and relentless effort crashing the boards propelled the Rockets to a 49-25 win.

The Panthers started the game on a quick 6-1 run after two quick 3-pointers by Erin Parenteau and Taylor Wood, but Auburn bounced back with a run of its own, outscoring David Prouty 9-0 to jump ahead, 10-6, going into the second quarter.

From that point the Rockets stalled the Panthers' offense with a brutally effective full-court press. That and their effort on the offensive glass resulted in easy baskets as Auburn didn't trail again in the game.

"Absolutely, we came into this season knowing that our strength would be our defense and our athleticism, so that is what we tried to do, turn our defense into offense," expressed head coach Nicole LePrevost.

Despite dealing with the full-court press, David Prouty was able to crawl back into the game in the second quarter. They won the frame, 7-6, thanks to their best defensive effort.

"Great first half to stay with a team like Auburn is good for us, in the second quarter we played much better defense and a lot better rebounding," explained head coach Dave Woodward. "It [full-court press] is something we obviously work on in practice, but we have a young team. We don't have any seniors and have five freshmen, so it is something we need to work on more in practice."

Prouty's Brooke Pepin scored 6 of her game-high 12 points in the second quarter and it was clear that she was the focal point for the Panthers.

"She will be all year, she will be our focal point of our offense. She is our leader, our captain and our point guard and everything goes through her. Basically how she goes is how we go and unfortunately she has been sick all week so in the second half she was gassed," Woodward expressed.

That fatigue factored into the game as the Rockets' high-tempo defense began to be too much to handle for the Panthers.

"I think the fact that a lot of them weren't even 60 percent, they ran out



David Prouty's Kylie Soter blocks a shot taken by Auburn's Molly Cutting.



Taylor Wood of David Prouty drives the baseline and works her way closer to the basket.

of gas and that is when Auburn started to get three, four chances at the basket. That is when the game got lost right there," explained Woodward.

Auburn extended its lead to double digits in the third quarter, 29-19.

"I think that being patient for us is really hard because we are a very quick and fired up team, so getting them to slow down and run through an offense has been a challenge of ours and something we will keep working on, but we did all right tonight with that," LePrevost stated.

Continuing their dominance on the glass, Auburn outscored David Prouty, 20-6, to end the game. Giving the Rockets a spark was Michaela Sampson, who scored eight of the 20 points in the quarter for her team.

"I am proud of the whole team for the fourth quarter, but I am especially proud of Mick," LePrevost expressed. "She has a sister who is a junior who just went through ACL surgery yesterday and I think I would be lying if she wasn't playing for her a little bit."

Victoria Murphy led all Auburn scorers with 10 points.



David Prouty's Brooke Pepin drives to the basket for a layup.



Allison Hingston of David Prouty is able to pass the ball away from the defense of Auburn's Isabella Therrien.

THE WRITE STUFF

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Deadline Jan. 19 5pm - Pub date Jan. 26 (300 words or less)

1. January is National Hobby Month. What is your favorite hobby & how did you get interested in it?

2. Share your memories about the Sugden block in Spencer, past business, classes, etc.

3. January is National Mentoring month. Who has mentored you and how has it impacted your life?

4. Winter fun Poems

5. Topic of your choice

HOW TO SUBMIT?

• May be mailed or dropped off to: June Simakauskas, Spencer New Leader, 25 Elm Street, P. O. Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550

• EMAILED TO jsima@stonebridgepress.news (preferred)

• FAXED TO: 508-765-0233

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Call June at 508-909-4062 or email jsima@stonebridgepress.news

We reserve the right to not publish essays for inappropriate content or to hold for a future publication. Early submissions are greatly appreciated.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Tantasqua to host Warrior Winter Softball Clinic

For girls in grades 3-8, Tantasqua Regional will host the Warriors Winter Softball Clinic inside the high school's gymnasium. Instruction will be provided by Tantasqua varsity head coach Phil Desroches along with assistant coaches and members of the Warriors' softball team. The clinic will focus on the basics of fielding and throwing, pitching and catching, and a hitting circuit. The clinic's dates are Tuesday, Dec. 26 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and Thursday and Friday (Dec. 28-29) from 9 a.m. to noon. The cost is \$50 if paid in advance or \$60 at the door. Proceeds benefit the Tantasqua Booster Club. Checks should be made payable to the Tantasqua Booster Club and mailed to Phil Desroches, 153 Podunk Road, Sturbridge, MA 01566. Please include the child's name, age/grade, parent/guardian, cell phone number, email address, emergency contact and emergency phone number. For any questions, please contact Desroches at (508) 330-4343 or email desroches153@charter.net.

Worcester State University to host catcher, youth baseball coaches clinics

On Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (Monday, Jan. 15), the Worcester State University baseball program will host two clinics at the new \$52 million wellness center.

The catcher's clinic is from 9 a.m. to noon and is for ages 8-18 with a cost of \$50. It is designed for both the serious catcher plus beginners new to the position.

A free youth baseball coaches clinic follows later that night from 6-8 p.m. This is a lecture-style clinic for adults who coach ages 7-12. The focus is to talk baseball and present drills for coaches to use with their own teams along with how to run a successful practice inside or outdoors.

Please visit wsulancers.com/camps-clinics and facebook.com/WSUbaseballclinics for more information on these clinics and other happening throughout 2018. You can also call (508) 929-8852, (774) 230-3872 or email dbaker1@worchester.edu.

SPORTS

Fontaine’s hot start helps Wolverines hold off Oxford

BY DEAN P. ST. LAURENT
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

LEICESTER — Sharpshooter Emily Fontaine got the Leicester High girls’ varsity basketball team off to a quick start in the first half on Thursday, Dec. 14, and it was enough to secure a 48-41 win over Oxford High, who surged in the second half in a rallying effort.

“Emily Fontaine hit a bunch of 3’s for us to give us some strength in the beginning,” explained Dave Padavano, head coach of the Wolverines. “I always tell them that the most important part of the game is the first two minutes of every quarter and we came out hard and charged up and we got a lead. We missed a few shots that would’ve put us over the edge, but we were able to still hold on at the end. I am very proud of them for that. Oxford is a very, very good team and they gave us everything we could handle. That number 10 girl

[Gina Parmenter] is awesome.”

Coming out of the gate Fontaine was on fire from 3-point range. Fontaine rained in four first half 3-pointers and added 14 of her 17 points in the first half to give the Wolverines a 29-24 lead going into halftime.

Despite having to withstand the hot start from Leicester, the Pirates kept on fighting and chipping away at the lead, ending the second quarter on a 10-4 run due to their aggressiveness driving to the hoop and drawing contact.

“I am very proud of them being on the road here, that is a good team,” expressed Oxford head coach Joe Pietrzak. “They’re [Leicester] relentless; they pass the ball well, shoot the ball like heck. It was a tough matchup for us tonight, but I thought we hung in and I think we tied it at one point in the fourth quarter.

“We talked before the game to take the ball strong to the basket and not

always settling for 3’s and I think in the first half we settled for too many outside shots, but in the second half we did a better job getting into the paint drawing contact,” Pietrzak added.

Throughout the game, especially in the second half with the lead, Padavano yelled onto the court countless times for his team to settle down and not rush their shots.

“All the time, I tell them patience, patience, patience,” explained Padavano. “There is a lot of times when we don’t need a shot right away and can get a better shot, but they’re excited and if it is there it’s there, if not we will pull it out.”

Surging and cutting into the lead late in the second half, the Pirates not only looked to their leader in Parmenter, who led Oxford with 16 points, but also youth off their bench in Olivia Clarkson, who added 7 points and more importantly made a presence defensive-

ly.

Gina got banged up a little bit and we had to go three or four minutes without her and that was huge because she definitely makes us go,” stated Pietrzak. “We have no seniors, so we are a work in progress. An eighth grader in Olivia Clarkson came into tonight and really sparked us in both halves...especially on the defensive end and that is something we need to do to be successful.”

After losing to South High, 32-31, in their season opener, Leicester was able to overcome a second half surge by a good Oxford team and bounce back. The future is bright for a team who starts three underclassmen.

“They’re learning, they’re great learners, they do everything I ask for and they work hard. If they keep doing that they will be successful in anything they do,” Padavano expressed confidently.

HIGH SCHOOL NOTEBOOK



Nick Ethier photos

On Wednesday, Dec. 13, the Tantasqua Regional boys’ and girls’ swim teams competed — and defeated — Wachusett Regional. Both squads improved to 2-0 following their victories.

Dec. 8
Tantasqua 89, Nashoba 83 — Thanks to the addition of two divers — Jonah Green and Zachary Lavallee, who placed first and second, respectively — the Warriors defeated the Chieftains in the boys’ swim team’s first meet of the season. Gavin Morse, Kaspar

Mazeika, Robert Wilson and Bryce Iller won the medley relay to open the night and Iller followed with a win in the 50 Free, qualifying for sectionals in the process. Iller also won the 100 Breaststroke. Morse won the 500 Free and also qualified for sectionals.

Tantasqua 99, Nashoba

72 — Alyson Locke, Lauren Butler, Joslyn Bronner and Sarah Kersting-Mumm won the medley relay for the winning Warriors girls’ swim team, who also competed for the first time this season.

Kami Davis (200 Free), Kersting-Mumm (200 IM, 100 Free), Lauren Butler (Diving,



100 Breaststroke), Bronner (100 Fly) and Locke (100 Back) all won individual events, while the 400 Free relay team of Locke, Bronner, Davis and Kersting-Mumm finished it off with a win.

Dec. 12
Tantasqua 45, Shepherd Hill 22 — Tom Flynn and Nick Lavallee each scored 9 points and Seann Lauritsen added 8 points to pace the Warriors’ offense in a freshmen boys’ basketball victory over the Rams. And Tantasqua’s defense was stout, limiting Shepherd Hill to just 4 points throughout the first half.


Dec. 13
Tantasqua 106, Wachusett 70 — Bryce Iller (50 Free), Jonah Green (Diving), Robert Wilson (100 Butterfly), Gavin Morse (500 Free, 100 Back) and Michael Turley (100 Breaststroke) all won individual events for the Warriors boys’ swim team, which improved to 2-0. The relay team of Morse, Andrew Wade, Kaspar Mazeika and Iller also won the 400 Free event.

Tantasqua 92, Wachusett 87 — The Warriors prevailed in a nail-biter over the Mountaineers in the girls’ swim meet, as Tantasqua jumped to 2-0. Sarah Kersting-Mumm won the 200 Freestyle, Lauren Butler took first in Diving, Alyson Locke prevailed in the 100 Back, and Erika Madden won the 100 Breaststroke. Locke, Christina Izbicki, Kami Davis and Kersting-Mumm combined to win the 400 Free relay.

Dec. 15
Tantasqua 106, Shrewsbury 79 —

The Warriors boys’ swim team is now 3-0, which got the meet started with a win in the medley relay (Bryce Iller, Michael Turley, Robert Wilson, Kaspar Mazeika). Gavin Morris won the 200 Free and 100 Free, while Turley won the 200 IM and Iller placed first in the 50 Free and 100 Back. Jonah Green won the diving event, while Mazeika took home the 500 Free. The 200 Free relay team (Andrew Wade, Zach Lavallee, Turley, Morris) and 400 Free relay team (Morris, AJ Osimo, Wade, Iller) finished things up with wins.

Shrewsbury 106, Tantasqua 79 — The Warriors girls’ swim team fell to the Colonials, falling to 2-1. Sarah Kersting-Mumm won the 50 Free and the 50 Free, while Lauren Butler took first in the 100 Breaststroke. The 400 Free relay team of Alyson Locke, Christina Izbicki, Rebecca Turley and Kersting-Mumm also won.



ATHLETE of the WEEK

Emily Fontaine

In Leicester High’s 48-41 win versus Oxford High on Thursday, Dec. 14, Fontaine buried four 3-pointers in the first half of play to build her team a lead. Fontaine finished with 17 points as the Wolverines won their first game of the season.

Athlete of the Week is sponsored by:



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SPORTS

Minutemen use high-powered offense to get past Auburn



Drew Paulhus of Bay Path collects a pass on the wing.

Nick Ethier photos



Caiden Ellis surveys the floor while possessing the ball.

BY NICK ETHIER
SPORTS STAFF WRITER

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional boys' varsity basketball head coach Al Greenough said that some nights his team will have to win with offense and other nights it will be the defense that is relied upon. When the Minutemen hosted Auburn High on Tuesday, Dec. 12, it was all about the offensive

attack. Behind 11 made 3-pointers, Bay Path defeated the Rockets, 77-58. "Offensively we brought it tonight," Greenough said of the Minutemen's fast-paced style. Bay Path is now 2-0 after defeating Pathfinder Regional in their season opener, 79-31. Defense was the key in that contest, so the Minutemen

have already displayed their two ways to win. "We've won both ways so far this year and as long as they can continue to do so we're very excited about this year and what can happen," said Greenough. "Right now to start the year I couldn't ask for anything more." Auburn was making its season debut and had trouble scoring in the early going, as they fell into a 34-21 halftime hole that they couldn't dig themselves out of. "I thought we played with some good energy, but we still have to play with a purpose — and I don't think we know what that is yet as a team," said head coach Andy Niedzwiecki. Bay Path opened the game on an 8-2 run, which featured 3-pointers by twin brothers Joren and Caiden Ellis. Later in the frame Pat Dyer drained a 3 of his own as the Minutemen led, 20-9, after the first quarter. Auburn settled into its groove in the second quarter and played nearly equal with Bay Path. The Minutemen edged the Rockets in the frame, 14-12, to lead by a manageable 13 points heading into the third quarter. But Bay Path had a high-scoring third quarter — "the third quarter they especially shot the heck out of it," noted Niedzwiecki — as they totaled 26 points to Auburn's 18 to lead, 60-39. Dyer had a pair of treys in the quarter, while the Ellis twins each added one more 3-pointer apiece. The Rockets then won fourth quarter scoring, 19-17, to account for the final 19-point deficit.

"They pressured us, they forced us into mistakes and they made plays that we couldn't make," said Niedzwiecki. "As we keep going hopefully we'll improve a little bit." Ehmil Johnson (10 points), Tyler Judice (10), Kualim Johnson (9) and Craigon Confer (8) paved the way for the Rockets. For Bay Path, double-digit scoring totals were had by Caiden Ellis (23 points), Dyer (22 points, 7 rebounds), Joren Ellis (19 points) and Drew Paulhus (11 points, 9 rebounds). The foursome are all seniors, as is fellow starter Kody Sandgren, and the senior leadership excites Greenough for the season. "I knew going into this year that I had a really experienced group of kids that have been playing together now for four years," he said. "It's the first time since I've been coaching here where we have a full team of Bay Path kids that total an AAU team. It helps out tremendously. "We want a lot of balanced scoring," added Greenough. "These guys have learned that if we can get four guys, five guys near double figures we're going to be very successful." And, after an 8-12 season a year ago and missing out on the playoffs, Greenough said that his team has its sights set on going .500 and beyond en route to the Central Mass. Division 4 postseason tournament. "We want to get into that tournament. They want to go out on a good note," he concluded.



Bay Path's Pat Dyer eyes the basket before taking and making a 3-pointer.



Bay Path's Joren Ellis gets fouled on a drive to the basket.



Quaboag's Martin Flynn fights in the paint against three Quabbin defenders to get a shot up to the basket.

Mathew S. Plamondon photos



Quaboag's Aidan Gilman moves around a Quabbin defender on his drive to the basket.



Jack Sledziewski of Quaboag releases a 3-pointer versus Quabbin.



Zachary McCann of Quaboag keeps the ball away from a Quabbin defender during an attempted layup.

Quabbin gets the best of Cougars

BARRE — Quaboag Regional fell to 0-2 on the young season after they fell to the Quabbin Regional boys' varsity basketball team on Wednesday, Dec. 13, by a final score of 59-20. The Cougars then lost to Grafton High to drop to 0-3 before taking on Millbury High, after press time. Their next game is scheduled for Friday, Dec. 22 at home versus Southbridge High at 6:30 p.m.



Quaboag's Hayden Perry works his way around a Quabbin defender while driving the baseline.



Hayden Perry of Quaboag keeps the ball away from a Quabbin defender while contemplating his next move.

SPORTS

Underclassmen help guide Tantasqua past Grafton

BY KEN POWERS
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

GRAFTON — Sophomore Lydia Boland hit a pair of free throws with five-tenths of a second to play to help the Tantasqua Regional girls' varsity basketball team win its first game of the season, 53-49, over upset-minded Grafton High on Monday, Dec. 18.

The Warriors, who led by as many as 18 points late in the third quarter, 43-25, improved to 1-2 with the victory.

Grafton, also 1-2, erased nearly its entire deficit, outscoring Tantasqua 18-5 during

a six-minute span that began at the end of the third quarter and ended with 1:29 left to play in the game when Taylor Paulauskas banked home an offensive rebound put-back to make the score 48-43.

With 53 seconds to play Warriors' freshman Ainsley Way, who scored a team-high 16 points, hit one of two free throws to give Tantasqua a 49-43 lead. On Grafton's next possession, however, junior Jenna Gordon, who poured in a game-high 17 points, scored on a drive to the basket to pull the Indians to within four, 49-45,

with 47 seconds to go.

Way answered Gordon's basket with one of her own two possessions later, scoring on a layup after the Warriors successfully broke Grafton's full-court press, to put Tantasqua back up by six, 51-45, with 31 seconds left.

Gordon then canned a jumper on the Indians' next possession, to again make it a four-point game, 51-47, with 21 seconds to play. Grafton's press then forced a Tantasqua turnover and the Indians cut the lead to two, 51-49, with six seconds remaining on a left-side jumper by Paulauskas (six points).

Paulauskas was then called for an intentional foul on Tantasqua's next possession, but Warriors' freshman Madison Varney missed both free throws. Tantasqua retained possession of the ball after the free throws (because of the intentional foul) and the Warriors inbounded the ball to Boland, who sealed the win by swishing home both free throws.

Boland said she expected to get fouled at the end of the game.

"I'm little so I drive to the hoop, but I usually don't make the shots because I get stuffed, but a lot of times I get fouled, too," Boland said with a laugh. "I expect to get fouled at the end of the game because the ball is usually in my hands, so I work on my free throws every day in practice.

"I was confident when I let the ball go on the first free throw," said Boland, who started to follow the shot after releasing it. "I think I had some jitters after I let the ball go and I figured I better follow my shot."

Tantasqua head coach Tom Goyette wasn't surprised Grafton played its way back into the game in the fourth quarter.

"They battled back on us, but that's Grafton, Grafton's scrappy," said Goyette, whose team used an 18-point third quarter to extend its 25-21 halftime lead to 43-29 entering the final frame. "In the third quarter we came out and we shot real well and executed a lot of things real well. If you shoot well every-



Nick Ethier photos

Tantasqua's Morgan Smith wins the game-opening jump ball tap versus Grafton.

thing kind of falls into place.

"We hit some great open shots in the third quarter and we were also able to lock them down defensively in the third, too, but they had a furious comeback at the end," Goyette said. "We were thankful we held them off."

Tantasqua's roster consists of two seniors, two juniors, four sophomores and five freshmen.

"We are extremely young," Goyette said, "and as a result we haven't practiced too many end of the game situations, but we'll be working on that."

Goyette said he was pleased, but not surprised by the play of

Boland.

"Lydia's only a sophomore, but she started for us as a freshman and gained a lot of experience," Goyette said. "She doesn't play like a sophomore; she's consistent and steady. She knows how to play the game out there. She's a heady player out there and she's only going to get better and better."

Boland believes at the end of the season the Warriors will look back on their victory over Grafton as the cornerstone win of the year.

"We are really young, but by the end of the season I think we'll look back and see steady improvement," Boland said. "The first two games are gone. We're going to build off of this game and get stronger as a team as the season goes on. I'm excited to see how the season unfolds for us."



Jillian Ruthier of Tantasqua tightly defends the shot against Grafton's Abigail Rogers.



Tantasqua's Lydia Boland spins away from defensive pressure provided by two Grafton players and passes the ball out to the top of the key.



Ainsley Way of Tantasqua tosses a pass inside the paint versus Grafton.



Tantasqua's Jordyn Trombly searches for a teammate to pass the ball to from the top of the key.



Madison Varney of Tantasqua heaves a long pass down the court.

O'Regan helps Byrnes era at Shepherd Hill begin with win over Warriors

BY KEN POWERS
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

STURBRIDGE — Four players scored in double figures, led by senior Jason O'Regan, who poured in a game-high 24, and the Coach Mike Byrnes Era at Shepherd Hill Regional began with a rousing 89-64 road victory over Tantasqua Regional on Tuesday, Dec. 12.

O'Regan, who scored all but one of his points in the second and third quarters, was followed closely on the score sheet by classmate Danny Cavic, who added 19. Both O'Regan and Cavic connected on four 3-pointers in the game. Fellow senior Kenny Flynn added 15 and junior Cody Adams, a first-year player for the Rams after transferring into the school from Bartlett High, scored 12 points.

"Hopefully that's going to be our game — playing fast, shooting a lot of 3's and crashing the boards," said the 24-year-old Byrnes after making his high school coaching debut. "The team loves the run-and-gun style we're playing and the fact that we're trying to make it a track meet and wear down the opponent."

O'Regan, a self-confessed slow starter in the first game of each season, lived down to expectations against the Warriors by scoring zero points in the

first eight minutes.

"Throughout my four years as a varsity player, the first game of every season I've always started out slow," O'Regan said. "First-game jitters, I guess. To start the second quarter though, I knew the jitters were gone and I was ready to go."

Tantasqua head coach Tom O'Neil said that he knew O'Regan would make his presence felt in the game despite not scoring in the first quarter.

"Jason's been a nemesis of ours since he was a freshman," said O'Neil about O'Regan, who scored 12 points in the second quarter and 11 in the third. "He beat us here his freshman year with a 3 late to win the game. He's a real tough player."

Shepherd Hill, behind the play of Cavic and Adams, broke a 6-6 tie midway through the first quarter with a 9-1 spurt. Cavic had seven in the run — six coming on a pair of 3-pointers — while Adams added a steal and a lay-in. The Rams led, 20-14, as play headed into the second quarter.

With O'Regan leading the way in the second period — he had 10 of Shepherd Hill's 12 points in a 12-5 run — the Rams led, 39-26, but the advantage seemed more commanding than 13 points. Byrnes' boys then erased all doubt

about the outcome in the third quarter, taking a 65-46 lead into the fourth period.

All 11 of O'Regan's points in the period came consecutively in a span that lasted just over a minute-and-a-half. During that span the score went from 49-36 Shepherd Hill to 60-41 Shepherd Hill.

"It was back and forth for a while, but then they started making shots and we didn't," O'Neil said. "Cavic scoring 13 in the first quarter, we didn't expect that. In the second quarter we started playing hero basketball and guys started taking it on themselves to shoot a lot of shots. Not bad shots, but not the best shot at the time and we shot too quickly."

Tantasqua (0-1) was led by Drew Peretti, who scored 12 points. Hayden Peterson and Chase Freeland added eight points each; Jackson Hall and Evan Couture had seven apiece. Cam Arellano and Ethan Brunelle chipped in with five points each.

"In the second half the game just got away from us. We miss a shot and they would hit a layup," O'Neil said. "Miss, layup. Miss, layup. Miss, layup. Also, they made 10 3's in the game and it felt like more. I thought it would be a more competitive game."

O'Regan said he likes the brand of basketball Byrnes has brought to Shepherd Hill.

"Going up-tempo has been great," said O'Regan, who played in front of a crowd that included scouts from Anna Maria College and Worcester State University. "Last year we were a slow-it-down, play-by-play team and that didn't work out to good for us. This year we want to get the ball off the boards, toss it up to our point guards and get our fast break going."

Byrnes was pleased with O'Regan's start.

"I thought Jason had a good game. I didn't know about how he starts slow to open the season, but that does explain his first quarter," said Byrnes, who runs The Swarm, an AAU basketball program. "We have high expectations for him. He's a captain for us and a leader for these guys. He's been playing very well and he displayed it tonight."

"I thought Danny [Cavic] really led us early and got us going with his big first quarter," added Byrnes, who served as an assistant coach at both WPI and Nichols College before taking the Shepherd Hill job. "He's one of our backbones and he has taken the team on his back."



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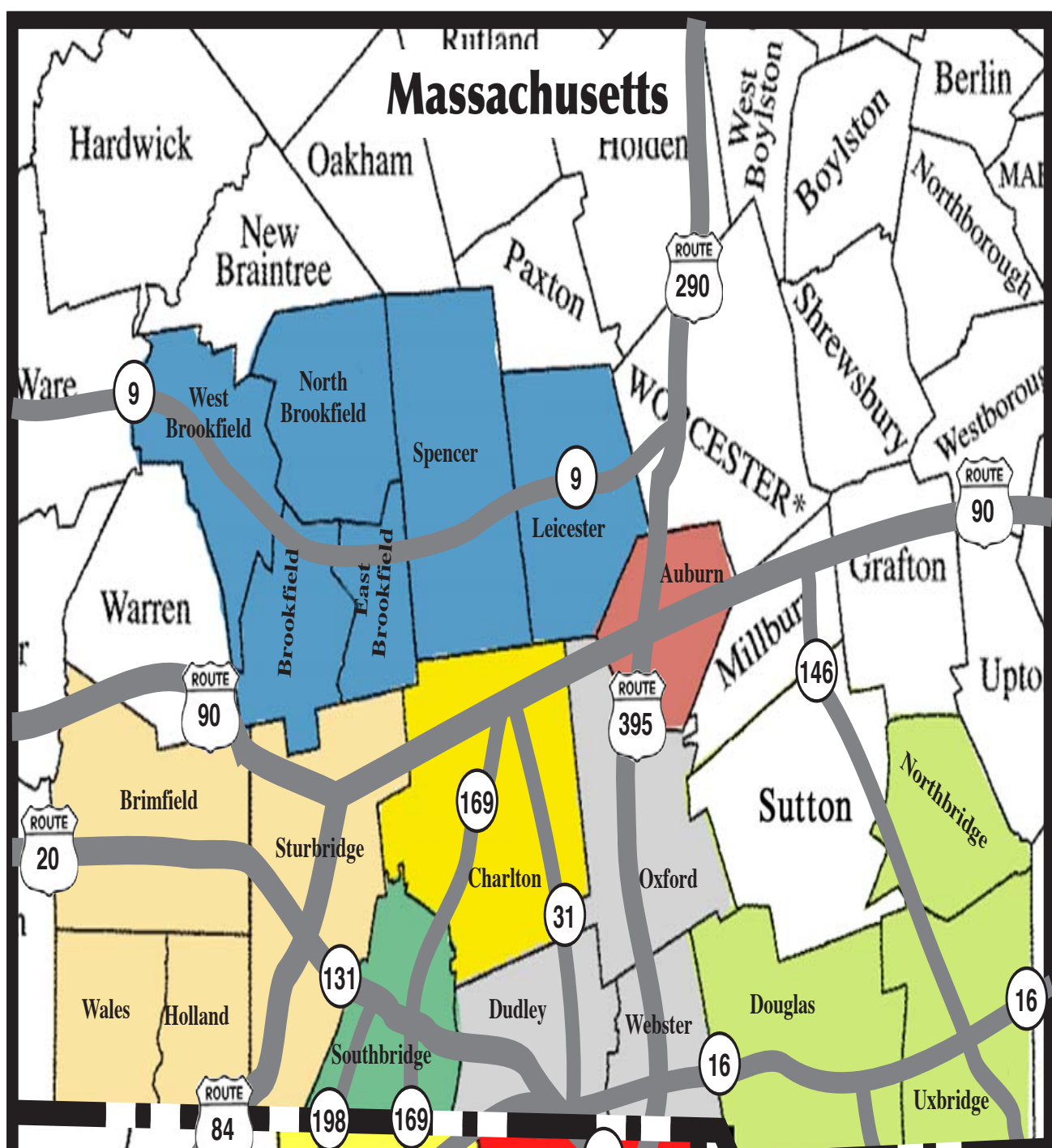
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ACTIVISTS

continued from page 1

momentum.

"People in this state know we need to take a lot of action, and they are interested in pushing for legislation. This isn't something that can wait," said Fry, who joined the CCL chapter in Lexington four years ago.

Fry and other researchers have discovered over the years that, regardless of how alarming the statistics are, it requires hard work from grass-roots organizations to get people to listen. The goal shouldn't simply be to lessen climate

change, he said, but to stop it by reducing the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to below 350 parts per million.

Fry's research, compiled over many years, indicates that summers are getting warmer in many places, especially during the day. Drier locations have experienced the steepest rises, he said, and if nothing is done we will all eventually see summers as hot as those in Las Vegas – some states much sooner than others. Meanwhile, Fry and other researchers have tracked record worldwide droughts and disasters over the last 15 years, including Australia's worst drought in

900 years (2003-10), as well as devastating Russian forest fires in 2010. That summer had been the hottest recorded in Russian history, leading to hundreds of wildfires breaking out.

"I will be doing much more research, and I have already met with many officials," said Fry, who has worked with Senator Anne Gobi and Representatives Donald Berthiaume and Todd Smola.

The effects of a U.S. carbon tax wouldn't just be great for the environment, Fry said, but also for the overall economy. Further increases in global temperatures pose significant threats to national security

and the economy, research indicates. But if legislation is passed soon, CCL members believe equal monthly dividends from carbon fees paid to every American household would help ensure that families can afford the energy they need during a transition to a greenhouse gas-free economy.

For Fry and his organization, the prime objective is to get this information into the hands of legislators who can lobby for change. At upcoming meetings, members will learn how to craft letters to officials and media articulating their goals. At the chapter's last meeting, members listened to a national

call with the CCL.

Fry doesn't partake in rallies and protests, finding them unproductive for his skill set. Instead, his goal is to continue inspiring local residents who want to make a difference to get involved in the CCL.

Area residents interested in mitigating the effects of climate change are invited to attend the group's next meeting, which will take place on Jan. 21, from 2-4 p.m., at Fry's home in Brookfield (17 Fox Run).

For more information, contact Fry at (781) 698-7176 or send an email to gene.fry@rcn.com.

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POLICE REPORTS

Spencer Police Department

Editor’s Note: The information contained in this police log was obtained through public documents kept by the police department, and is considered to be the account of the police. All subjects are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Police agencies can no longer print the names of people who are arrested or charged with domestic assault related charges. The new law is designed to protect victims, so they are not re-victimized through indirect identification.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6

12:22-1:17 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:46 a.m.: medical/general (Greenville Street); 1:46-2:07 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 2:22 a.m.: residential alarm (Treadwell Terrace), services rendered; 6:49 a.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 6:55 a.m.: citizen complaint (Hastings Road), spoken to; 7:18 a.m.: animal complaint (Main Street), dogs running in traffic; 8:04 a.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), spoken to; 9:22 a.m.: animal complaint (Meadow Road), spoke w/ ACO; 9:51 a.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 10:15 a.m.: suspicious activity (North Brookfield Road), unwanted party; 10:32 a.m.: missing person/adult (Cranberry Meadow Road), party missing two days; 11:46 a.m.: mv complaint (Greenville Street), erratic operation; 12:12 p.m.: 209A service (West Main Street); 12:34 p.m.: officer wanted (Wilson Street), spoken to; 1:05 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), spoken to; 1:46 p.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 1:50 p.m.: suspicious mv (Main Street), services rendered; 2:42 p.m.: abandoned 911 call (West Main Street), spoken to; 3:52 p.m.: property released/returned (West Main Street), debit card; 4:00 p.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street); 4:04 p.m.: animal control (Brooks Pond Road), dead raccoon in yard; 4:09 p.m.: accident (Maple Street), report taken; 5:15 p.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street); 7:05 p.m.: suspicious activity (Chestnut Street), services rendered; 7:29 p.m.: animal control (Howe Road), dog loose; 7:59 p.m.: fire alarm (Main Street), services rendered; 8:37 p.m.: officer wanted (Pint Eastalee Drive), welfare check; 9:16 p.m.: building checked, secure; 10:22 p.m.: medical/general (Cherry Street).

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7

12:35 a.m.: suspicious mv (West Main Street), services rendered; 12:37-1:08 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 2:04 a.m.: commercial alarm (West Main Street), services rendered; 4:47 a.m.: disturbance (Franklin Street), services rendered; 6:40 a.m.: building checked, secure; 7:11 a.m.: fire alarm (Main Street), services rendered; 8:13 a.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 8:47 a.m.: disabled mv (Main Street), assisted; 8:54 a.m.: officer wanted (Briarcliff Lane), welfare check; 9:19 a.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 10:15 a.m.: juvenile matter (Paxton Street), req. officer check on son at school; 10:58 a.m.: officer wanted (Ash

Street), contraband located; 11:57 a.m.: accident (Maple Street), report taken; 12:12 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), spoken to; 12:37 p.m.: officer wanted (Bixby Road), spoken to; 12:37 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 12:44 p.m.: officer wanted (Prospect Street), info taken; 12:51 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), spoken to; 1:51 p.m.: officer wanted (Lake Avenue), spoken to; 2:09 p.m.: 209A service (West Main Street); 2:49 p.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street); 3:03 p.m.: officer wanted (Maple Street), welfare check; 3:19 p.m.: parking violation (Mechanic Street), citation issued; 3:41 p.m.: mv lockout (Main Street), services rendered; 5:28 p.m.: officer wanted (Pope Street), spoken to; 6:14 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street); 6:42 p.m.: FID issued (West Main Street); 7:47 p.m.: disturbance (Linden Street), unwanted party; 8:16 p.m.: building checked, secure; 8:18 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operation; 8:34 p.m.: parking violation (Adams Street), citation issued; 8:35-8:49 p.m.: building checked, secure; 10:37 p.m.: officer wanted (North Street), harassing phone calls; 10:44 medical/general (Paxton Road); 11:25 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; 11:35 p.m.: 911 call (West Main Street), services rendered; 11:54-11:56 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; 11:58 p.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), shopping carts in road.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8

12:04 a.m.: building checked, secure; 12:06 a.m.: parking violation (Chestnut Street), citation issued; 12:08 a.m.: parking violation (Chestnut Street), citation issued; 12:16-12:18 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 12:29 a.m.: parking violation (Church Street), citation issued; 12:32 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street); 12:32 a.m.: building checked, secure; 12:47 a.m.: medical/general (Franklin Street); 12:50 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 8:33 a.m.: suspicious mv (Lincoln Street), mv blocking driveway; 8:34 a.m.: medical/general (South Spencer Road); 9:25 a.m.: larceny (Briarcliff Lane), scrap metal stolen; 11:24 a.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), wallet taken; 11:39 a.m.: officer wanted (Lake Avenue), possible b&e; 12:14 p.m.: property released/returned (West Main Street), purse returned; 12:53 p.m.: animal complaint (South Spencer Road), injured fox; 1:26 p.m.: officer wanted (Chestnut Street), employee complaint; 1:53 p.m.: request to speak to ACO (West Main Street); 1:54 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), spoken to; 3:12 p.m.: animal complaint (Oakland Drive), dead raccoon; 4:19 p.m.: mv stop (Charlton Road); 4:38 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), Harrington CT down; 5:08 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 5:10 p.m.: mv stop (North Brookfield Road); 5:20 p.m.: accident (Clark Street), report taken; 5:21 p.m.: mv complaint (Route 49), erratic operation; 5:39 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), spoken to; 6:29 p.m.: odor of gas (Sullivan Street), services rendered; 7:30 p.m.: accident (Pleasant Street), report taken; 9:12 p.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), spoken to; 11:47 p.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), welfare check.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9

8:14 a.m.: medical/general (Pope Street); 8:28 a.m.: disabled mv (Howe

Road), welfare check; 8:48 a.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), traffic lights; 9:26 a.m.: mv stop (Paxton Road); 11:04 a.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), services rendered; 11:08 a.m.: officer wanted (Cherry Street), spoken to; 12:08 p.m.: accident (Pleasant Street), report taken; 12:15 p.m.: accident (Charlton Road), report taken; 12:18 p.m.: accident (Paxton Road), report taken; 12:27 p.m.: accident (North Brookfield Road), report taken; 12:28 p.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), poss. 209A violation; 12:37 p.m.: accident (Charlton Road), report taken; 1:07 p.m.: accident (Browning Pond Road), report taken; 1:14 p.m.: accident (Cranberry Meadow Road), report taken; 1:16 p.m.: accident (Browning Pond Road), report taken; 1:32 p.m.: officer wanted (Point Eastalee Drive), unable to locate; 1:41 p.m.: accident (Grove Street), report taken; 2:09 p.m.: accident (North Spencer Road), report taken; 2:24 p.m.: accident (School Street), report taken; 2:34 p.m.: officer wanted (Wilson Street), flat tire; 3:30 p.m.: lost/found (Main Street), lost backpack; 4:11 p.m.: fire alarm (Main Street), services rendered; 4:36 p.m.: accident (Gold Nugget Road), report taken; 4:37 p.m.: accident (Browning Pond Road), report taken; 4:55 p.m.: officer wanted (Charron Street), services rendered; 4:59 p.m.: mv lockout (Maple Street), services rendered; 5:09 p.m.: lost/found (R. Jones Road), men’s wallet; 5:23 p.m.: disabled mv (North Spender Road), services rendered; 6:15 p.m.: fire (North Street), cooking fire; 6:19 p.m.: accident (Thompson Pond Road), report taken; 7:16 p.m.: animal complaint (Bixby Road), barking dog; 7:41 p.m.: DPW call (Bell Street), large hole in roadway; 8:21 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 9:33 p.m.: medical/general (Wire Village Road), assisted; 10:52 p.m.: accident (Greenville Street), report taken; 11:05 p.m.: officer wanted (Mechanic Street), threats.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

12:44 a.m.: suspicious mv (Route 49), spoken to; 1:11-1:27 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 7:20 a.m.: medical/general (Maple Street); 7:22 a.m.: DPW call (Pine Avenue), road not plowed yet; 7:51 a.m.: officer wanted (Church Street), snowblowing onto sidewalk; 8:35 a.m.: parking complaint (Prospect Street), spoken to; 9:34 a.m.: medical/general (West Main Street); 10:10 a.m.: disturbance (Roberta Bay), issues w/ neighbor; 11:01 a.m.: juvenile matter (West Main Street), custody swap; 11:43 a.m.: mv lockout (Howe Village), assisted; 11:45 a.m.: parking complaint (Summit Street), mvs parked in restricted area; 11:46 a.m.: mv lockout (Church Street), assisted; 12:35 p.m.: accident (Wire Village Road), report taken; 12:49 p.m.: animal complaint (Gold Nugget Road), dog loose; 12:58 p.m.: suspicious mv (Fourth Avenue), spoken to; 1:13 p.m.: medical/general (Bay Path Road); 1:34 p.m.: DPW call (Northwest Road), uncovered old well; 3:15 p.m.: animal complaint (High Street), injured coyote; 4:12 p.m.: mv complaint (Chestnut Street), erratic operation; 4:51 p.m.: mv theft (Condon Road), report taken; 6:47 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operation; 7:04 p.m.: DPW call (Meadow Road), icing; 7:50 p.m.: medical/general (West Main Street); 8:22 p.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), spoken to; 10:38 p.m.:

medical/general (West Main Street).

MONDAY, DECEMBER 11

12:19 a.m.: residential fire (Town House Court), services rendered; 1:19-2:02 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 2:59 a.m.: parking complaint (Main Street), mv parked illegally; 4:05 a.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 4:44 a.m.: accident (North Brookfield Road), deer struck; 6:12 a.m.: medical/general (Bixby Road); 6:28 a.m.: medical/general (Mechanic Street); 8:03 a.m.: animal complaint (Hastings Road), dog got loose; 8:17 a.m.: medical/general (Maple Street); 9:09 a.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), spoken to; 9:14 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street); 11:27 a.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), issue w/customer; 12:17 p.m.: 911 call (Ash Street), test; 12:35 p.m.: building checke, secure; 12:47 p.m.: lost/found (West Main Street), lost wallet; 1:48 p.m.: juvenile matter (Main Street), welfare check; 1:50 p.m.: disturbance (Thompson Pond Road), neighbor dispute; 2:05 p.m.: parking complaint (Summit Street), spoken to; 2:07 p.m.: accident (Pleasant Street), report taken; 3:16-3:17 p.m.: LsTC issued (West Main Street); 3:38 p.m.: suspicious mv (Woodside Road), spoken to; 4:37 p.m.: DPW call (Lake Avenue), referred; 4:39 p.m.: officer wanted (Dufault Road), welfare check; 4:55 p.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street); 4:58 p.m.: 209A service (West Main Street); 5:55 p.m.: disturbance (Church Street), unwanted party; 6:40 p.m.: 911 call (West Main Street), open line; 7:55 p.m.: animal complaint (North Spencer Road), dog struck by mv; 9:06 p.m.: 911 call (Northwest Road), spoken to; 9:43 p.m.: mv complaint (West Main Street), erratic operation; 9:47-9:54 p.m.: buildings checked, secure.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12

12:12-1:06 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 8:27 a.m.: firearms violation (Route 49), firing out of mv; 9:09 a.m.: medical/general (Smithville Road); 9:39 a.m.: 911 call (West Main Street), spoken to; 9:47 a.m.: disturbance (Roberta Bay), neighbor dispute; 9:52 a.m.: 911 call (West Main Street), wrong number; 10:04 a.m.: mv stop (Maple Street); 11:28 a.m.: runaway (Main Street), spoken to; 11:38 a.m.: 911 call (West Main Street), Harrington CT down; 11:47 a.m.: 911 call (West Main Street), open line; 12:10 p.m.: 911 call (West Main Street), spoken to; 1:30 p.m.: accident (Greenville Street), report taken; 1:46 p.m.: DPW call (Thompson Pond Road), utility pole cracked; 4:17 p.m.: larceny (Main Street), spoken to; 4:23 p.m.: parking complaint (Dustin Street), spoken to; 4:24 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; report taken; 5:54 p.m.: medical/general (Wall Street); 6:02 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 6:15 p.m.: larceny (Main Street), services rendered; 6:20 p.m.: medical/general (Summit Street); 6:36 p.m.: burglary (Sumner Street), report taken; 6:43 p.m.: disabled mv (Main Street), assisted; 9:45 p.m.: medical/general (West Main Street); 9:50 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; 10:30 p.m.: medical/general (Pioneer Valley Drive); 11:24 p.m.: disturbance (Roberta Bay), spoken to; 11:46-11:51 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; 11:55 parking violation (Mechanic Street), citation issued; 11:59 p.m.: parking violation (Summit Street), citation issued.

Wojnar now president of chiefs’ association



Jason Bleau photos

Dudley Chief Steven Wojnar accepts the ceremonial gavel as he becomes the new president of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY — Dudley Police Chief Steven Wojnar has reached a new high for his career in law enforcement being named the new president of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association.

A special ceremony featuring around 160 guests, including law enforcement officials and officers and state officials as well as representatives from the town of Dudley, was held Thursday, Dec. 14 to officially install Wojnar as the new association president at the Southbridge Hotel and Conference Center.

The ceremony included much pomp and circumstance including patriotic numbers by the Shepherd Hill Regional High School chorus and the presentation of colors by the Dudley Police Department Honor Guard.

The highlight moment of the event however was the passing of the ceremonial gavel as outgoing president and Middletown Police Chief James DiGianvittorio welcomed Wojnar to the top seat on the association to serve a one-year term.

Wojnar was awarded the position after being elected by his peers to serve his first term as president. His installation came with many well wishes and stories from different officials and fellow officers Wojnar has worked with over the years, all of them confident the chief will do his new position justice.

Among the guests was Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito, who considers central Massachusetts her home region. Polito said she was proud to see an officer from an area close to her heart take the reins on the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association.

“I’m very proud and honored to see that we have one of our own in central Massachusetts take on the presidency of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association,” Polito said. “We do have a lot of work ahead of us and we look forward to working with Chief Wojnar.”

Senator Ryan Fattman, who reminisced on meeting Wojnar first as a father and second as a law enforcement official, said he too was proud to see the chief achieve such a high honor from his peers and represent Dudley, and law enforcement officers throughout the state, in a new capacity.

“It’s a great honor for me as the senator for the town of Dudley to have our local chief be represented here today. It’s impressive,” Fattman said. “I think of how lucky I am to represent 14 communities where we have police departments that are beyond reproach. They take their job incredibly seriously. On behalf of the Massachusetts State Senate we are happy to have Chief Wojnar as the new president.”

Also present to share their remarks were Attorney General Maura Healey, District Attorney Joseph D. Early Jr., Secretary Daniel Bennett of the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security, Dudley Town Administrator Greg Balukonis, and Dudley-Charlton Superintendent of Schools Gregg Desto.

Wojnar was humble in his acceptance of his new position, thanking everyone he could from his fellow chiefs to Dudley town officials, his family, mem-

bers of the media and others who helped define his career. He also made a point to note that his success leading Dudley also has a lot to do with the men and women that embrace his leadership giving the officers of Dudley a special thank you.

“You can’t do this job alone and (Dudley) is really fortunate to have a lot of great and dedicated individuals working for us,” Wojnar said. “We’re well respected in town, all the officers are well respected, the courts always mention the great job they do and it’s really been my privilege and honor to lead them.”

Wojnar also spoke about his battle with colon cancer and the struggles life has thrown his way and how he managed to get through both his professional and real-world roadblocks with the help of many people in his life and a positive outlook towards the future.

As part of his installation celebration the chief was recognized for his continuous support of the Jimmy Fund and awarded the Hector J. Pelletier award by the Chiefs of Police Association. In lieu of party favors Chief Wojnar also announced a \$1,000 donation to the Adam Bullen Memorial Foundation which helped him through his cancer treatment.

Chief Wojnar called his installation as association president a major career moment and one he couldn’t do alone. He also promised to do everything in his power to perform his duties properly and do what’s best for the many dedicated law enforcement officials throughout the



Dudley Police Chief Steven Wojnar addresses the crowd for the first time as president of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association

Commonwealth.

“The support of my peers in such an important role is truly tremendous. This organization is designed to focus on cooperation and the professional growth and development of police chiefs throughout Massachusetts. Whether you’re from the largest city or the smallest town you’re still recognized as law enforcement professionals and the safety and security of our citizens is our top priority. My experience in this organization has shown that we have a group of dedicated professionals serving in leadership roles in our communities,” Wojnar said.



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Ad Libs
by June

The weekend has arrived to celebrate Christmas and, to Christians, the birth of Jesus Christ. For others, it's a celebration of family and friends, and the end of a crazy shopping season that usually begins on Thanksgiving and ends with empty wallets and massive credit card bills on December 24. Santa, after all, needs help fulfilling the wishes of all the boys and girls not on his naughty list. And then there are those who have no family, no home, with just the clothes on their backs, that rely on the kindness of strangers and special organizations like the local food pantries, Toys for Tots, Salvation Army and Veterans organizations to take care of their needs around the holidays. During these past few weeks, I'm sure we've all encountered opportunities to help others while fulfilling our own needs for Christmas.

Inside this issue please find my "thank you" to all those I've worked with in 2017. This is quite a task to put together and I hope I haven't missed anyone. If you advertised with me in 2017 and I did miss you, I sincerely apologize. Please let me know and I'll mention your business in an upcoming column.

I'd also like to invite you to read THE WRITE STUFF in this week's issue. Although it started out as a writing page for students in 2001, I'm very happy that it's grown to include authors of all ages, many of whom contribute on a regular basis. One teacher recently told me about her students... "They are so excited about the prospect of being published. You have really helped them with working toward a goal with writing." This made my day!!! We have younger students in this month with Letters to Santa...I hope they will also continue to write, and invite all students to participate. I always offer topic suggestions but the page is an open forum for topics of your choice. If you like this section, please thank Lamoureux Ford for sponsoring. If you're a business and would like to be a sponsor, please contact me.

I'm taking an Ad Libs vacation for the next two weeks...be back on January 12th.

Best wishes for a blessed Christmas and a Happy, Healthy & Prosperous 2018!

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Happy Hanukkah

Feliz Navidad

Joyous Kwanzaa

From all of us at the Spencer New Leader

Mark Barrett

Aimee Stezelecki

Merry Christmas
to all from all of us at the

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Sharon Pelletier


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Jane Austin Caspary

We are proud to be an American!

God bless the United States

of America!



OBITUARIES

Brian Cook Catron, 32



C H A R L T O N - Brian Cook Catron, 32, passed away Saturday, December 9, 2017 at his home.

He is survived by his son Travis Catron and the mother of his son, Jenna Broderick. His mother, Polly Cook-Ortiz of Charlton, his father, Gerald Catron of Rio Rancho, New Mexico and step father, David Toupin of Spencer, 5 siblings; Ben Catron, Gregory Toupin, Julie Toupin, Jamie Toupin and Jarrod Catron. He also leaves behind many aunts and uncles and his dog "Bella".

Brian also leaves his paternal grandparents, Bruce and Janice Catron of TN. He was predeceased by his maternal grandparents, John and Gretchen Cook of Charlton.

Brian was born and raised in

Charlton and graduated from Shepherd Hill Regional High School. He was a beloved son, brother and father. He loved to listen to music, attending shows and festivals with his friends.

He loved being a dad, and also loved to go fishing and camping with friends. Overall, the love he had for his dog Bella.

He was a Union member of Local#33 roofer union and worked for Greenwood Industries.

Calling Hours were Saturday, December 16, 2017 from 5-8 pm at the ROBERT J. MILLER-CHARLTON FUNERAL HOME, 175 Old Worcester Rd., Charlton.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to: Boston Children's Hospital, 300 Longwood Ave., Boston, MA. 02115.

To leave a condolence or share a memory of Brian, please visit his on line guest book : RJMillerfunerals.net

Charles D. Schliker, Sr., 89

LEICESTER-Charles D. Schliker, Sr., 89, of Mayflower Road died Saturday, Dec. 16 in St. Vincent Hospital after an illness.

He leaves his wife of 49 years, Judith A. (Champoux) Schliker, a son Charles D. Schliker, Jr. and his wife Lisa of Hudson, a daughter Teresa M. Schliker of Worcester, a sister Helen Schliker of Leicester and several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by three sisters; Anna Beahn, Mary McCluskey and Frances Conley and one brother; Richard Schliker.

Mr. Schliker was born in Worcester, son of Clark and Rose (Casale) Schliker. He was a warehouse manager at Reed Plastics in Holden for many years before he retired. After retirement he volunteered at the Worcester County


Food Bank. He was a former member of the Leicester Knights of Columbus Council 4528. He enjoyed watching car races, gardening and doing handy work around his house. In the 1950's and 1960's he raced oval track cars at several area race tracks. He owned his own plane and enjoyed flying around New England.

A funeral service was held on Wednesday, Dec. 20 at 11:00 AM in MORIN FUNERAL HOME, 1131 Main Street, Leicester. Burial will be private at the convenience of the family. In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to Worcester County Food Bank, 474 Boston Turnpike, Shrewsbury, MA 01545.

www.morinfuneralhomes.com

Christmas in Heaven Memoriams


IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE
AT CHRISTMAS



Paul E. McCarthy
"Our Special Gem"
3/30/60-7/26/12


*Snowflakes from heaven...
the beautiful memories of the life
we shared!
Love Debby, and family*

Edward Fortin
1/9/66 - 11/22/15




Missing you at
Christmas and
your birthday,
January 9,
and always.

*Love - Mom, Mike, Deb, Anita,
Jay, Laura, and friends*



In Loving Remembrance at Christmas


Gerald "Gerry" W. Choiniere
2/12/65 - 11/21/01



*You are always only
a thought away.*

*Love,
Mom & Joe*

Christmas Memorial




**Patricia
Simakauskas**
June 2, 1950
August 10, 2014

Merry Christmas Patti!
We love and miss you.
Life just isn't the same without you.
Your tree is up and
lighting up our Christmas.

Love, the Sima family


*In Loving
Remembrance at Christmas*

Harry E. Hodgerney Sr.
2/2/37 ~ 10/28/09



We miss you Dad/Papa!
Christmas isn't the same.

*Love,
Sally, Leslie, Keith, Michael,
Andrew, Christopher, Harry, Jr.,
Bill, Anthony and Leighton*



Maureen Miner
3/29/67 ~ 4/8/17

Missing you today and every day.
Merry Christmas Mom!

*Love,
Abby, Nick, and Katie.*




In Loving Memory
Mary A. Ciuffredo
5/19/26 ~ 8/19/17



Blessed God gave us you
We love you,
Sue, Jack, and family

*In Loving Remembrance
at Christmas*



Mark Lusignan
3/13/1984-7/5/2010

*Missing you this Christmas and always
Uncle Mark*

Love, Maci & Dylan

In Loving Remembrance at Christmas

Zachary R. Jubinville
7/18/95 - 7/18/95

Missing you forever in our hearts
this Christmas Season

*Love,
Mom (Chris), Dad (Brian),
Allison, Joe and Megan*

*In Loving Remembrance
at Christmas*



John (Jack) Fagnoli Jr.
4/28/1952-5/9/2016

Missing you this Christmas
and always Papa

*Love,
Isabella and Amelia*

IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE AT CHRISTMAS ~ 3RD ANNIVERSARY




Paul M. Milluzzo
5/14/69 - 12/22/14

From now until forever,
a piece of my heart lives in heaven.
You were my person.

Love always, Sheena (Kate)

*In Loving Remembrance
at Christmas*





**EDWARD
GEORGE
KEEFE**
9/17/1956 10/4/2016

*Our broken hearts ache with grief
Your time on earth way to brief
Memories sustain us in our collective grief
We wish time a more gentle thief
Moving forward through our grief
Your ever present spirit provides much relief
Sensing your sincere and gentle heart, we
are guided through our grief
Gratitude for the life and love we shared and
your Belief!
- Ann*

Forever in our hearts,
Ann, Ed C., Katherine, Lucy,
Family & Friends

IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE
AT CHRISTMAS
~ 20TH ANNIVERSARY ~





Patrick Briggs
12/22/97

Tillie Murphy
1/10/98

Missing you
this Christmas & always
- Patricia

In Loving Remembrance at Christmas



Mary R. Wilson
10/21/1945
2/21/2017

A Blessed Christmas,
Missing you Always.
Love, your family

In Loving Remembrance at Christmas
In God's Loving Care



Shawn A. O'Day "Odie"
April 15, 1992- April 15, 2000

*A beautiful life that came to
an end, he died as he lived,
everyone's friend. In our hearts
a memory will be kept, of one
we loved, and will never forget.*

Lovingly remembered and sadly missed
by family and friends




My First Christmas in Heaven

I see the countless Christmas trees around the world below,
With tiny lights like Heaven's stars reflecting the snow.
The sight is so spectacular- please wipe away the tear,
For I'm spending Christmas with Jesus this year.
I hear the many Christmas songs that people hold so dear,
But the sound of music can't compare with the Christmas choir up here.
I have no words to tell you the joys their voices bring,
For it's beyond description to hear the angels sing.
I know how much you miss me, I see the pain inside your heart,
But I am not so far away, we really aren't apart.
So be happy for me dear ones you know I hold you dear,
And be glad I'm spending Christmas with Jesus Christ this year.
I sent you each a special gift for my heavenly home above,
I sent you each a memory of my undying love.
After all love is a gift more precious than pure gold,
It was always most important in the stories Jesus told.
Please love and keep each other
as my Father said to do,
For I can't count the blessing of love
he has for each of you.
So have a Merry Christmas
and wipe away that tear,
Remember I am spending Christmas
with Jesus Christ this year.

Author unknown.

Merry Christmas



Send all obituary notices to
Stonebridge Press, PO Box 90,
Southbridge, MA 01550, or by e-mail
to jean@stonebridgepress.news



OBITUARIES

James E. O'Neil, 85



CHERRY VALLEY: James E. O'Neil, 85, of Main St., in the Cherry Valley section of Leicester, died with his family at his side, Wednesday, Dec. 13 in UMASS Memorial Medical Center in Worcester, after a long illness.



His wife of 64 years, Dorothy M. (Gaffney) O'Neil, died in 2015. He leaves his daughters Kathleen A. Corley and her husband Steven of Rochdale, and Susan M. Lauder and her husband Thomas of Leicester, two sisters Margaret Partenheimer and Elizabeth Larson both of Leicester, three grandchildren Amy Schrader and her husband Marc of Leicester, Marc Corley of Smithfield, RI, and Katherine Lauder of Simsbury, CT, great granddaughters Madelyn & Lilly Schrader. He also leaves his brother-in-law Robert Gaffney and his wife Ruth of Auburn, along with several nieces and nephews. He is predeceased by a grandson Andrew Lauder in 2015, brothers Rev. Leo O'Neil, Daniel O'Neil and a sister Mary O'Neil.

Jim was a longtime truck driver for several area trucking companies and most recently Red Star Express, retiring in 1992.

Born in Worcester, the son of Leo 'Cap' and Margaret (Mulvey) O'Neil, he attended Leicester High School and then served his country with the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War. He was an active and loyal member of

the Cherry Valley American Legion Post 443, Teamsters Union Local 170, and St. Joseph/St. Pius X Parish.

He taught his family life long lessons about patriotism, religion, honesty and his true specialty, how to drive safely. He was the family repair man and could fix most anything around the house. Jim spent his summers at the Cape with family, keeping everyone on their toes with his dry wit. He even finished the Falmouth Road Race one year. Each winter Jim, his beloved wife, Dottie and often his grandchildren would drive to Florida to spend his time sight-seeing and photographing his family. He also traveled by train across the country on two occasions to see the sights out west. He enjoyed seeing his friends at church and getting together with his Teamster buddies for breakfasts. (He loved to joke about working under Jimmy Hoffa.) His greatest joy was spending time with his family, especially his great grandchildren, Maddie and Lily.

Jim's funeral will be held on Saturday, Dec. 16, from the MORIN FUNERAL HOME, 1131 Main St., Leicester with a Mass at 11 a.m. in St. Pius X Church, 1153 Main St., Leicester. Burial with Military Honors will follow in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Leicester. Calling hours are Friday, Dec. 15th. from 5 to 7 p.m. in the funeral home. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Andrew Lauder Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o Country Bank, 1084 Main St., Leicester, MA 01524. www.morinfuneralhomes.com



Raymond E. Freniere, Sr., 93

OXFORD—Raymond E. Freniere, Sr., 93, died Wednesday, December 13, 2017, at Lanessa Extended Care in Webster. He is survived by his wife of 73 years, Ida F. (Davis) Freniere; three children, Cheryl A. Dagnese and her husband Richard of Worcester, William M. Freniere of Webster, and Raymond J. Freniere of Dudley; 7 grandchildren, 4 great-grandchildren, and several nephews and nieces. He was predeceased by a brother, Norman Freniere; and a sister, Rita Senecal. He was born in Spencer, son of the late Ellsworth and Marie Rose (Racine) Freniere, and lived in Auburn before moving to Oxford in 1965.

Mr. Freniere was a roofer at B.H. cutler Roofing Company in Worcester for 45 years, retiring in 1982. He was a member of Singletary Rod and Gun Club in Oxford and the Amateur Trap Shooting Association. He was an avid hunter, fisherman, and outdoorsman.

A private graveside service will be held at Worcester County Memorial Park in Paxton. There are no calling hours. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, 309 Waverly Oaks Rd., Waltham, MA 02452. Paradis-Givner Funeral Home in Oxford is directing the arrangements. paradisfuneralhome.com

Robert R. Dumais, Sr., 91



Robert R. Dumais, Sr., 91, passed away Friday, December 8, 2017.

He was predeceased by his wife, Veronica (Jolly) in 1998.

He is survived by daughter Diane Johnson and her

husband Clint of Spencer, son Robert R. Dumais, Jr. and wife Heather of Charlton; grandsons Travis Johnson and wife Kate of North Brookfield, Myles Johnson and finacee' Katina of Worcester; great grandchildren Haley, Ryan and Cody; and his sister Lorraine Monette of Spencer.

There are no calling hours, burial service will be private.

Timothy M. Griffith, 55



SOUTHBRIDGE—: Timothy M. Griffith, 55, of Charlton St., passed away on Sunday, Aug. 13th, in his home after a sudden illness.

He leaves his two brothers, Don P. Griffith of Southbridge and Peter Griffith of Southbridge; three sisters, Joyce Smith of Southbridge, Charlene Albettski of Charlton and Christine Hebert of Southbridge; his close friend, Jeanie Johnson and her daughter Amanda of Southbridge; his business partner, Scott Benoit; and many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by two brothers, Brian J. Griffith and Daniel A. Griffith, and a sister, Nancy Griffith. Tim was born in Southbridge the son of the late Coy R. and Jacqueline C. (Richer) Griffith. He was a graduate of

Southbridge High School and attended UMass Amherst.

Tim was a co-owner and operator of the Colonial Copy Shop in Southbridge. He previously worked for G & F Industries in Sturbridge and Flexcon in Spencer. He was an avid reader. He also enjoyed music, he played the guitar and sang. Tim was his Mother's caregiver for several years before her passing. He had many friends and will remembered for his great sense of humor.

A graveside service for Tim will be held on Thursday, Dec. 28th at 1:00pm in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Southbridge.

The Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge is directing the arrangements.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, 18251 Quantico Gateway Drive, Triangle, VA 22172.

www.morrillfuneralhome.com

David Victor Gervais, 58



SPENCER: David Victor Gervais, 58, of Spencer, formerly of Uxbridge, passed away peacefully in his home surrounded by family after an illness, Saturday, Dec. 9.

He leaves his wife of 36 years; Susan R (Beando) Gervais, daughters; Jessica R (Gervais) Leonard and Ashley M Gervais, grandchildren; Leah, Kolton and Jaxon Leonard, dogs; Maggi and Baxter, and many beloved friends and family.

Son of Victor E and Beatrice (Beaucage) Gervais, nephew of Bella Baker, David was born in Milford and graduated from Uxbridge High School in 1977. He attended Framingham State and interned at MA State House. He made an impact on many lives, dedicating his own to helping people. He was the youngest elected official; to Uxbridge Board of Health at 18. He served Uxbridge Fire Department and was an EMT. In 1984, he received

the John O. Tate Community Service Award for saving a woman's life. He was a Special State Police Officer at Saint Vincent Hospital for 34 years. He was an adored Meals on Wheels site manager at Howe Village in Spencer and a case worker for Tri-Valley Elder Services for many years. He was a coach for his daughters' sports teams. He belonged to Knights of Columbus, Council 118.

He enjoyed spending time with his beloved grandchildren, family and friends, boating, fishing, antiques and camp fires.

The funeral will be held Thursday, Dec. 21 from J. HENRI MORIN & SON FUNERAL HOME, 23 Maple Terr., Spencer with a Mass at 10:00 AM in Our Lady of the Rosary Church, 7 Church Street, Spencer. Burial will follow in St. Mary's Cemetery, Uxbridge. Calling hours are Wednesday from 5:00-7:00 PM.

In lieu of flowers, donations in David's memory may be made to Tri Valley Inc., c/o The Nutrition Program, 10 Mill St., Dudley, MA,01571 www.trivalleyinc.org/donation, or Spencer Rescue Squad, P.O. Box 147, Spencer, MA 01562.

www.morinfuneralhomes.com

Steven M. St.Jean, 56



OAKHAM-Steven M. St.Jean, 56, passed away the morning of Tuesday December 12, 2017 after a heroic battle with Multiple Systems Atrophy (MSA). He will be remembered for the love he had for his

family, his witty sense of humor, and his passion for the New England sports teams.

For the past 9 years, Steven took pride in his work as owner of St.Jean's Country Package Store. During that time, he became well known and loved by the North Brookfield community. He leaves and will be greatly missed by his wife of 27 years, Elizabeth St.Jean, son Benjamin St.Jean and daughter

Sydney St.Jean, all of Oakham; father Gerard St.Jean of California; brothers Mark St.Jean of West Falmouth, Christopher St.Jean of North Carolina and Larry St.Jean of Spencer; sisters Lisa Brown of North Carolina and Wendy Bryner of Colorado; and family and friends. Steven was predeceased by his beloved mother, Betty-Jane St.Jean-Lomas.

Family and friends are invited to pay their respects on Thursday December 21, 2017 from 3:00 – 5:00 pm in Pillsbury Funeral Home 44 Gilbert St., North Brookfield with a brief celebration of life immediately following. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to The MSA Coalition 9935-D Rea Road #212 Charlotte, NC 28277. For an online tribute please visit: Pillsburyfuneralhome.com

Gary W. Keyes,63



N O R T H B R O O K F I E L D- Gary W. Keyes,63, passed away peacefully surrounded by his children on December 11,2017 .

He leaves his three children, Tara (Keyes) Goodrich, Adam Keyes, and Aaron Keyes; stepson Michael Cloutier; sisters Gloria (Keyes) Vincovitch and Diane (Keyes) Layth; brothers William Keyes, Stanley Keyes and Charles Keyes; countless nieces , nephews, and a large extended family.

Gary was born in Worcester the son

of the late James and Anna (Derosier) Keyes the youngest of their 19 children. Gary brought charm, humor, and compassion to everyone he met. He was a champion of recovery, remaining loyal to the program and an inspiration to many.

The family wishes to thank all those who befriended Gary. He valued the friendships he had, and genuinely cared for those who were a part of his life.

Calling hours were held on Tuesday, December 19,2017 from 4-6PM in Pillsbury Funeral Home 163 Main St. Spencer. A prayer service followed at 6PM. For an online tribute please visit: Pillsburyfuneralhome.com



To place an In-Memoriam, Card of Thanks, Birthday or Anniversary Greeting, in the Spencer New Leader,

the deadline is Friday noon for the following week.

Ad prices are \$15 for a 2x3 (actual size 2.4" x 3") or \$25 for a 3x4 (3.7" X 4") or 4x3 (5" x 3"). You can add a photo at no additional cost.

To send by mail, please mail to
June Simakauskas, P. O. Box 90, 25 Elm St., Southbridge, MA 01550.

Personal checks, Visa, Master Card, Discover and AMEX are accepted.

For more information, please call June at 508-909-4062 or email jsima@stonebridgepress.news and she'll be happy to help!





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MERRY CHRISTMAS & A HAPPY NEW YEAR



SUTTON - 30 Tournament Way! Pleasant Valley CC! Beautiful 3,100' 8 Rm Townhouse w/All the Expected Amenities for Your Enjoyment! Pleasant Custom Granite Kit! Frplc Liv Rm w/18' Ceilings! Formal Dining! 1st Flr Master Suite! Library! 2 4 Bdrms! 2.5 Baths! C/Air! 2 Car & Golf Cart Garages! "Fore" **\$549,900.00**



GRAFTON - 23 Maplewood Dr! Unique 5 Rm Brick Ranch! 3 Bdrms! Corner Lot! Enjoy the Convenience of One Floor! Easy Access Living! Kit w/Breakfast Bar! Fireplace! Living! Din Area! Master Bdrm w/Full Bath! 2 Baths! Total! Florida Rm! Private Back Yard! Attached 2 Car Garage! **\$289,900.00**



LEICESTER - 2 Logan St! Beautifully Updated 6 Rm Split Entry Set on Nicely Landscaped 1/2 Acre! Stainless Appliance Kit w/ Granite Tile Counter Opening to Dining Area & Liv Rm! Fam Rm plus 2 Bdrms or 3 Bdrms! Full Tile Bath! Sunroom w/Wall AC! Hrdwd Flrs Throughout! **\$239,900.00**



CHARLTON - 2 Ponnakin Hill Rd! Nice Updated 7 Rm Split! .92 Acre Corner Lot! SS Appliance Kit w/Center Isl, Cathedral & Skylight! Din Rm w/Slider 12x16 Deck! Cathedral Liv Rm w/Brick Frplc & Pellet Stove! 3 Bdrms! 2 Full Baths, Whirlpool Tub! Frplcd Fam Rm! Garage! **\$289,900.00**



EAST BROOKFIELD - 854 Podunk Rd! 6 Rm Cape! 1.5 Acres! 3 Bdrms, 2 Baths! New & Recent Features! Open Flr Plan! Granite Kit! SS Appliances! 1st Flr Hrdwds! Master Bath & Walk-in Closet! Natural Woodwork! Patio w/Hot Tub! Fruit Trees! Recent Roof & Windows! New Garage Door! **\$247,900.00**



WEBSTER - 8 Oakwood Dr! 12 Rm Hip Roof! 5,165' Custom Colonial on 1 Acre w/ In-ground Pool! Formal Din & Liv Rms! Frplc Fam Rm & Frplc Den! Master Suite! Master Bath! 6 Bdrms! 3 Full & 2 Half Baths! Hrdwds & Wall to Wall! C/Air! In-law Potential! 2 Car Garage! **\$499,900.00**



STURBRIDGE - 13 Main St! Work & Live Here! Completely Remodeled! "Turn Key" 1st Flr Beauty Salon w/Cair, Handicapped Bthrm, Kit, Gas Heat! 2nd Flr - Appliance Kit, Liv Rm, 2 Bdrms, 1.5 Baths, New Oil Furnace! 13 Parking Spaces! 2 Car Garage! Sep Utilities! Town Services! Rte 20, 84 & 90! **\$329,900.00**



AUBURN - 5 Pinedale Rd! Updated 7 Rm, 4 Bdrm Cape! Appliance Cabinet Kit! Formal Din Rm w/Hrdwds! NEW 20x22 Liv Rm out to 14x20 Deck! 1st Flr 2 Bdrms w/ Laminate Flrs! Recent Full Bath! 2nd Flr w/2 Bdrms w/Laminate Flrs! Laundry w/ Washer & Dryer! 2 Sheds! Town Services! **\$222,900.00**



DUDLEY - 36 Fish Rd! 7 Rm Raised Ranch w/Huge Split Level Cathedral Ceiling Family Rm w/Skylights! Open Cathedral Ceiling Kit! Din & Living Rms w/Skylights! 3 Bdrms! Master Bath! 3 Full Baths! Huge Steel 1 Beam Clear Span 2 Car Garage! 1.1 Acres! Oil Heat! Shed! **\$299,900.00**



DUDLEY - 20 Williams St! Nice 7 Rm Cape w/3 Car Garage! SS Appliance Kit w/Oak Cabinets & Corian Counters! Frplcd Liv Rm & Din Rm w/Hrdwds! Sunroom w/Hot Tub/Skylights! 3 Bdrms! Master Bath & Walk-in Closet! 2 Tile Bathrooms! Buderus Furnace! Town Services! Fenced Backyard! **\$244,900.00**



LEICESTER - 38 Boyd St! Spacious 3 Fam! 6 1/2 Bdrms! 3 1/2 Bdrms! Investment or Owner Occupied! Quiet Residential Neighborhood! Corner Lot! Open Din/Liv Rms. Eat-in Kits w/Pantries & Laundry! Sep Utilities! Rools, Gutters & Downspouts! 2017! Garage & Shed! Off St Parking! Well Maintained! **\$330,000.00**



DOUGLAS - 93 Monroe St! 10/97 ACRES! Updated 1887 8 Rm Farmhouse! Flexible Floor Plan! Loads of Charm! Frplc Liv Rm! Fam Rm w/ Cathedral! Slider to Deck! Din Rm! 4 Bdrms! 2 Baths! 2 Car Attached Garage! Additional 3 BAY, 50x85' GARAGE BUILDING! **\$594,500.00**



DUDLEY - 7 Kayla Lane! 8 Rm Colonial Set On 1.84 Acres! Appliance Granite Kit! Frplcd Dining Rm! Living Rm w/Hrdwds! Cathedral Ceiling Family Rm! 3 Bedrooms! Spacious Master, Master Bath! 2.5 Baths! 1st Floor Laundry! Farmers Porch! Deck! Attached 2 Car Garage! **\$359,900.00**



WEBSTER - 9-11 Lyndale Ave! 8 Rm Colonial w/Greenhouses! Eat-in Kitchen! Formal Dining Rm Open to Living Rm w/ Wood Floors! Full Bath! Den w/Built-ins! 4 Large Bedrooms on 2nd Floor! Nice Level Lot! Walking Distance to Center of Webster! Town Services! Rte. 395 Near! Walk to Schools & Churches! **\$114,900.00**



CHARLTON - 44 Oxford Rd! 8 Rm Colonial w/Farmers Porch! 1.38 Acres! New Quartz Kitchen! Formal Dining Rm w/Hrdwds! Frplcd Fam Rm w/Hrdwds! Spacious Liv Rm! 4 Bdrms! Master Bath! 2.5 Baths! Total! 16x30 Deck! 2 Car Garage! Shed! 2016 Roof! Many Updates! **\$344,900.00**



OXFORD - 74 Walnut St! 5 Rm Ranch! Central Location w/Good Size Level Yard! 2 Bdrms w/3rd Possible! Full Bath! Hrdwds Liv Rm & Bdrms! Cedar Closet! Basement w/2 Finished Rms! Vinyl Siding! Older Replacement Windows! Deck! AG Pool! Shed! Cosmetics Needed! **\$179,900.00**



WEBSTER - 42 Cushing Rd! 7 Rm Ranch! Cabinet Kit w/SS Appliances & Tile Flr! Dining Area w/Corner Hrdwd! Frplc Liv Rm w/Hrdwds! 3 Bdrms w/Hrdwds! Full Bath w/Tile Flr! Den w/New Carpet! New Electrical Service! Partially Finished Basement! Garage! Screened Porch! Shed! Town Services! **\$239,900.00**



WEBSTER - 141 Gore Rd! Rte 16! 1.68 Acres! Prime Exposure! Business Opportunities! Zoned Commercial! 165' Road Frontage! 183x22' 4 Car Garage! 123x20' Workshop! 7 Rm Colonial! 3 Bdrms w/Hrdwds! Din/Liv Rm w/Hrdwds! Sided! NEW FURNACE! Needs Roof, Updates to Electrical & Cosmetics! **\$109,000.00**



WEBSTER - 56 Chase Ave! Well Maintained 2 Fam! 6 1/4 Rms! 3 1/2 Bdrms! Appliances! Eat-in Kits! Formal Din Rm! Carpeted Liv Rm! Large Bdrms! Updated Full Baths! Skylight! Hrdwds! 6 Panel Rd! 22 Oil Heat! Furnaces 1 Yr Old! Newer Plumbing & Electric! Fenced Yard w/Patio! **\$219,900.00**



WEBSTER - 47 Harris St! Custom Built 6 Rm Ranch! .43 Acre Lot! Eat-in Kit w/ Oversized Pantry! Frplcd Liv Rm w/Bay Window! 3 Large Bdrms w/Wall to Wall Carpets & Large Closets! Den! Full Bath w/Linen Closet! Semi-Finished Lower Level! Full Bath! 10yr Young Roof! Newer Gas Furnace! **\$239,900.00**



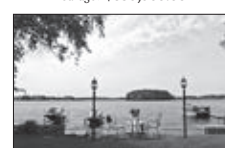
WEBSTER LAKE - 294 Kildeer Island! North Pond! 62' Waterfront! Panoramic Views! 8 Rm Colonial! Kit w/Double Oven! GLEAMING Hrdwd Flrs! 4 Bdrms! 2 Full Baths! 1420' Trex Deck! Newly Painted! Pond Landscaped! Fenced Yard! Plenty of Docks Included! **\$524,900.00**



WEBSTER LAKE - 10 Kenneth Ave! South Pond! Sandy Shoreline! 9 Rm Contemporary, 3 Bdrms! 3 Baths! Lake Views from Most Rooms! Hrdwd & Tile Flrs Throughout! Brumarhan Custom Granite Kit! Cherry Cabinets! 1st Flr Office! Master w/New Bath! Frplcd Fam Rm! Deck w/Custom Bar! 2 Car Garage! **\$639,900.00**



WEBSTER LAKE - 60 Bates Pond Rd! Middle Pond! Absolute Prime 52' Level Waterfront Lot w/Western Expo! Beautiful Sunsets! Panoramic Lake Views! 8 Rms, 3 Bdrm, 2 Baths, A/C'd, Ranch! Custom SS Appliance Granite Kit! Din Rm w/Hrdwds & Slider to Waterfront Deck w/Awning! Lake Facing Frplc Liv Rm w/ Cathedral, Skylight & Hrdwds! Comfortable Master Bdrm! Frplcd Lower Level Fam Rm! 2 Car Garage! **\$749,900.00**



WEBSTER LAKE - 82 Lakeside Ave! South Pond! Prime 157' Waterfront w/ Western Expo! Beautiful Sunsets! Panoramic Lake Views! 10+ Rm, 4 Bdrm, 4.5 Bath, A/C'd, 3,832' Custom Colonial! Lake Facing Quartz Kit w/Heated Flr! Din Bath w/Custom Wall Unit & Slider to Waterfront Deck w/Elect Awning! Frplc Liv Rm! Din Rm w/Tray Ceiling! Lake Facing Master w/Master Bath! Upstairs 3 Bdrms, 2 Lake Facing! Lower Level Fam Rm w/2nd Kit, Sauna & Full Bath! 3 Car Attached, 1 Car Detached! Security! Generator! Boat House! **\$1,195,900.00**



WEBSTER LAKE - Reid Smith Cove Waterfront! LOT! South Shore Rd! Build Your Dream Home or Summer Retreat! Set on Quiet Road, Surrounded by Woods! Sloping Lot Down to Level Waterfront! 7,200' Lot! 57' on the Water & Road! Town Water & Sewer Available! **\$229,900.00**



WEBSTER LAKE - 30 S. Point Rd! 91' Waterfront! 1/2 Acre! 7 Rm Colonial! Ideal 2nd Home! Panoramic Views of South Pond! NEW Kit w/Din! Frplc Din & Liv Rm w/Lake Facing Picture Window! 3 Bdrms! Walkout Lower Level w/Fam Rm w/Summer Kit! New Int. Paint! Recent Roof & Siding! **\$349,900.00**



WEBSTER LAKE - 55 Colonial Rd! South Pond! 105' Level Waterfront! Western Expo! Awesome Sunsets! 10 Rm Contemporary! Pano Lake Views Most Rm! Open Flr Plan! Frplcd Liv Rm! 4 2nd Flr Bdrms, 3 Lake Facing! Master Bath! 2.5 Remodeled Baths! 2 Car Garage! Deck! Add Lot Across St! Recent Roof! **\$599,900.00**



WEBSTER LAKE - 33 Beacon Rd! 6 Rms, 3 Bdrms, 2 Baths! 141' Waterfront! 12,458' Lot w/Plenty of Privacy! Kit, Master Bdrm, Master Bath, Roof & Windows New in 2013! Enjoy Sunsets from Wrap-around Porch! Beautiful Lake Views! Frplc Liv Rm! SS Appliances C/Air! 2 Car Garage! **\$519,900.00**



WEBSTER LAKE - 334 Kildeer Island! Middle Pond! South Facing! Well Maintained 7 Rm Colonial! Appliance Oak Kit! Din Rm w/Hrdwds! Cathedral Ceiling Liv Rm w/Lake Views! Cathedral Ceiling 3 Season Sunrm Overlooking Lake! Lake Facing Master Suite, Master Bath! 3 Bdrms! 2 Baths! Sandy Beach! **\$469,900.00**



WEBSTER LAKE - 60 Lakeside Ave! 100' Waterfront! Huge Views of South Pond! Western Exposure = Fantastic Sunsets! In Time for Summer! 5 Rooms of Rustic Charm! Real Log Summer Cottage! 10,924' Lot Allows for Room to Expand! Remodel It! Tear it Down! Build New! **\$359,900.00**



WEBSTER LAKE - 48 Laurelwood Dr! Reid Smith Cove! One of the Lake's Best Lots! Beautiful 10 Rm, 3,686' Contemp! 104' Waterfront, 228' Rd Frontage, 33,628 Sq. Ft. or .77 Acres! The Best on Market! Gradual Sloped Lawn to Beach/Shore! Private Rd w/Woods Across Street! Location, Slope to Water, View & Exposure, Things You Can't Change, After that it's One's Imagination! Front, Back, & Side Yards, Space to Roam, Entertain, Park & Expand! Main Level, White & Black Granite Kit, Center Isl w/Gas Range & Sink, Wall Ovens! Din Area! Lake Facing Din Rm! Frplcd Liv Rm w/Cathedral Open to Sun Rm w/Water View! Lake Facing Office/Possible 4th Bdrm! Half Bath! Upstairs, 3 Bdrms, 2 Bathrms! Amazing Lake Facing Master, Bath w/Whirlpool, Steam Shower, Dble Vanity, Cathedral w/Skylight & Laundry! Walk-out Lower Level w/ Frplcd Fam Rm, Summer Kit & 3rd Full Bath, 3.5 Total! C/Air! Gas Heat! 2 Car Garage & More! **\$1,100,000.00**



WEBSTER LAKE - 18 Bates Crossing! South Pond! Beautiful Sunrises! Huge Eastern Exposure! 8 Rm 3,100' Custom Contemporary! 2.43 Acres! Substantial Privacy! Home Features Endless Possibilities! Open Flr Plan w/Magnificent Views from Every Rm! 3 Bdrms, 3 Baths, Cathedral Ceilings w/Skylights! European Kit w/Center Isl! Modern Frplc Liv Rm w/Glass Sliders Open to Waterfront Balcony! Master Bdrm w/en-suite Bath, Separate Shower, Jacuzzi Tub, Walk-in Closet & Attached Laundry! Lower Level Bdrms Share Private Bath! C/Air! Attached Garage w/Work Space! Detached 2 Car Heated Garage w/Workshop! Greenhouse! Panoramic Lake & Estuary Views! **\$950,000.00**



WEBSTER LAKE - 901 Treasure Isl! Prime Beachfront! Townhouse! 6Rms! 1,874' Open Floor Plan! Appliance Granite Kit w/Hrdwds! Din & Liv Rms w/Hrdwds! 2 Bdrms! Master Bath! 2.5 Baths! Frplcd Fam Rm w/Tile Flr! Recent Cair, Gas Heat & Windows! Trex Deck! Garage! BOAT SLIP! Heated Pool! **\$424,900.00**



WEBSTER LAKE - 334 Kildeer Island! Middle Pond! South Facing! Well Maintained 7 Rm Colonial! Appliance Oak Kit! Din Rm w/Hrdwds! Cathedral Ceiling Liv Rm w/Lake Views! Cathedral Ceiling 3 Season Sunrm Overlooking Lake! Lake Facing Master Suite, Master Bath! 3 Bdrms! 2 Baths! Sandy Beach! **\$469,900.00**



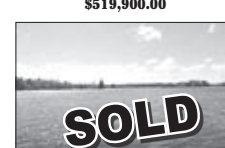
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Open House Directory

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(B) Business	(U) Duplex	(S) Single Family	(D) Adult Community
(P) Land	(L) Mobile Home	(A) Apartment	(W) Waterfront

ADDRESS STYLE TIME PRICE REALTOR/SELLER/PHONE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23

DUDLEY
2 Laurel Ln S 10-Noon \$249,900 ReMax Advantage 1/ JoAnn Szymczak 774-203-5066

Tobin Farm S Noon-1 New Price ReMax Advantage 1/ JoAnn Szymczak 774-203-5066

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Cardinal Heights
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and rough plumbed for a second
bath. Easy highway access, to Rtes
395, 20 Mass Pike and 146

2 Laurel Ln ~ \$249,900

DUDLEY

Tobin Farm Estates

2.5 Acre Lot \$70,000
3.5 Acre Lot \$105,000
Must Act Quickly
Be home for next
Christmas

NEW PRICE

Webster: 3 bedrooms each unit,
Siding, roof, windows are 10
years old, 1 car garage
50 Lake St ~ \$174,900

Webster: Duplex, 6 rooms and 2
baths each side, town services, 2
car garage

41 Thompson Rd- \$239,900

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REAL ESTATE



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HERE & THERE → Local Events, Arts, and Entertainment Listings

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23

9:00 p.m.

PERSONS OF INTEREST

Acoustic cover rock band

308 LAKESIDE
308 East Main St.
East Brookfield, MA
774-449-8333

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY

Buffet dinner, D.J. and
continental breakfast

7:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.

\$30 per person
For reservations call
508-832-2769
AMERICAN
LEGION
TUTTLE POST #279
88 Bancroft St., Auburn, MA

RING IN THE NEW YEAR
WITH DJ SEAN MURRAY
Dinner and dancing
308 LAKESIDE

308 East Main St.
East Brookfield, MA
774-449-8333

ONGOING

ROADHOUSE BLUES JAM
Every Sunday, 3:00 - 7:00 p.m.
CADY'S TAVERN
2168 Putnam Pike, Chepachet, RI
401-568-4102



TRIVIA SATURDAY NIGHTS
7:00 p.m. register
7:30 p.m. start up
HILLCREST COUNTRY CLUB
325 Pleasant St., Leicester, MA
508-892-9822

WISE GUYS TEAM TRIVIA
Every Tuesday, 8:00 - 10:00 p.m.
CADY'S TAVERN
2168 Putnam Pike (Rt. 44)
Chepachet, RI
401-568- 4102



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50 Elm St., Auburn, MA
508-832-6492

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First Friday of the month
Early Bird 6:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
1st table: 7:00 p.m.
Auburn Sportsman Club
50 Elm St., Auburn, MA
508-832-6496

RAFFLE

TRIVIA TUESDAYS
at 7:00 p.m.
Cash prizes
308 LAKESIDE
308 East main St.
East Brookfield, MA
774-449-8333

???

TRIVIAL THURSDAY
No cost to play
Cash prizes
Every Thursday at 7:00 p.m.
CHESTER P. TUTTLE POST
AMERICAN LEGION
88 Bancroft St.
Auburn, MA
508-832-2701



Happy Holidays



GOT A HOUSE FOR SALE?

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home in our real
estate section.*

December 22

(Suggested topics for January)

The Next Write Stuff
Will Publish On January 26.

Deadline For Submissions Is
Friday, January 19.

Thank you to Lamoureux Ford of East Brookfield for continuing to be a sponsor of The Write Stuff... it's "Where Friends Send Their Friends!" Also thank you to this month's authors.

We hope that you will join us again in January, and encourage others to write as well. This is a great class project, senior center project, or for anyone who enjoys writing and sharing their thoughts.

For more information or to submit for next month,
email jsima@stonebridgepress.news or call 508.909.4062



The Write Stuff

Essays, Short Stories, Memories,
Poems and more!

Open to ALL ages

1. January is National Hobby Month. What's your favorite hobby and how did you get interested?
2. Share your memories about the Sugden Block in Spencer, past business, classes, etc.?
3. January is National Mentoring Month. Who has mentored you and how has it impacted your life?
4. Winter fun poems.
5. Topic of your choice



Dear santa,
BY SHER MORSE, SPENCER, MA

Dear santa, our dad and our son went to heaven this year, why they were taken isn't exactly clear.

We loved them immensely- didn't want to let go, our hearts are broken and filled with woe.

Dear santa, can you hear what we very said ??? Our Christmas spirit is just about dead.

We really having trouble going on day to day, especially when we really feeling this way.

Dear santa, can you restore our hope, can you heal our pain and help us cope?

All we want for Christmas this year, is to see one more time the ones we hold so dear.

Dear santa, we'll end our letter by saying, that all we can do now, is continue praying.

~~~~~  
*The Escort*

BY JEAN E. O'NEILL, BROOKFIELD, MA

Jennifer and I could hardly believe what a perfect winter day it was. Sunny, not too cold and the snow was just right for sliding.

"Let's try the new sled out today," I said. Jen became very excited. A just right slope came to mind. Good for a six year old and even better for a scare de cat mom.

We bundled up and headed out. I pulled Jen on her brand new flexible flyer for at least two miles. The first mile was a quiet and lonely country road of woods. I ran a lot in that section.

At last we arrived at the old Roger Langley School of Barre Plains. A lot of children were there. We joined in on the fun and had a wonderful time. After a couple hours, we got cold and tired. The sky had darkened and I started worrying about the wooded area of road we had to walk. Jen was very good about my decision. I told her to sit on the sled and hold on tight. "We will be home in no time at all, drinking hot chocolate," I uttered.

Out of no-where a Great Dane dog appeared. He walked beside us like he was our dog. I said, "Go home boy, you'll get lost. Go ahead boy. Go home."

The dog paid no attention. He kept up our pace with his eyes looking straight ahead. Jen said at one

point, "Mommy, can we keep him." "No darling," I replied.

We felt so proud, well protected and enjoyed every step. The dog pranced along and was so sure of coming with us. I could tell that his mind was made up to protect us. He was highly intelligent and well taken care of. I was wishing that everybody I ever knew could have seen us that day.

When we approached the wooded section of the road, we had nothing to worry about. The sky was getting even darker, but we felt like we were in the Easter Parade. I felt so spiritual and secure. "Maybe it was an angel," I thought.

All of a sudden, as we were almost to the town dump road, the dog heard something. His ears flew forward. His head popped up and he shuffled a few steps ahead. He was spaced out and turned into something. He continued to walk a few steps ahead of us, but still beside us. He seemed to be worried about some kind of danger.

We then heard whistling coming from the dump road. Finally we saw a man walking around the curve. The closer the man got, the more wired up the dog became. Jen and I were overcome with suspense.

The man crossed to the other side of the street we were on and was about to be passing us, going the other way. He yelled in desperation, "Hold your dog." I was so sorry to yell back, "It's not my dog." The man was now right across the street and not taking his eyes off the dog for a minute and was visibly shaken. Our escort handled the situation perfectly. With much composure, he simply kept right on walking with us and watched the man go by.

Another few minutes and we were home. The dog followed us right up on to our porch. Jen and I ran in the house and called loudly to anyone home, "Come see the Great Dane that followed us home, Quick," we yelled. When we all ran to the door and windows to look, our great, Great Dane was gone. I ran outside and looked up and down the main road and then ran to the corner to check down the street we just came from. The dog was nowhere in sight. We never forgot this story I am telling you. Since then, every time the name Great Dame comes up, I tell my story.

*The following LETTERS TO SANTA were written by Anne Mulrain's first grade students at Wire Village School in Spencer.*

Dear Santa,  
On September 8, I moved to Spencer. How can you eat that many cookies and drink all that milk? I helped wash dishes. I would like a double giant Hatchimal, a kitten, and a bunch of surprises. Thanks!

Love, Abigail A.

Dear Santa,  
This year I am 7. How many elves to you have? Am I on your naughty or nice list? How many reindeer do you have? For Christmas I would like a new elf. I was nice when I helped my mom put the tree in the car. Thank you!

Love, Stella

Dear Santa,  
I am six and I am in the first grade. I've been good for the past few days. Can I ask you some questions? How many elves do you have? How do you deliver all the presents in one night? Can you please bring me a baby doll. Christmas is so much fun!

Love, Abigail S.

Dear Santa,  
I got a new dog this year. His name is Sisco. How do you fit all the presents in your sleigh? How come your sleigh doesn't slide down the roof? I would like a Nerf gun for Christmas!

Love, Brody

Dear Santa,  
I try my best in school. I help my mom at home. I love snow, do you? For Christmas I would like a small camo locker. How old can an elf get? Merry Christmas! Love, Anthony

Dear Santa,  
I lost three teeth. I helped my dad make the gingerbread house. I would love a new game for my Playstation. How many elves do you have?

Love, Michael

Dear Santa,  
I love school because my friends are with me and I love to learn. I miss old friends in my old school. Am I on your naughty or nice list? Miss Mulrain said I must be at the top of your nice list. Can I please have some Shopkins and stuffed animals?

Love, Olivia

Dear Santa,  
I have a loose tooth! I am in first grade. I like playing trick word. Could you please bring me a Nintendo Switch or a four wheeler? How many elves do you have? How do you eat so many cookies in one night? Merry Christmas!

Love, Jordan

Dear Santa,  
I am 7 years old. I am enjoying math in first grade. I would love to get a Nerf gun or Nintendo Odyssey for Christmas. You are the nicest guy. I will leave you some cookies. I have been good in school. How long does it take to grow your beard? I love you so much!

Love, Divino

Dear Santa,  
I have a loose tooth! I have been nice this year! I have washed dishes. How do you get up the chimney after leaving presents? I would like X-Box for Christmas. I love Christmas.

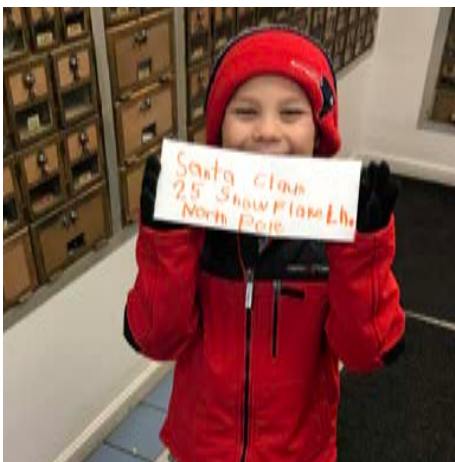
Love, McKinnon

Dear Santa,  
I am 6. I'm in first grade and I like math. How do you get all the presents? Is it ever hot in the North Pole? How does Rudolph's nose glow? Could you please bring me a Roblox. Thanks!

Love, Beau

Dear Santa,  
I have been good to my dog. I feed him every night. I want to know how you fit all the toys in your sleigh. I would love the Barbie dream house. I will leave cocoa and carrots on Christmas Eve!

Love, Sara



Dear Santa,  
I went to Disney World this summer. I loved the scary rides and Splash Mountain. I was nice when I shared with Jack. For Christmas I would like a PS4. How many reindeer are at the North Pole?

Love, Fiona

Dear Santa,  
Did you know I can climb trees? I was nice this year. I helped my friend pick up his crayons and his pencils. How do you deliver all the presents to all the homes in one night? I would like a PJ Masks Headquarters, please.

Love, Lucas

Dear Santa,  
I am 6. I had fun at camp this summer. I am learning how to add 3 numbers in Math. Am I on your naughty or nice list? I was nice when I helped a boy who fell at school. I would like a skateboard for Christmas. How do you deliver all the presents in one night?

Love, Riley

Dear Santa,  
I turned six. I lost three teeth. I would like Amelia Bedelia books 1-10 and Shopkins, please. How old can your elf get? How old are you? I can't wait to see what you bring on Christmas!

Love, Luciana

Dear Santa,  
I went to the Christmas parade and saw you on the float. I helped clean up at my house. Can I have a toy robot and bouncy ball? How many reindeer do you have?

Love, Lillian

Dear Santa,  
I lost a tooth. It hurt! I listen to my teacher. I would like lip gloss, a kite and a fingerling for Christmas. How many reindeer do you have? It is almost my birthday! Merry Christmas!

Love, Kyleigh

Dear Santa,  
I lost five teeth! I am six now. What kind of books to you like? I would like Shopkins for Christmas. I helped my mom and dad clean the house. I will leave you some chocolate chip cookies!

Love, Brooke

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*The following authors are  
Students of Melissa Boratyn  
Sixth Grade English Language  
Arts, Leicester Middle School*

The Arctic freeze makes the bee’s  
sneeze,  
Snowy Stallions shriek and shiv-  
er,  
Flakes of snow Heaven falling  
small,  
Grass no more just snow for a  
few more  
Until it snows away, quiet nights,  
louder days when the kids are out  
playing...  
The joy on the 25th makes winter  
alive,  
Don’t take it for granted just live  
it to the Fullest.  
Just some snowy glaze across the  
way is the start and end of winter.  
*By William Foy*  
~ ~ ~ ~

When the wind is howling at dusk  
like a Wolf in the Night Sky,  
With freezing cold air that keeps  
you up all night,  
When I wake up in the morning, I  
race down the stairs,  
To grab the remote and watch  
some TV,  
I ask my Mom if we have school  
today,  
She said probably just a slight  
delay,  
But she got a phone call stating,  
“No school today”,  
“Oh never mind, go on and have  
some fun today”,  
I said Ok, and I race up the stairs  
and you tell your brother  
What you want to do today,  
The snow is twirling and whirl-  
ing so fast that it makes it  
Look so so very vast!  
We grab our sleds and have a  
blast,  
When we run inside to get  
warmed up,  
We grab hot Chocolate and have  
some fun!

*By Leianna Lupien*  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
As the delicate snowflakes fall  
We catch them in our mouth,  
All the roads are frozen and icy  
And the wind is frigid,  
As we make snow angels,  
And ice skate with all our friends  
Oh boy do I love  
WINTER!!!!!!!

*By Maeve Nelson*  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**WAR**  
After the draft,  
Jack felt imprisoned by the acts of  
war.  
And he thought to himself,  
what are we fighting for.

Caught by the crossfire,  
but he couldn’t get out.  
All around him,  
he hears the soldiers shout

Trying to keep calm,  
to hold his rifle steady.  
Wishing he was home,  
Knowing he wasn’t ready.

Captured by the enemy,  
fright is filling inside.  
Locked in a cage,  
darkness is all he can find.

He hears gunshots all around him,  
wishing he could see.  
His friends find him,  
now he is finally free.

Even after he is free,  
He is still trapped in his mind.  
Never really knowing,  
what will he find.

*By Eric Ortiz*  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
**Winter Wonderland**  
*BY MEGHAN LE*

Over the night it rains,  
As you sleep it’s very cold,  
Hoping for snow,  
Or something even better,  
When you wake up you see a  
glow,  
Sharp like a crystal and very  
clear,  
Fearless of anything around,  
holding its ground,  
Could this mean winter is coming  
to town,  
After a few days they have fallen,  
But replaced with snow that  
hardened.  
Sitting around the fire it looks  
like a pile of leaves,  
crunching , crackling like thin  
ice.  
Throwing snowballs like a pitch-  
er throwing baseballs,  
Sledding,  
snow coming up like a surfer get-  
ting splashed in waves.  
What a lovely winter wonderland.  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**Whispering Winter**  
Let’s play in the chilling snow  
Winter to us is all we know  
BANG! A snowball hits you so  
quick  
It’s like the snow wants to  
start fight

The sound of Winter not quite at all  
I jump in the snow heap READY  
SET GO  
Winter to us is all we know  
  
Winter winds whispering to you  
Like a gossiping friend  
Why does Winter have to end

Whirling, Swirling, Wailing winds  
Blowing the warm weather away  
Cold and chilly weather is here to  
stay  
Shoveling the driveway Oh I hate  
this part

So let’s let Summer take a nap  
While Winter can frolic and play,  
making it snow  
Because Winter to us is all we know!  
*By Jayla O’Neal*  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**Imprisoned by yourself**  
*BY CHLOE BOUCHARD*

Do you ever have a dream  
that you hope you can pursue,  
but something gets in your way,  
and that something is you.  
You are your own enemy  
as you detain yourself,  
You take those wild dreams  
And with degradation, set them on  
a shelf.  
The fear of falling down  
will not help you get back up,  
you must simply go on,  
stand tall and bright like a butter-  
cup.  
So, when you have a plan,  
analyze, attempt, achieve  
it is a self-triumph to maintain a  
goal,  
all you have to do is believe.  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**WEATHER**  
*BY MICHAEL GERBER*

I walk through the snow,smooth as  
silk,  
All of the land is white, like milk,  
As I watch the snowflakes fall, crys-  
tallized and nice,  
the lake was frozen over with ice,  
Animals in hibernation, in the  
moon beam,  
Dear are sleeping, having such a  
nice dream,  
And then a Blizzard starts whip-  
ping the Snow,  
Now i’m lost in the forest “OH NO!”  
Well I guess that’s Winter, like the  
cold war of Weather,  
Snow as White as a Seagull feather

~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
**Winter Masterpiece**  
*BY ANDREW BOISVERT*

Snow covering leaves that piled  
Weather anything but mild  
The snowflakes act rowdy and wild  
Powdered snow over slippery tiles.

Trees left without leaves  
Holiday season filled with please  
Fun and games with much ease  
Friendly gestures, including tease.

Crunch, Clash the sled starts  
Racing down the street in carts  
Some ideas not so smart  
Pumpkin pie never tart.

Blankets needed to survive  
Houses crowded like a beehive  
Joyful fun makes you lose track of  
time  
Bears hibernating, oh my!

Birds flying by like a speeding car  
Going somewhere oh, so far  
Snow glistening on top of tar  
Snow slides down the hill, like a  
shooting star.

Cuddled up by the fire  
Listening to a Christmas choir  
Slipping cars, snow on tires  
Snowflakes pounding down like a  
fighter.

Somewhere in the woods,  
A crackling fire burns.  
You walk towards the fire and  
SNAP, you step on a twig.  
You throw a newspaper in  
And listen to it crinkle as it burns.  
Cough-cough-cough,  
The smoke comes your way.  
You get tired and leave,  
But put the fire out first.  
You pour water on it and listen to the  
Hisssssssssssssss.  
*By James Sweeney*

~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
**Confidence**  
  
Gone in the wind  
Never to be found again  
Ripped out from deep down inside  
you  
Detained from ever being happy  
A few words can take it away,  
But a long time to get it back  
Completely vacated,  
Nowhere to be found  
Where oh where does it go  
They imprison you with sadness  
And degrade with their hurtful  
words  
Do you forgive or forget?  
Maybe both  
Maybe neither  
You may never know  
*By: Allie Blair*  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**Snowflake**  
*BY MOLLY BAKER*

Diving down to the carpet of white  
Looking so intricate,  
Taking my first flight

Sleepily coming down,  
Soon to reach a pillow,  
Wondering if I’ll end up downtown

I don’t want to get lost,  
In the sea of whispering white  
Gazing down at the crystalized  
frost!

Now I’ll rest down to sleep  
In a Winter Wonderland  
As a whole looking like a fluffy  
sheep!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
**Nature**  
*BY MASON GRIFFITHS*

Swish goes the wind  
Rattle, Rattle the trees brush  
Splash the river flows  
Blup, Blup goes the fish  
Buzz the bees say  
Sbsp the animals walk in the woods  
Chop, Chop goes the axemen  
Chirp, Chirp screech’s the birds  
Ribbit, Ribbit croaks the frog  
Ssss goes the slithery snake  
Woof, Woof barks the dog  
Hoot, Hoot says the owl to end the  
day.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
**Dark**  
*BY JACOB ALTMAN*

I start my campaign  
In the light  
But when the moon rises I am  
detained  
Wolves howl at the moon and start  
a vicious fight  
To dark to see in a dark vale  
Too much degrade there’s not glee  
I feel imprisoned like a trai just ran  
off its rails  
Feels like the upside down  
Shadow monster appears  
Cold enough to make you frown  
Gimilgorgan almost as powerful as  
a grenade launcher  
It feels like someone is a stalker  
Got a chill up your spine  
Doesn’t feel divine  
Still the nights at its start  
This is why I hate the dark

~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
**Dreamy Kitten**  
*BY PEYTON KNOTT*

Dreamy kitten curled up in my lap.  
Letting your dreams fill the air.  
Purr, purr, purr as I pet your furry  
body head To tail.

LIttle kitten is awake, take a stretch.  
Yawnnnnnn, time to eat and fill your  
tummy Up full.  
Munch, munch, munch, crunchy,  
savory Kibble filling your tummy.

Little kitten is ready to play.  
Your heart has the desire to hunt.  
I roll the ball across the floor,  
Pounce, pounce, pounce.  
Diving at the ball with pride.

Streeeetch, oh little kitten, all done  
for the Day?  
Bumpety, bumpety, bump as we  
race Upstairs to my room.  
Hop on your blanket at the bottom  
of my Bed.

We tuck ourselves in click goes the  
light.  
Your purring motor soothes me to  
sleep  
And our dreams fill the air.  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**“Winter”**  
Blade like icicles quickly fall of the  
tree  
White snowflakes floating slowly  
to ground  
Icy branches instantly snapping  
next to me  
Frozen frost gradually covers the  
window

Hungry deer barely walking a top  
the hill  
Blankets of snow heavily layer the  
ground  
Silent wind wisp wildy in the air  
Chilly ice quickly covers the stars

Loft trees wave tiredly in the forest  
“This is why winter is the best”  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**Winter**  
*BY ZACHARY JACKSON*

As the snowflakes drift gently and  
happily  
The snow slowly slopes swaying to  
the ground  
The pine trees are bending like  
candy canes  
Animals are hibernating  
Outside it feels like Antarctica  
There are different types of snow-  
flakes  
They are white and bright like a  
light  
I see icicles inch increasingly  
The frozen lake looks like a winter  
wonderland  
The wind roars furiously like a lion  
Oh how quick winter has been  
I hope I see you again  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**Sports**

Sports usually distract me,  
But they fill me with glee.  
But in my sports mind,  
Some walls you may find.  
They are stronger than stone,  
And hard to the bone.  
The sports trap you in custody until  
a game,  
While in school you do a shame.  
Segregated from school and  
detained with sports,  
Whail thinking nothing of reports.  
For a while you won’t be as smart,  
And in sports you may have a false  
start.

*By Shawn Bloniasz*  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~  
**Homework**  
*BY GABRIELLE PIETRI*

Homework oh Homework  
You are sometimes tough  
And when I have a lot of you  
I have no time for fun  
You detain me from playing with  
my toys  
And from hanging with my friends.  
Homework oh Homework  
I think we’ve had enough  
I feel like I’m in custody  
So I don’t think it is necessary  
To give us oh-so-much.  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**Winter Time**  
*BY GRACE BUJAK*

The snow is like a white blanket  
Covering the grass  
The frost is friendly frolicing  
In the frisky air  
The fire is swaying  
Inside the house  
The deer are talking to each other  
Deep in the woods  
The branches still brown  
Beautiful but bending down  
The snowmen are still  
Looking like statues  
Everyone has fun  
All the way  
Until the day is done  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**Winter poem**  
*BY EMILY MAYOTTE*

Shiny snow gracefully falling  
On a cold winter day  
The pine tree swaying slowly  
In the frozen tundra  
The ice is hard glistening quickly  
On the frozen pond  
Caged icicles shining softly on the  
Roof of the house  
The frozen snowman glistenings  
Slowly in the middle of  
The woods.  
The frozen lake is slippery like ice  
on the side  
Of the rode.  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~



Winter Poem

BY JACK BRADY

So crisp and so frigid  
The wintry mix is,  
The snow crystals shimmer  
And glimmer and glimmer  
The icicles freeze  
And the Christmas tree soars  
Oh wow it's so big it will break the  
Floor boards  
The ice is so slippery, slick,  
And so clear  
The reindeer's feet tapping  
Could startle a bear  
The Christmas lights lights glow  
As Santa says go  
And then he goes off saying  
"Ho Ho Ho!"  
The snow is so white like a polar  
Bear's coat, good luck trying  
To get onto the frozen lake with  
Your boat  
Swish! The snow's blowing  
Round'  
It's blowing and blowing  
Around on the ground  
We want to ice skate  
On the big frozen lake,  
Then we'll have a slice  
Of my Aunt's fruit cake  
The tree's branches hold the snow  
And they don't let go  
Presents oh presents  
Oh Lord oh Lord  
It looks like St. Nick dumped  
His whole present  
Sack on the floor  
Knock knock! Oh  
My family is at the door  
The heat of the fire  
Is as warm as the Sun  
Winter oh winter  
Is just so much  
fun!

~~~~~

Opinions

BY ELLA PRICE

Sour like a lemon,
Sweet like candy
Others opinions.
Caged inside others hurtful words,
Mind locked up.

In the custody of others,
Arrogant kids beat down on you
Like water hitting rocks causing
erosion;
Every success is a failure
Others are jealous.

So called friends vacate you,
Others triumph over.
Friendships disappear like illu-
sions,
Confidence like a crumpled up
piece of paper
Slightly tearing until, "Rip!" you
are split.

Stuck in a cell,
Where no one can reach you,
At your lowest point;
Sinking in the mud,
Until you reach up.

You are beautiful, intelligent, and
lovable;
Put these words in the back of your
mind.
Your stiff iron bars break
I am me, you are you;
Opinions cannot break me.

~~~~~

Lone Turkey

BY JASMINE NGO

All alone in the woods,  
Sheath full of arrows.  
Gurgle gobble rings out,  
All alone is he.  
A faint crackle follows him,  
As he limps through the woods.  
Heart thumps faster louder,  
You comfort yourself by thinking,  
He is old he is hurt it will be  
quick.  
An arrow finds the bow,  
Strong arm pulls back,  
And whiz!  
The arrow flies by finding it's mark,  
You wince at the loud crinkle  
crunch,  
With every step forward you take.  
The woods hum with a sorrowful  
tune,  
Melancholy chirps from every bird.  
Then the music stops and you spot,  
Two glinting eyes which a growl  
accompanies,  
It won't hurt human but will a tur-  
key.  
And as you walk away snapping  
twigs,  
You know this fate was better.

~~~~~

Hair, height, happiness, I never do
it right
Everyone is perfect, but me.
I can't stop thinking of the guilt of
something going wrong,
The segregating feel of regret,
Double think, double do, triple
think.

The prison of doubt holding me in
custody, never letting me go.
The detaining thought of something
going wrong,
Sunshine opens the metal bars of
the cage and rain of guilt closes it
back up,
The degrading feeling of nothing
going right,
Soft, Silence, Showing every sign of
doubt, I can never be perfect;
Like the arrogant people looking
over me.

By: Laylah Summers

~~~~~

The Semicolon

Im laying in my room,  
Not knowing what do do.  
I feel alone.  
Drop drop, my tears start rushing  
down my face.  
I can't bare to feel this way.  
I look down at my paper,  
A semicolon lies.  
Crunch, the paper blows around.  
My story isn't over,  
The paper says to me.  
I look at it and smile,  
I'm not alone, No one is.  
Crash,slip, I fall on my bed happily.  
Creak, my mom opens the door.  
I smile.  
I'm not alone.

By Julia Soden

~~~~~

Winter

BY CADEN BIRTZ

Snow drifting daintily
To the blanket of white
Falling down daily
Watch out for frostbite

The skyscraping trees
Guarding their forest
Tilting from the breeze
Clicking in a chorus

Animals cuddled in homes
Protecting their family
From predators in their biomes
As safe as they can be

Snowflakes fluttering down
Falling from the sky
Gently smashing to the ground
And landing in my eye

Ice forming on the roads
Is a beautiful dangerous case
It's slippery like a slimy toad
And appears all over the place

Frozen lakes are so fun
Skiing, Snowmobiles, and skates
Colors reflecting setting sun
Echoing cracks it makes

Blizzard winds shake the house
Snow piles in feet
Feeling small as a mouse
I can not see the street

Wind blows the snow in swirls
Wisping over the plain
Quiet as the winter squirrels
Powerful as a train

All though it is so cold
And full of danger and fears
It is beautiful and bold
My favorite time of year

~~~~~

Good and Bad

BY SHANNON O'BRIEN

Snow falls like little balls of cotton  
Little men form like magic  
But life itself seems to be forgotten  
Every winter there will be some-  
thing tragic

Slick ice growing and spreading  
And cars zoom through the streets  
Eyes on the road watch where  
you're heading  
Or you'll surely slide on sleet

Bears are sleeping  
The air is calm  
Mice are squeaking  
Fall is gone

My family is here  
It's cold outside  
There's nothing to fear  
And nothing to hide

~~~~~

Imprisoned by Thoughts

BY LILITH FIELD

Imprisoned by my thought
Like taken into custody
My pencil draws and draws
Like there's a whole new side of me
I try to segregate myself but I may
not be free
For it seems drawing has taken
over me

~~~~~

First Snow

BY ADAM SKOGLUND

Fluffy snow is gracefully fluttering,  
Onto the roof of an outstanding  
cottage,  
The frost is suddenly forming,  
Around the thick black metal rail-  
ing,

Letter to Santa

JJ Geurtin, Age 6, Spencer, MA

Dear Santa,  
My name is Jason and I would  
like legos, books, a robot, a life size  
Super Mario, gum, clothes, shoes  
and lots of candy canes! I will leave  
you some delicious sugar cookies  
and milk and some carrots for your  
reindeer! See you soon!

Love,  
JJ

BY DEBORAH GREGROIRE LEFEBVRE,  
SOUTHBRIDGE, MA

Look at it snow,  
The cause of it was it that the air  
pressure was low.  
That's what the meteorologist  
said during his intro.  
This is what Mother Nature hath  
bestow.

From the gray sky to the ground  
below,  
A white blanket that continues  
to grow.

Look at at snow.  
I heard the winds begin to blow,  
And the trees swaying to and fro.  
I saw plow trucks passing by all  
in a row,

And there were cars with orange  
tickets on them ready for tow.  
Streets without parked cars  
makes easier traffic flow.  
Watching kids making a bunch of  
snowballs ready to throw.

Look at it snow.  
My husband Mike finished shov-  
eling and came in for a cup of Joe,  
He said "The neighbor forgot to  
put away his garden hoe"  
As he turned on the tv to watch  
his favorite show.

He loves to watch The Three  
Stooges; Larry, Curly and Moe.  
I'm glad I have no place to go.  
When's it going to stop? I don't  
know.  
Look at it snow.

The following submissions were  
written by students in Heather  
Stapel's 6th Grade students at  
Leicester Middle School.

Snowball Frenzy

BY CONNOR PARKE

Every winter my family is thrilled  
because we love snowball fights.  
Also, my grandpa loved them too,  
but he sadly passed away. Next my  
family also likes building our bases  
for the fights and of course my dad  
gets very competitive. After that  
my whole family looks at his base  
and it is so good, but we don't give  
up. Then it is time for the battle to  
start so we all yell "5,4,3,2,1, go",  
and the battle started. Next, I quick-  
ly scurried to my stash of snowballs  
and grabbed as many as I could and  
then "whoosh" I threw a snowball  
right at my sister and of course she  
freaked out because the snow went  
down her back. Also, my dad threw  
a titanic of a snowball right at my  
brother's base but only damaged  
his right side. As the battle contin-  
ued we thought we should probably  
go inside because we don't want  
to get a cold. Then we all went to  
the dryer and put all our cold, wet,  
damp snow clothes in the dryer.  
After that, my mom makes us each  
a nice hot cup of hot chocolate and  
the we all go sit together on the  
couch and watch a family movie  
together.

~~~~~

My Favorite Holiday

BY KHARINE RIVERA

My favorite holiday is
Christmas because my family and
I have a lot of fun. I decorate the
house with my family from the
inside and the outside. While my
sister and I decorate the tree, we
put on some classic holiday music
like A Holly Jolly Christmas. Then
my dad comes and starts dancing
and it's really childish. When we
go outside to put the lights up, it's
usually snowy and my sister and I
play a game where whoever finish-
es putting up lights on a small tree
first wins. While we make our own
reefs, my dad plays holiday music
on the piano.
Another thing I love about

Christmas is baking gingerbread
men and gingerbread walls for the
houses. My sister and I pretend
that we are on a baking show and
my mom is the host. So, we do a
baking contest to see which one of
us can finish baking first. Then, my
brother judges how they taste but
he can only eat one of each because
we save the rest for later. Whoever
wins the taste contest gets to eat 2
cookies from their own batch.

The last reason that Christmas is
my favorite holiday is that we have
fun sleepovers with family and we
wear Christmas themed pajamas.
We also have a gingerbread house
decorating contest. I always wake
up first and then wake up my favor-
ite cousin and then we wake up all
of the adults just to be annoying.
When everyone wakes up we do a
lot of different activities like snow-
ball fights outside. We end with the
gingerbread house decorating con-
test and opening presents. I hate
doing the presents last because
I just love opening presents and
would rather do it first. This is why
I Christmas is my favorite holiday.

~~~~~

Snowboarding

HUNTER SENIOR

My favorite winter activity is  
snowboarding. I like snowboard-  
ing because I get to spend quali-  
ty time with family and friends.  
After snowboarding we usually go  
out to eat most likely for dinner and  
get some delicious hot cocoa. I also  
love to go snowboarding because I  
get to go full blast down the slope  
with nothing but a few people in  
my way. My favorite thing of all  
about snowboarding is practicing  
things that challenge me such as,  
stopping, 180s and 360. Most of the  
time I do not land the tricks, but it's  
fun to try them out and hope I get  
better. I love the feeling when I can  
go full speed. Above all, it feels so  
smooth when I get to the bottom of  
the slope and pull out my stop and  
kick up all the snow over the fence  
at the bottom of the hill. As you can  
see I love snowboarding.

~~~~~

Christmas Once Again

BY ANNA CAFORIO

The rich potatoes soar into
my mouth. The frosting drips over
the fudge brownies, the smell of
pine fills the air as the juicy turkey
is picked up by the shiny fork. The
gravy spills over my tongue as I
wipe my lips clean. I jump up fast
as my chair squeaks and groans in
pain. I bolt downstairs to see a glow-
ing tree and presents galore. I slide
on the tile as I grab for the door. I
open it quickly and peer out in the
dark, to find a fresh blanket of snow
on the lawn. I crack into a smile as
I slam the door shut. I flop on my
bed and go back to sleep as I wait
for morning to arrive. When I open
my eyes, I am tired and droopy. I
slowly remember why I am so tired,
and yank the covers over me. I run
to the tree and smile at my family
who has waited patiently for me.

~~~~~

Christmas

BY HANNAH KULARSKI

My favorite holiday is Christmas,  
it is so exciting. My family has  
lots of fun on Christmas Eve and  
Christmas Day! I will tell you why  
Christmas is my favorite holiday.

One thing I love about Christmas  
is hanging out with family and  
friends. When my family comes  
over we eat Christmas dinner. After  
we eat dinner, we open presents.  
Here's the bad part.... We have to  
clean wrapping paper that is every-  
where.

Another thing I love about  
Christmas is decorating for  
Christmas. Most of our Christmas  
decor is shiny, sparkly, glittery,  
and very festive. When we finish  
decorating the Christmas tree we  
put candy canes on it, but two days  
later they are all gone because my  
siblings and I eat them all.

The last thing I love about  
Christmas is SNOW! I love the white  
snow on the bare trees as I look in  
the woods behind my house. The  
snow is super fun to play in with  
my family! My siblings and I love  
making snowcones with the fluffy,  
fresh snow!

As you can tell I really like  
Christmas! These are all the rea-  
sons I love Christmas.

Fa la la la la, la la la la! Okay you  
caught me I really LOVE Christmas!

~~~~~


Christmas
BY: ABBIE LANE

Christmas is always so fun and so exciting. All of the snow on the ground as if you are walking on a big, fluffy cloud. Here are a few reasons why Christmas is my favorite holiday!!

One thing I love about Christmas is when I get to see my friends and family. Some of my family lives far away so this is the time when I get to see them most. It is always so fun to see everybody together. Every time they get together there is always something new. Everybody is always so happy around Christmas time too!!

Another thing I love about Christmas is the tree and the presents on Christmas morning. All of the decorations seem to be more magical on Christmas. I love to open all of my presents and stockings to see what is in side at 6:00 in the morning. Also, I will never forget the excitement on Christmas day, while opening presents next year.

The last, but not least, reason why I love Christmas is when we decorate our tree. All of the lights look so nice on the tree reflecting off the ornaments. While we are putting the ornaments on the tree, there are always flashbacks of when we were little. At the end of decorating the tree, it looks so different and beautiful every year. Even the candy canes make it look beautiful.

Christmas is always full of surprises and excitement. The eager feeling as soon as you wake up on Christmas morning, wanting to open your presents downstairs. All of the fun you have is so unbelievable. Your family and friends join together like paper and glue. All night you're dreaming of Christmas day!!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

My Favorite Holiday Activity
BY NORA OLIVER

Christmas is one of my favorite times of the year. My favorite activity is making Christmas cookies with my family.

Making Christmas cookies is always fun for my family. We love going to my grandparent's house because we don't get to see that side of my family a lot. Everyone goes to my grandparent's house to meet up and make them. My family goes, my aunt and her kids go, and my other cousins, too. The first thing we always do is set up everything on my grandma's counter.

Another reason why I love making cookies is because while we make them we play Christmas music and have some fun. For example, we make the cookies into Christmas shapes and just act kind of silly. The Christmas shapes are Santa, a bell, a tree, a reindeer and a star. My favorite one is the reindeer.

When we are all done making the cookies, we eat some! The best is when they are soft because they just came out of the oven! One of my favorite parts of making cookies is decorating them. I love to put all the frosting on with sometimes candy, too! When we are done with that, we unfortunately have to leave.

Making Christmas cookies always makes my family happy because we all get to be together! That is why we love it so much.

The following Letters to Santa were written by Kristy Graves' first grade students at Wire Village School in Spencer, MA

Dear Santa,
I am trying to be nice to my friends. I wish my sister would help me set the table. I will leave you chocolate chip cookies. I hope I get a new art set.

Love, Sawyer C.

Dear Santa,
I am working on my backbends. I wish I could go to Disney. I will leave you chocolate cookies. I hope that I get some makeup. Merry Christmas Santa Claus.

Love, Lena G.

Dear Santa,
I have been trying to be good at school. I wish that my brother would be nice to me. I will leave you chocolate cookies. I hope I get a new iPhone.

Love, Jordan F.

Dear Santa,
I have been trying to be nice to my brother. I wish my brother did not work. I will leave you some chocolate cookies. I hope I get a Hatchimal.

Love, Ava C.

Dear Santa,
I am trying to be good at home. I wish that I was an only child. I will leave you chocolate chip cookies. I hope that I get a new Barbie doll.

Love, Gabriel L.

Dear Santa,
I am trying to be nice to my brothers. I wish my brothers would help me. I will leave cookies for you. I hope I will get a new nightlight for Christmas.

Love, Sophie S.

Dear Santa,
I am trying to be nice to my sister. I wish my sister would be nice to me. I will leave you mint cookies. I hope I get a robot because I love robots. I love you Santa.

Love, Connor C.

Dear Santa,
I have been trying to help my mom. I wish I could see you. I will leave you cookies and milk. I hope I get a Ninja Turtle.

Love, Izayah M.

Dear Santa,
I have been trying to focus on my work. I wish to be good. I will leave you cookies and milk. I hope I get a dirt bike.

Love, Ethan B.

Dear Santa,
I have been trying to not annoy my sister. I wish for a gel board. I will leave you chocolate chip cookies. I hope I get a four wheeler.

Love, Hunter L.

Dear Santa,
I have been trying to be good. I wish my brother will help me be safe. I will leave you some cookies on my chair. I hope I get a bat.

Love, Avril H.

Dear Santa,
I have been trying to raise my hand. I wish I could listen for my father and mother. I will leave cake and cookies. I hope to get a bouncy castle.

Love, Lillian S.

Dear Santa,
I have been trying to treat my cats right. I wish my dad wouldn't sleep in my bed. I will leave you cookies and milk. I hope I get some Star Wars figures.

Love, Brody P.

Dear Santa,
I have been trying to concentrate in school. I wish my kittens will snuggle with me. I will leave you milk and cookies. I hope I get Blisstick.

Love, Callen M.

Dear Santa,
I have been trying to read. I wish I could find my elf Elvis. I will leave you a frozen yogurt. I hope I get a blue dress.

Love, Andrea S.

Dear Santa,
I have been trying to be nice to my sister. I wish I had a dirt bike. I will leave chocolate chip cookies for you. I hope I get a Playstation for Christmas.

Love, Isaiah J.

Dear Santa,
I have been trying to brush my teeth every night. I wish my sister would stop being mean to me. I will leave you chocolate chip cookies and milk. I hope I get a whiteboard and markers for Christmas.

Love, Chris G.

The following are submissions from the Spencer Writer's Group. The group meets at the Richard Sugden Library in Spencer...next on Monday, January 8 from 5-7 pm. All genres welcome!

*Spencer Writers' Group -
Dec, 2017*

Once upon a Starry Night
BY SHARON ROSS LEGASEY

Once upon a starry night a muse appeared with a story on her tongue, A goodnight story for a wee little one. Yes, to the bedside she brought paper, pen and ink To seal in a book as she told her tale full of adventurous fun!

On that starry night welcomed by the handmaiden's son, She need not fear from anyone that she be shun She wore a silky white dress with a sparking shawl of pink Her auburn hair hung loosely on the sides of her face and swirled around to the back in a bun

We all sat and listened as her words unraveled faster than we could think, Creating a word dance as rhyme and rhythm began to sync. A story was quickly forming! But soon, the creative exploration was done. ... Just like that in a blink!

On that starry night she blew us a kiss and with a wink, The wee little one fell back on a pillow and began to sink into a fantasy world of dreams that immediately started performing A play of thoughts in which he would link

A starry night adventure through to the morning Life is never boring When storytelling is awakened after all, words were created to make life more adorning

Once upon a Starry Night
BY GINGER CAMARDA, N. BROOKFIELD, MA

It was a week before Christmas about 4:30 in the afternoon. The sun had set and darkness was covering the countryside. "Where were my three boys? I 'd been ringing the 'the bell' for some time now." The dinner bell was

my way of calling the boys home. I couldn't go looking for them because we had a little baby girl and I couldn't leave her alone. All the neighbors knew when they heard the bell ring, it was for the Carella boys. Typical boys, they were always in some kind of mischief.

The night was clear and cold. Soon the stars were shining brightly. With every passing minute I got more and more nervous. Their Dad arrived home from work and was about to begin searching for them in the nearby woods when we saw three small figures walking through the field. They all seemed to be carrying something.

They came running now – "Mommy, Daddy, Look what we found!"

"First we were a little bit lost. Then this one star was so bright we could see our way home and we found these baby kittens.... We never would have found them without that bright star!" "Can we keep them?" "Can we?"

Doorway Thoughts
BY LYN STEVENS, SPENCER, MA

I am home in the house built by my dad and my maternal grandfather. The house was built after I was born in a small town in Brockville, Ontario, Canada. It is a simple bungalow that was carefully crafted with love for our family.

My dad is standing the doorway of the kitchen. His right hand is on the plain, white painted wood frame. Behind him is the living room but it is not clear to me. Only the kitchen is clear – simple, white painted wooden cabinets. The counter top is small with a fold down four burner contraption for stove top cooking.

Dad's clothing is simple and comfortable – white t-shirt, light colored pants, brown belt. He has a dish towel tucked into his waist band as his apron. I guess he must be the cook for the day I am envisioning.

I don't have many memories of my dad, as he died when I was six. I have pictures of him with me on his lap at a cousin's house

when we were visiting, or when we were moving from this house designed and built by him to a house in Montreal; in that picture, it is winter. My dad, mum, my brother and I are outside dressed in heavy coats, hats, gloves and scarves. We are waving goodbye to our neighbors, the Cloughs.

I know that my dad was a do-it-yourself kind of a guy even before that was "thing." He was hands on caring for the car, the house, in the kitchen and with us children. I have been told that he had a great sense of humor, was a good friend and a loving family man. I wish I could remember more specifics but these facts about him are comforting to know.

Doorway Thoughts
A New Home

BY LINDA JONES, NORTH BROOKFIELD, MA

Mary woke up with a smile and feeling so excited! Today was the day she and her husband, Bob were going to inspect the house they hoped to buy. It was a beautiful two-story house, sand colored brick, three bedrooms, two and a half bathrooms, and a large deck in back with a large yard and beautiful trees. The two car garage was just what they wanted.

Bob and Mary hurried through breakfast, anxious to get going to the check out this house.

They drove a few miles to the area and met their real estate agent there. Mary loved the sand color brick house already. She went in and stood in the doorway looking inside and admiring the spacious room with its bay window and large shuttered windows on the other side. The shutters and window trim were a beautiful polished oak color.

Bob and Mary went out on the deck and Bob noticed the stone grill and barbeque pit out back. He said, "Mary, I'm sold, let's buy it!"

Mary was so happy!! She said "Yes, yes, Let's move in tomorrow!"

Michael, The Fortune-telling Reindeer

BY TOM VANTRE, SOUTHBRIDGE, MA

We all know the classic story of Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer. A favorite Christmas tale of all ages. There is however, a story of another reindeer with a special gift. This reindeer's name was Michael. Now, Michael's story came before Rudolph's tale. In fact, Michael knew there would be a reindeer that was born differently before everyone else. This was because Michael is a fortune telling reindeer. He could tell you your future by reading palms and simple magic tricks. Michael loved that he had this gift but naturally he was the only one. He tried to share his gift with other reindeers but they just laughed.

"You can't do a palm reading on other reindeers. Reindeers don't have hands" his parents told him as a child.

"You're super crazy. You can't predict the future." Said his friends.

"It is impossible for a reindeer to know the future" his teachers told him in front of everyone.

Michael even had a vision of a reindeer with a red nose that would one day save Christmas. However, when he tried to tell Santa Claus about his vision, Santa did not believe him, saying "I don't have time for this Michael. I'm busy." Heartbroken that Santa doesn't even believe him, Michael just went home and stayed there.

Soon after that, a reindeer with a red nose, named Rudolph was born. Years later, Rudolph with his nose so bright saved Christmas just as Michael predicted. When Santa got back from delivering toys that night, he went to Michael's and apologized for not believing him. Since then all of Michael, the fortune-telling reindeer's visions and future predictions have never been wrong and no one made fun of his gift ever again. Not even Santa Claus himself.

LEST WE FORGET

BY EVA E. PERRON, EAST BROOKFIELD, MA

It was Christmas Eve, 1957, a cold bright night. The twinkling of the stars and the quiet stillness captured the true feeling of Christmas.

My husband and I and our two little girls arrived at my mother's house for our traditional Polish eve dinner. All of her family were gathered to feast on delicious foods, which began with the passing of the Plates a holy wafer. The head of the family (the father) breaks off a piece, it is handed to the next person, down in line wishing God's blessings and good health. The Christmas spirit and togetherness of family makes us aware of how blessed we are.

I had forgotten a gift in our car and when I went out to get it, I heard screams in the distance. At first I thought they were happy screams of children sliding on near by hills; but after a few more minutes I realized they were shrieks of fright or helplessness.

A neighbor, Ernie O., who came out from his house recognized the voice of Esther F. who lived alone on Bell Hill. He took off in his truck and found Esther on the side of the road crying; she had fallen, her ankle swollen and twisted, with her knees scraped and cut. Her tears weren't only for her bruises, but also for the loneliness and heavy heart she endured this special night.

Ernie brought Esther to the home of a neighbor-the Wojnas home. Mary and Henry nursed her wounds and invited Esther to spend the rest of the holidays with them. I learned that other neighbors remembered Esther with gifts and goodies, their generosity and thoughtfulness, her best medicine.

I along with many others learned a valuable lesson...there are many people like Esther who are alone with no relatives, no reason for Christmas spirit, and wouldn't our Christmases be brighter and more meaningful to share our blessings with them. And, isn't it in giving that we receive?

During the years, my husband and I shared our Christmas Eve feast with people who would have been alone, and those Christmases were our most rewarding.

Esther passed away many years ago, and each Christmas I think of her and people who are alone. Silently, I say a prayer that some friend or neighbor will invite him or her over, so together they can experience the splendor of this special night, lest we forget.

Once Upon a Starry Night

BY SUZANNE YASHUGIN

Once upon a starry night, I looked out of the train window at the Russian sites.

Gingerbread dachas were illuminated in the farmland snow, and purple mountains stood behind them mysteriously in a row.

Never did I think I would miss a Christmas without my family by my side,

but an adventure beckoned me and its leer I could not deny.

So, here I sit with my new Russian friends,

swaying to the train's hypnotic movement that never ends.

Will they even celebrate Christmas at all?

Or will I be forced to live in the memories that I recall?

Well, I will soon find out the answers to these questions,

because we've finally arrived at our hotel destination.

What is this, my new friends are setting on a stand,

but a tiny Christmas tree with lights and garland.

The three children who came with our group,

parade over and set up their slippers in a loop.

Lena explained that children must leave their slippers below the tree,

So Father Frost can fill them with something to bring them glee.

Next, each of the children stood in front of the tree and recited poems.

The sound of their gentle voices made me feel less lonesome.

I still did miss the people and traditions that I left behind that year,

yet, I was thankful for new friends to bring in Christmas cheer!

ONCE UPON A STARRY NIGHT

BY R D ROLLINS

Two thousand and seventeen years ago, on a cold starry night in Bethlehem a poor boy was born. At the time of his birth he was little known, nearly anonymous, with only a handful of people knowing who he really was. More importantly why was he here.

Why did God choose such a primal time to introduce his son? God could have waited, why not, he is God and he has been around forever. What

would the problem have been if he had waited a couple more thousand years? By delaying he could have been aided by better communications.

By delaying the birth of his son by 1400 years the printing presses could have sent the message, printed in multitude of languages and could have quickly spread throughout Europe and the Middle East.

He could have waited for the arrival of the photograph, which was introduced in 1825. 1890 man was given motion pictures and the first transatlantic radio message. Closely followed by 1920 with the first transatlantic air mail.

Late in 1930 TV was invented. 1960 saw the Communication Satellites. Then in 1985 we were introduced to the Internet, followed by Cell Phones and Smartphones.

Sure, God has made some mistakes; what happened with that Duck Billed Platypus, and why is that Avocado stone so big? And Jelly Fish, what's up with those things?

But no, he chose that starry night of which mankind can never forget. Probably the most paramount of his decisions and an example of the greatness of God.

To date there are an estimated 2.3 billion (that is 2,300,000,000) Christians on our plant. That's a number that neither Facebook or Twitter could handle.

Keep Christ in Christmas.

A Merry Mary Christmas

BY JOAN BEDARD, EAST BROOKFIELD, MA

As I walked up the long driveway to the farm house I wondered if it was inhabited as it had been neglected for many years. I knocked on the door and when the door opened a beautiful young pregnant woman welcomed me in. She took the basket of fruit I handed her from our church members. I believe it was truly a luxury they hadn't enjoyed for quite a long time as she smiled and thanked me several times. She asked "Would you please join me and have a cup of tea? I would really like you to stay awhile."

The room was a visual description of the word "poverty." It was only warm sitting in front of the fire in the fireplace. She was lonely and anxious to explain the reason for this situation.

She said, "John and I bought this farm in July. John is a carpenter and we planned to have the major repairs completed by Christmas, my due date. Unfortunately, John fell off a roof in August and his injuries prevented him from working until two weeks ago and with limitations. I do want to show you the baby's room!"

She opened the door to reveal a beautiful freshly painted room with light blue walls and new wood work painted white. The two windows had pretty freshly laundered white curtains. It certainly was a contrast to the rest of the house.

When I saw the light blue painted walls I commented, "Oh you are having baby boy."

"Oh no," she quickly replied, "we are having a girl! When I was born my parents named me Mary and dedicated my life to the Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus. They vowed to dress me in blue and white until I made my first Holy Communion. John and I want to do the same for our baby, Anne. My mother recently passed away and her name was Anne.

I was deeply moved by her story. As I was leaving I asked if some of my friends and I could return the following week. They love to knit and crochet and I'm sure they'd want to make some pretty blue and white items for baby, Anne.

Oh yes, we all returned leaving gifts and the single electric candle in the front window seemed like a star guiding our way. There is such a simalrity to a scene in Bethlehem over two thousand years ago that I want to call the three men from our parish, "the three wise men." They helped John with more repairs to the house.

Christmas is a time for love and giving and have you ever noticed, it is not called 'Santamas?'

Once Upon a Starry Night

BY EMILY-ROSE PAPPAS
LEICESTER, AGE 17

Once upon a starry night, I decided to go for a walk. A terrible decision, really. Normally walks under the stars with my big greyhound, Bentley, was something I looked forward to after a long day of work. But tonight, I had a feeling that it would be different. And I was as sure of that fact as I was sure that my hair was black.

My first feelings of discomfort came from the occasional growls from Bentley. He would pull on his blue leash and growl deep in his throat. The leash vibrated and I felt

his growl all the way up into my wrist. I told him to be quiet and just do his business so I could get out of the cold. But he ignored me and let out a small "boof". He was staring straight ahead at a tree on the side of the road. There was nothing unusual about the willow- it was covered in a layer this morning's snow, its branches bending down towards the ground where drifts piled up. But my dog seemed to think that the willow was anything but natural.

Bentley growled at the tree again. What was wrong with this stupid dog? I pulled my hat down further so it covered my ears and looked down at my winter boots and tall knitted socks peeking out of them. I then looked at the snow drifts in distaste. Then at Bentley who was showing me he wide brown eyes- the same wide brown eyes he gave me whenever he wanted to go "o-u-t" or have a cookie. This was stupid. I had no reason to be nervous about a tree, right? I steeled myself and stepped off of the side walk and allowed myself to go crunching through the snow drifts and towards the willow tree that my dog was so peeved about.

He tugged me forward, and it took all my strength to stay standing as the eighty-pound dog almost pulled me face-first into the cold snow. I stumbled after him, holding onto the leash with both hands as he tugged me along. I pushed the branches aside and stepped inside the small area void of snow. But what I found in between the bowing branches made me wish I had stayed in my yard.

A Starry Night

WRITTEN BY SHARON ROSS LEGASEY,
SPENCER

Once upon a Starry Night

A tiny new born son slept cradled in his mother's arms

When all the rooms at the Inn were gone, a manger became his bed.

Sent by angels and guided by a single bright star, shepherds in the fields nearby curiously appeared at the stable, welcomed in by Joseph they knelt at the manger and gazed upon the child so full of peace.

If you have ever looked at a baby sleeping, you have seen that peace. But have you ever looked upon the face of the King?

Isiah wrote telling us He would come. Three wealthy Wiseman from the East believed what they read and they too followed the single bright star that appeared. They came bearing gifts fit for a king - Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh and laid them before the manger as Immanuel slept quietly.

As you celebrate on December 25th this year by presenting gifts to your loved ones and when you prepare special foods to be enjoyed by all, I hope you will take a few moments to think about what happened on the starry night before the celebration.

May God's peace be with you this Christmas Season

The Doorway

BY EVA E. PERRON, E. BROOKFIELD,

It was on a beautiful early spring Sunday morning; the sun was shining, birds chirping, the beginning of a great day. How lucky I am to be alive enjoying the blossoming of a new season. The phone interrupted my thoughts; "yes, I'd love to go out to dinner."

In the foyer of the restaurant, I noticed a young service man dressed in his army fatigues standing in the inside doorway with his right arm extended high above his head; maybe he was just exercising it or massaging a sore muscle. I wanted say, "thank you for your service," but his serious, stern look showed this wasn't the right time.

A short time later, an attractive young lady entered. A little kiss on her cheek and small embrace and it was evident he was happy to see her.

The hostess seated them a booth close to ours and I learned the young man's name was David and he was meeting with his sister, Rose. Because of a bad cold, her hearing was affected, she he had to talk loud. Not that I'm nosy, but I was anxious to know about this problem. Meanwhile, my daughter and son-in-law were engrossed in a problem about the selection of a new health-care plan, whether A or B so my attention was focused on the next booth.

David stated, "Sis, you know of my girlfriend, Pam, well she's beautiful and I love her... and she wants to get married next month; she keeps hounding me about it all of the time, and I don't want to make a commitment until after I'm discharged, I still have 12 months to serve,"

"Why is she in such a hurry?"

"Well, she always wanted a son and she wants to get pregnant right away, before she's too old."

"But you do have a son, does she know about Bobby? And by the way, how old is he now? Do you see him often?"

"He's seven now, since the divorce Jan stopped me from seeing him."

"Instead of starting a new family, you've got to concentrate on having a relationship with your own child. Bobby needs you!"

I found myself shaking my head in agreement and realized they must have been aware. A phone call interrupted their talk. David had to go outdoors. I then caught up on my meal and though my baked potato cooled off a little, it was still delicious along with the rest of my dinner. My daughter noted that I had been very quiet during the meal time. I assured them I didn't want to influence their health care decision so I spent little attention. Deb's smile and wink spoke volumes.

David returned from his phone conversation, as we were leaving the table, so I had a chance to say, 'thank you for your service.....and I wanted to add, you need your son as much as he needs you. Good Luck!"

What to buy
Grandma for Xmas!

BY KATRINA CHUMSAE, ROCSDALE, MA

My grandmother is a druid, her ancestors were druid. You are born a druid in the windswept fishing villages of Scotland. Druids are inspired by their ancestors. To a Druid, ancestry is not a vague concept, but a gathering of individuals, each with their strengths and weaknesses, their own stories of success and failure. Druidry's diversity is further expressed through the fact that each person has a different line of ancestors, honoring their ancestors, that once were, a farmer, a baker, a blacksmith, a maker, a traveler, a writer or healer, by using the skills inherited, honor, respect, truth and justice are of primary importance. It is also common within Druid practice to celebrate important points along life's path, and it is at such times that we acknowledge the growth, change and release that are integral to an individual's path. Some points that may be celebrated are:

Children's Rites – the welcoming of newborn babies, naming ceremonies, starting school and their successes are all important points that may be celebrated within the community.

Weddings, often called Handfastings.

Rites of Passing that may include funerals, memorials or honoring of the dead.

Rites of Separation – acceptance and release are important. Breakdown of any relationship should be acknowledged.

Rites of Elderhood – these occur for men and women between the ages of 55 – 70, acknowledging their changing place in society with retirement, menopause or the arrival of grandchildren.

Dedication – for some it is important that they declare their dedication publicly. This may be a dedication to God, their work, their community or any other important areas of focus.

All Druids honor the powers of nature, as environment: the land, sea and sky, as ancestors: of our blood, of our history and land, of our mythology, as heritage and wisdom. In terms of an integrated system of belief and practice, Druids would be expected to :

Respect the natural world (non-human), care for the environment, to study nature from trees to winds.

Respect human nature, work on their own intellectual and emotional development, care for the community, family and colleagues.

Respect our history, learn about our heritage, ancestors, their stories, languages, ways of life.

Respect God, and the forces of nature that influence our worlds.

All these are religious tasks, performed not just as a way of serving God, ancestors or community, but as a way of connecting with God, seeking religiously meaningful union. They belief that we are all connected The Druids of ancient Scotland still remain something of a mystery today, but not for me because my Grandmother and her 'Herb' medicine bags, Scottish Gaelic drawl, and her beautiful Gloine nan Druidh "Druids' glass" or wishing stones,(found on the seashores, they have a white quartz ring on it somewhere. The ring must be complete with no breaks or pauses in the circle it forms.) I wear one too as did my ancestors before me . So maybe just some Scottish shortbread for xmas!

CALENDAR

Thursday, December 28

SNOWBIRDS MEETING: The Spencer Snowbirds have announced the club meeting schedule. The group gathers at Camp Marshal 4H Club, 92 McCormick Road at 7:30 p.m. The next four meetings are Dec. 28, Jan. 25, Feb. 22 and March 29 as announced by Bob Fraser, Spencer Snowbirds secretary.

ONGOING EVENTS

Deja New: Art, Antiques, & Collectibles Vendor Marketplace open on Wednesday from 1:00 pm-7:00 pm in the St. Joseph's Rectory building for its first season. In addition, a farmer's market will be open from 3:00-6:00 pm that day. Stop in and check out our vendor products! All proceeds will benefit the non-profit "24-7 Community Partnership" which will provide funds to programs for the needy, including the Leicester Food Pantry. Open April-December.

VFW MEETING: The Rochdale VFW Post 7556 will hold their monthly business meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the post at 713 Pleasant Street, Rochdale on the 2nd Wednesday of each month.

ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP: On the third Wednesday of each month, 6-7 p.m. at the Overlook Independent Living Building, fourth floor Solarium, 88 Masonic Home Road, Charlton. The intent is to build a support system, exchange practical information, talk through issues and ways of coping, share feelings, needs and concerns and to learn about community resources. Contact Kathy Walker at (508) 434-2551 or kawalker@overlook-mass.org for more information. Presented by Alzheimer's Association MA/NH Chapter, visit (800) 272-3900 or alz.org.

ECONOMY SHOP: 1st FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, 207 Main St., Spencer; (508) 885-2149. Open every Wednesday 8 a.m. to noon; Thursday 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. & 6 to 8 pm; Friday 8 a.m. to noon. Come in to see our new Fall line.

THRIFTY: St. Joseph-St. Pius X Parish, 759 Main St., Leicester, (508) 859-8083. The "New To You" Thrift Shop. Hours: Tuesday, 5 to 7 p.m., Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

LIBRARY PROGRAMS: Richard Sugden Library in Spencer has the following weekly programs. For more information contact the library at (508) 885-7513.

Looking for a fun and educational activity to do with your toddler or preschooler? Come to toddler story hour at 10 a.m. and meet other parents, enjoy songs, stories, and activities with your 18 months to 3 year old. Caregivers must remain in the room with their toddler. Preschoolers (ages 3-5) come at 11- caregivers must remain on the same floor. These are free programs but do require registration which you can do when you arrive. Today's themes are drums and rhythm.

Join us at Bouncing Babies on Wednesdays from 10-10:45 a.m. for a rollicking, good time! Meet other caregivers, share stories, songs, & rhymes. It's for ages birth to 24 months & their caregivers. Program followed by open play time. The free Afterschool Fun program is today from 4-4:45 p.m. for children from k-grade 5.

Tune in Together on Thursdays is a music and movement program for toddlers and preschoolers and their caregivers, sponsored and presented by CFCE. Meets from 11 a.m.-noon.

Paws and Pages encourages children to become better readers by sharing a book with trained therapy dogs. This program is possible because

of the generosity of trainer, Barbara Laborde and her canine helper. Come between 4-4:15 p.m. on Thursdays to reserve a spot.

FREE FOR MOM & KIDS: There will be free weekly parent/child programs from 9 to 11 a.m. Fridays and Wednesdays at the North Brookfield Elementary School, New School Road, North. The program runs on school calendar and closes for vacation and inclement weather according to North Brookfield School calendar. This free program is sponsored by the Spencer, Wachusett, North and East Brookfield Coordinated Family Grant in partnership with the North Brookfield Elementary School. Funded by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. For more information, please call CFCE at (508) 885-2934 or e-mail Wachusettcpc@hotmail.com.

SUPPER TIME: A free, community meal is held on the first Tuesday of the month at The Cross Roads Café Coffeehouse, from 4:30-6:30 p.m., at the Emmanuel Church, 25 Winthrop Terrace, Warren. All ages are welcome. There is no cover charge; however, a love offering is accepted as a gift to the band or musician as thanks to God for their sharing of their talent and gift for the glory of God (www.emmanuelorthodox.org).

STRE-E-E-TCH: Senior Exercises Classes are held every Wednesday from 10 to 11 a.m. at the Rutland Community Center, Glenwood Road. Enjoy an hour of fun and exercise to music to help stay strong, fit, healthy and independent. Classes are co-ed and all are welcome. The fee is \$4 per class. For more information, call Joyce Gamache at (508) 754-2821.

SIT AND KNIT: knitting group every Wednesday at 10 a.m. at the Merriam Gilbert Library, West Brookfield. Bring your sewing, embroidery, knit-

ting or crochet and enjoy some socializing while you work on your project.

ECONOMICAL: First Congregational Church, 207 Main St., Spencer, (508) 885-2149. Economy Shop hours, open every Wednesday, 8 a.m. to noon; Thursday, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m. to noon.

N-37: Bingo at the Knights of Columbus, 10 Meadow Road, Spencer every Thursday. Doors open at 4:30 p.m. The first game starts at 6:30 p.m. Along with our regular games we feature two winner take all games, two 50/50 games and two progressive jackpot games with payouts of \$600 and \$500 respectively. Good food and soft beverages are available at Judy's Kitchen. Come and enjoy some good food, good people and hopefully win a little.

STAY HEALTHY: The VNA Care Network and Hospice is holding a free Keep Well Clinic to residents 60 and older from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Spencer Fish and Game Club on Mechanic Street. Local residents may have their blood pressure checked and learn about health concerns. Blood sugar, weight monitoring and other health assessments may also be available. VNA Care Network and Hospice clinics are funded in part by the United Way, local boards of health, private foundations. For up-to-date clinic information visit www.vnacarenetwork.org or call (888) 663-3688 x 5603.

IT'S A LUNCH DATE: The East Brookfield Baptist Church invites all senior citizens to a Community Lunch at 11:30 a.m. every second Thursday of the month in Fellowship Hall. A delicious lunch and great desserts will be served. This will be followed by a time of fellowship and games concluding with a devotional just before 2 p.m. Reservations are encouraged. Call (508) 867-7725.

LEGALS

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING Project File No. 608190

A Design Public Hearing will be held by MassDOT to discuss the proposed South Pond Road over South Pond Inlet Bridge Replacement Project in East Brookfield, MA.

WHERE: Meeting Room A
Town Office Complex
122 Connie Mack Drive
East Brookfield, MA 01515

WHEN: Thursday, January 4th, 2018 @ 7:00 PM

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed South Pond Road over South Pond Inlet bridge replacement project. All views and comments made at the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of replacing the existing South Pond Road Bridge over the South Pond Inlet with new, single span vehicular bridge and pedestrian bridge structures. The vehicular bridge will be 31'-3" wide with a 35'-0" span length. The pedestrian bridge will be 8'-0" wide with a 45'-0" span length. The bridges will consist of precast, prestressed concrete NEXT beams on pile-supported concrete integral abutments located behind the existing abutments, which will partially remain in place. There will also be roadway improvements to the bridge approaches including: new guardrail, planted slopes and a drainage swale in the shoulder at the northeast approach to the bridge. The existing flow control gate will remain in place with proposed connections to the proposed pedestrian bridge. No modifications to the gate capacity are proposed. The existing gate controls will be removed, serviced, and replaced in a position allowing them to be operated from the safety of the proposed pedestrian bridge.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The Town of East Brookfield is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be discussed at this hearing.

Written views received by MassDOT subsequent to the date of this notice and up to five (5) days prior to the date of the hearing shall be displayed for public inspection and copying at the time and date listed above. Plans will be on display one-half hour before the hearing begins, with an engineer in attendance to answer questions regarding this project. A project hand-out will be made available on the MassDOT website listed below.

Written statements and other exhibits in place of, or in addition to, oral statements made at the Public Hearing regarding the proposed undertaking are to be submitted to Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Bridge Project Management, Project File No. 608190. Such submissions will also be accepted at the hearing. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked within ten (10) business days of this Public Hearing. Project inquiries may be emailed to dot.feed-back.highway@state.ma.us

This location is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, open or closed captioning for videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), fax (857-368-0602), TTD/TTY (857-368-0603) or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten (10) business days before the meeting.

In case of inclement weather, hearing cancellation announcements will be posted on the internet at <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Highway/> JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR
PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER
December 22, 2017
December 29, 2017

TOWN OF NORTH BROOKFIELD OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF APPEALS

The North Brookfield Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing & meeting on Thursday, December 28, 2017 at 7:00 pm at the North Brookfield Police Department, 55 School Street on the application of Nicholas Harvey, 41 Grove St for a Special Permit to Zoning Bylaw Section IV,A,2,1 for the Zoning District R11 to convert the property from a single family dwelling to a 2 family. A copy of the application is available at the Town Clerks Office at 215 Main St.

Tara Hayes
Clerk
December 15, 2017
December 22, 2017

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Worcester Division 225 Main Street Worcester, MA 01608 (508) 831-2200 Docket No. WO17P3985EA Estate of: JOHN C. EMERSON III Date Of Death: October 18, 2017 INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner

Thomas J. Emerson of West Brookfield MA , John C. Emerson, IV of West Brookfield MA Thomas J. Emerson of West Brookfield MA, John C. Emerson IV of West Brookfield MA, has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond. The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Rep-

resentatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.

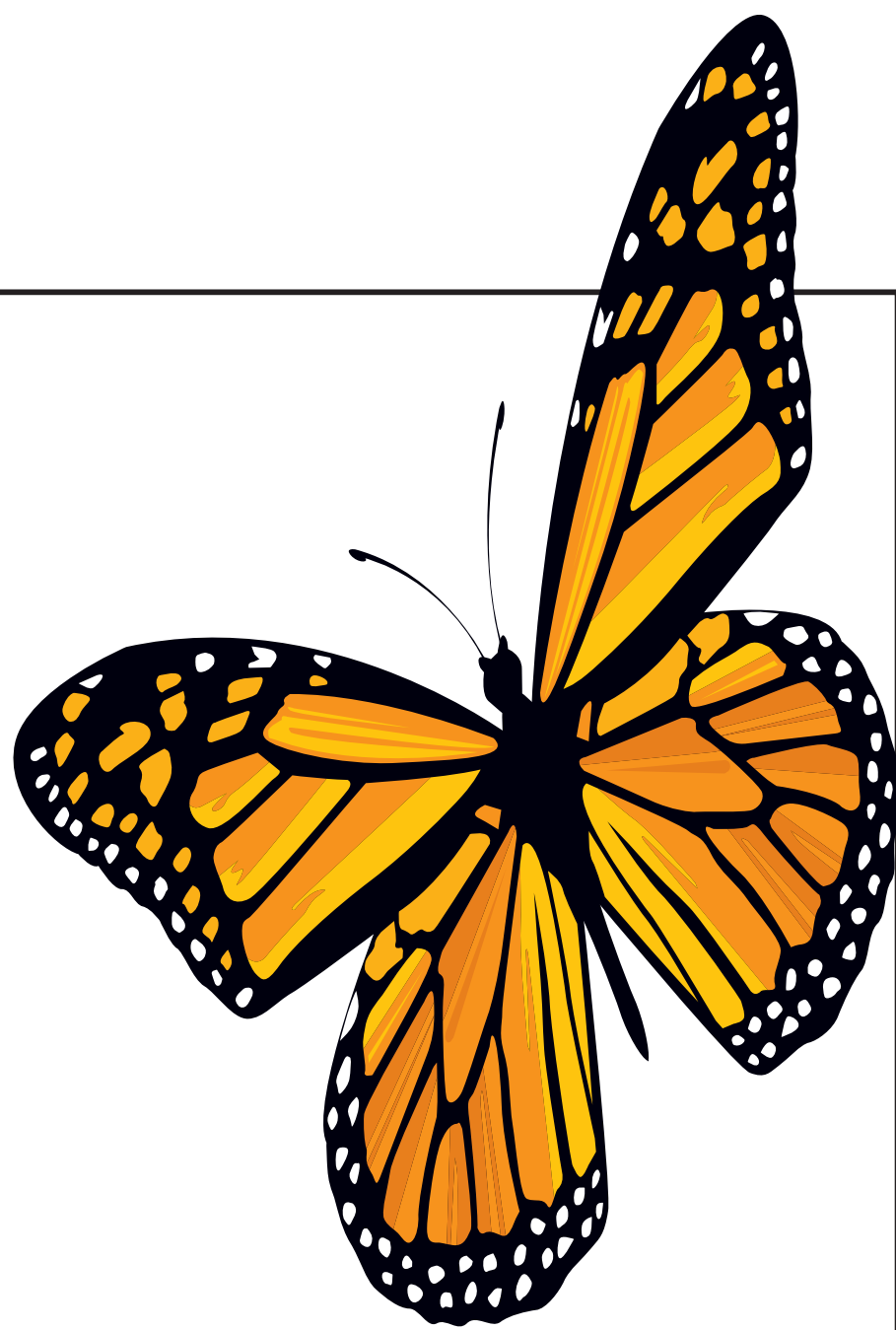
December 22, 2017

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Worcester Division 225 Main Street Worcester, MA 01608 (508) 831-2200 Docket No. WO17P3970EA Estate of: ROLAND W. FORGETTE Date Of Death: October 18, 2017 INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner

Susan L. Forgette of North Brookfield MA, a Will has been admitted to informal probate. **Susan L. Forgette of North Brookfield MA,** has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond. The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.

December 22, 2017



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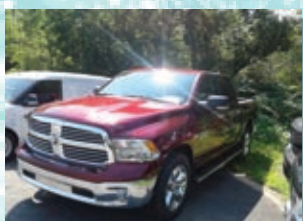
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Beige Reclining Lift Chair
\$350

White Couch and Blue Velvet Chair & Floral Chair
\$450

48" Round Slate and Cherry Coffee Table with Matching End Table
\$500

Antique Dining Room Set; Table w/ Six Chairs, Buffet Server, China Cabinet & Secretary
Excellent Condition
\$1,500

Queen Size Hillsboro Iron Bed w/ Beautyrest Black Box Spring and Mattress
Excellent Condition
\$2,000

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\$75.00

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\$20.00 PER

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SPARE TIRE P225/60R16 EAGLE GA WITH RIM
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\$100.00

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Solid Rock Maple Bedroom Set
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Brand New!
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3 Pair
Black Leather Walking Shoes
Velcro Close, Never Worn!
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78"x60"
plus 18" Extension,
6 Side Chairs
\$800

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TRL625 recumbent cycle w/stabilizing floor bar for secure balance

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New Total Gym

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Runs great
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Storage box included
Excellent condition
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Beautiful
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\$50

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ONE MAHOGANY COLORED
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Both Very Good Condition
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Attention Job Seekers

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Runnings is a fast growing retail chain with 43 stores and 3 distribution centers located in 7 states in the Midwest and Northeast. We are a general retailer offering our customers everything they need for their home, farm and outdoor activities. Our new location in Putnam (the former K-Mart building) will be opening in the spring of 2018 and we are very excited to be a part of the Putnam community and surrounding area.

We are looking for outgoing and energetic individuals who enjoy working in a customer service role to join our team. We will begin filling positions to assist with store set-up immediately. If you would like to explore a full-time career or a part-time earning opportunity with a highly successful retail company please consider attending our job fair on Thursday, January 4, 2018.

- **Job Fair:** 8 AM to 6 PM on January 4, 2018
- **Location:** The Store Location, 44 Providence Pike, Putnam, CT 06260
- **Opportunities:** Full-time and Part-time opportunities available with career advancement opportunities
- **Benefits:** Health, Life, LTD, STD, Vacation, Holidays, Sick, 401K + match, generous employee discount
- **Applications:** Will be available at the job fair.

Runnings is an Equal Opportunity Employer

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21 Ton, Horizontal/Vertical
\$1,600

FLOOR JACK
\$20

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16 Gallon
\$50

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WHEELED BIKES

8 BARRELS
for a Floating Dock
\$10/each

GLASS TOP TABLE
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Includes 140 Rolls
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DEADLINE FOR YARD SALE SUBMISSIONS IS NOON MONDAY FOR ALL MASS. WEEKLY PAPERS

Deadline subject to change due to holidays
Call for more info

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\$350
Call (508) 278-2083

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2 Person
Paddles Included
\$500
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2013 40HP Yamaha Motor, Full Cover Hummingbird Fish Finder, Many Extras, Boat, Motor, and 2014 Trailer Like New, Ready to Go!
Call
(860) 935-0340
Leave Message
Price \$8,500.00

Old Town Canoe
1931 old town 18' restored Maine guide canoe.
Clear resin coated, Mahogany gun wales And caned seats a third seat mahogany caned seat and back Paddles included
Perfect for the wooden canoe enthusiast.
\$5800.00
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AGE: 12

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PLEASE CALL WITH ANY INFORMATION
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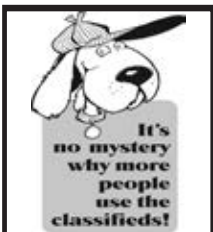
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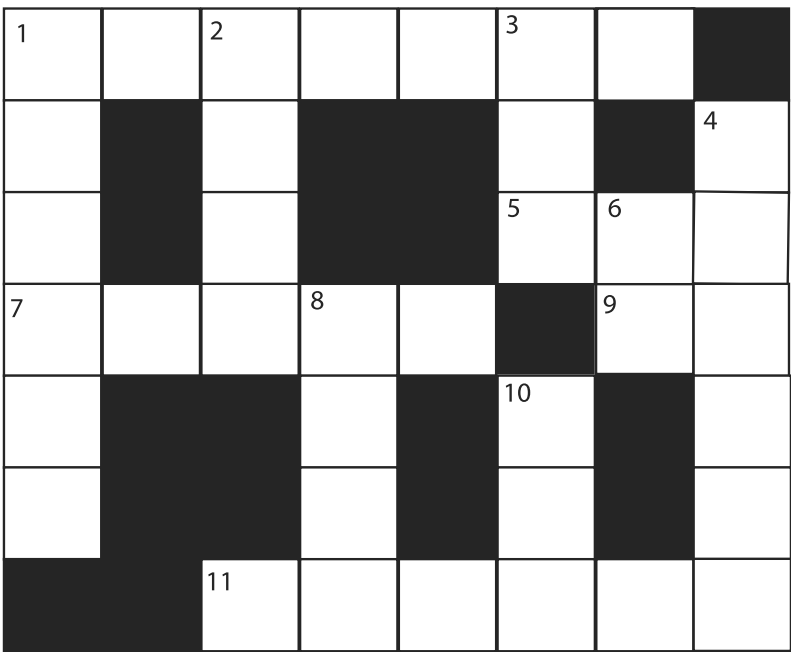


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Crossword Puzzle



- ACROSS
- DOWN
1. Heating up

5. Was victorious

7. Ground

9. Negative

11. Cleared away
1. Cold season

2. In back

3. Currently

4. ____ in: blocked by snow

6. Opposite of “off”

8. Not fake

10. Line of things

Answers:
Across
1. Warming 5. Won 7. Terra 9. No 11. Plowed
Down
1. Winter 2. Rear 3. Now 4. Snowed 6. On
8. Real 10. Row

THIS DAY IN...



HISTORY

- 1154: HENRY II OF ENGLAND IS CROWNED AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY.
- 1924: THE LAST ROLLS ROYCE SILVER GHOST IS SOLD IN LONDON.
- 1972: APOLLO 17 SPLASHES DOWN IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN, MARKING AN END TO THE APOLLO PROGRAM OF MANNED LUNAR LANDINGS.



IN WHAT MONTH OF THE YEAR DOES WINTER BEGIN IN THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE?

ANSWER: JUNE



FRIGID

very cold in temperature

How they SAY that in...

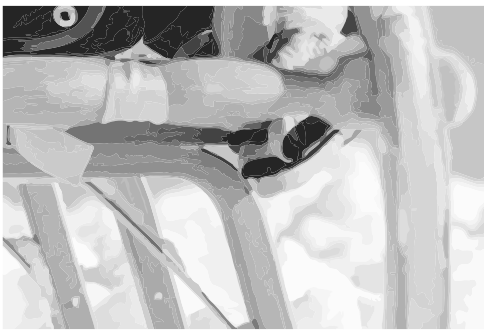
- ENGLISH: Coat
- SPANISH: Abrigo
- ITALIAN: Cappotto
- FRENCH: Manteau
- GERMAN: Mantel

Did You Know?

SKIING AND SNOWBOARDING ARE POPULAR WINTER SPORTS THAT DRAW MILLIONS TO THE SLOPES.



GET THE PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

ANSWER: SLED

CRYPTO FUN

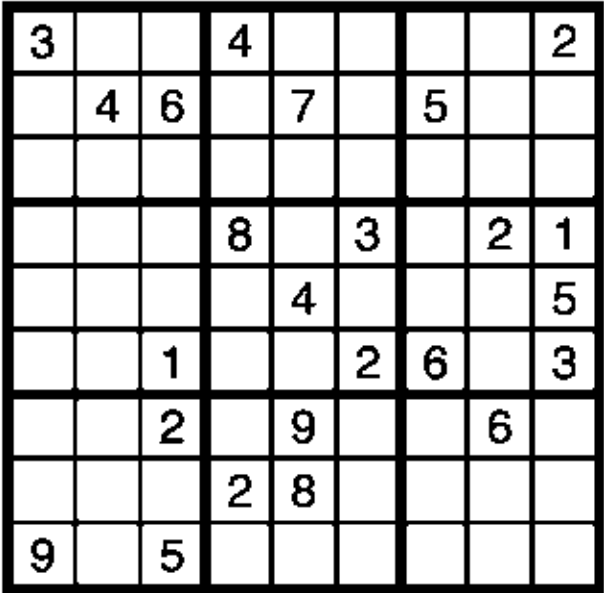
Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to resolutions.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 13 = i)

- A. 12 15 17 25 13 4 20
Clue: Donations
- B. 24 13 4 11 14 26 26
Clue: Exercise
- C. 26 1 9 22 13 11 10
Clue: Bad habit
- D. 1 9 11 14 20
Clue: Finances

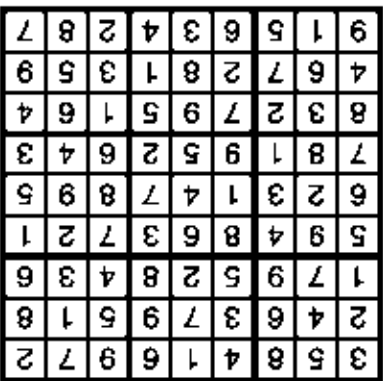
Answers: A. charity B. fitness C. smoking D. money

SUDOKU



Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!



ANSWER:

Fun By The Numbers
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SE TRIM • GREAT ON GAS

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2014 FORD ESCAPE SE #P11206L • 4X4, MOONROOF, TURBOCHARGED, 17" ALLOYS	\$18,755 AS LOW AS \$205/month	2012 NISSAN TITAN V8 #P11178 • 4X4, ALLOY WHEELS, CREW CAB, IPOD INPUT	\$26,888 AS LOW AS \$294/month
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