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Friday, August 14, 2020

# Charlton recovers from Isaias



Charlton firefighters work to remove fallen tree limbs from the roadway after Hurricane Isaias

BY JASON BLEAU  
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON - Hurricane turned Tropical Storm Isaias became the first major storm of 2020 to push through New England on Tuesday, Aug. 4, leaving more than 200,000 without power in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, including around 840 customers in Charlton.

Charlton Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director Ed Knopf said as of Friday, Aug. 7, the town's power was fully restored. The storm toppled trees and power lines throughout the town causing numerous road closures but, thankfully, no fires or injuries. Wind speeds throughout the state ranged from 40 to 80 miles per hour lasting for hours after experts

originally expected a weaker and shorter storm.

However, for Chief Knopf and his crew, they've grown to expect these kind of weather events especially with two tornados striking nearby communities over the last ten years.

"I think with everybody else we've become more receptive to the possibility that these types of things are going to occur. Ten or fifteen years ago nobody would have ever thought about a tornado. It was a once in a generation thing. Now they seem to be popping up more and more. I think within the town it's a coordinated effort with police, fire, the DPW and the town hall when we respond to these disasters. Early on, quite frankly we weren't expecting too much out of this storm other than some winds," said the chief.

Knopf gave credit to National Grid for their response efforts after the town was issued a dedicated liaison to help improve communication. Town officials worked with the power provider to prioritize roadways for reopening and recovery making for a seamless cleanup effort.

Looking to the future, Chief Knopf said they will continue to learn from this storm to help improve their response. While Charlton feels they have an effective emergency plan, they're always looking for ways to improve and Hurricane Isaias provided a good opportunity for the town to learn and be even more prepared for the next inevitable weather event.

"I think you're fooling yourself or putting yourself at a dis-

Please Read **ISAIAS**, page **A3**

# Bay Path holds graduation ceremony

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School in Charlton held its 2020 Graduation on July 25 with three separate ceremonies.

When parents entered the Bay Path grounds, the driveway was lined with all graduating student pictures. The Sturbridge Minuteman Society was represented by three members who discharged their muskets after the National Anthem in memory of all those who have suffered from Covid-19 virus.

The graduation ceremony was held in the front of the school with parents and students in cars. Students walked across the red carpet to receive their diploma. Their families could take pictures and were socially distanced. Students continued to walk to receive their gift from the class as well as their yearbook. They returned to



their cars, and at the end of the ceremony all senior class officers stood in front of the class to present the Class of 2020 and perform the turning of the tassels. Live speeches were held at all three ceremonies. Graduates and their families were met with a banner that said, "Victory Lane - Bay Path 2020 - We are proud of you!" Upon exiting, the banner message was "Congratulations Bay Path 2020! Go create your future!"

All student images throughout the ceremonies were projected onto a 30 foot screen for all to see including a power point with individual pictures and careers listed for each student. Multiple comments from students were received as they were happy to receive their diploma in hand

Bay Path's message to graduates -- This is your year, Bay Path 2020!

# Flamingo fundraiser benefits Chip-In Food Pantry

BY JASON BLEAU  
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON – During the entirety of the entirety of the COVID-19 pandemic the Chip-In Food Pantry has been hard at work providing food assistance and other resources to those in need throughout the community. The pantry got a little assistance from a local neighborhood in July after neighbors came together for a popular fundraiser called flocking.

The fundraiser involves the use of pink plastic flamingos which are passed from property to property encouraging those who have been "flocked" to make a donation to a cause to have them removed. While the donation is not required the activity is often seen as a fun way to unite individuals for a cause and has been used to benefit school programs and other causes in the past.

Melissa Finnegan of Hyde Road in Charlton saw the event as a way to not only embrace the unity in her close-knit neighborhood but also help out an organization they felt was playing a significant role in helping



Photo Courtesy

A few youngsters show off flamingos that "flocked" their house.

Please Read **FLOCKED**, page **A12**

# Public Safety Building to appear on November ballot

BY JASON BLEAU  
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON – Charlton voters will once again make their voices heard on the proposed Public Safety Building project, this time during the Nov. 3 presidential election where town officials hope to get a larger sample of voters to decide on the funding mechanism for the project.

The initiative has been one of the hottest topics of discussion for over a year after voters approved \$28.5 million for the project in May of 2019 before voting against a debt exclusion question in a special election later in the year. The Public Safety Building Committee went to work trying to adjust the project to make the cost and layout more palatable for voters while also doing justice to the project's purpose of replacing the aged

police and fire departments. In December a capital campaign committee was founded to help gain financial backing to offset at least \$200,000 of the cost associated with the proposed 40,300-square-foot facility which would be erected on Masonic Home Road.

Despite some pushback from opponents and the misconception that voting down the Proposition 2½ debt exclusion killed the project, the Public Safety Building Committee spend the later part of 2019 and the first half of 2020 working with selectmen to finalize a new plan to bring before voters once more in what is expected to be a busy Election Day in November that they feel will provide a larger and more accurate sampling of the voters' opinions.

Captain Rob Barton of the Charlton Fire Department told the Stonebridge Press

that after an extensive public meeting in July the Board of Selectmen voted to put an article on the ballot for November asking voters for a debt exclusion of \$26.9 million, the remaining amount allocated from the project after design costs and taking into account the \$200,000 donation goal. The tax impact to the average single-family home would be around \$255 per year. Captain Barton said the cost of the project cannot exceed the budgeted number being requested before voters and that a debt exclusion would make the cost of borrowing only a temporary burden on taxpayers that will be removed once the debt is fully paid off.

Captain Barton further explained that the Building Committee did explore numerous options, including removing the police department from the plans, but it was decided



Photo Courtesy

An artist's rendering of the proposed Charlton Public Safety Building.

with input from selectmen and the designers that it would be most cost effective to build the facility with both the police and fire department in mind from the start.

"The committee went back to the Board of Selectmen and recommended we do a fire station only. It was determined that it wasn't really a viable option because of the way the building needed to be positioned and situated and the uncertainty that the police station would ever be added on. It effects the inner workings

of the building, the electrical system, the HVAC system, the plumbing system and all that. The Board of Selectmen felt the most financially sound decision was that it should still be a public safety building and we should still move forward trying to define the building more specifically," Captain Barton said.

A Web site has been set up to provide Charlton residents with as much information as possible about the project including a financial break-

Please Read **BUILDING**, page **A4**



# Help kids feel comfortable at the dentist



Routine dental examinations and cleanings are an important component of oral healthcare for both children and adults. However, many children do not visit the dentist until well after the time recommended by medical and dental professionals. Parents may be unaware of the dental health timeline, or they could be reluctant to bring their children for fear of how their kids will

behave — especially if parents are harboring their own apprehensions about the dentist.

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry recommends that a child go to the dentist by age 1, or within six months of the eruption of his or her first tooth. Yet, according to a survey commissioned by Delta Dental Plans, the average age of a child’s first dental visit is 2.6 years.

Parents worried about how their kids will respond to the dentist can take the following steps to acclimate kids to dental visits to make them more comfortable during their appointments now and down the road.

- Be a positive role model. Children frequently learn by example. If they see their parents being diligent about dental care, they’re more likely to embrace proper oral hygiene. Bring children to your own dental appointments so they understand the process and become familiar with the type of equipment used.

- Stick to the first-tooth milestone. Take your child to the dentist on or about when his or her first tooth erupts. Early dental visits will get kids used to going to the dentist and prevent minor problems that may lead to more complex dental issues.
- Read books about the dentist and role play. Information can allay kids’ fears about the dentist. Read books together about dental visits and act out possible scenarios with your kids. Give kids toy dental health tools and have them practice exams on you and vice-versa.
- Be supportive and instill trust. Avoid telling your child that everything will be okay. If a procedure is needed, this could affect his or her trust in you and make the dental office an even greater source of anxiety. Simply be supportive and offer a hand to squeeze or a hug if your child needs you.

- Consider using your dentist. Some parents like to take their children to a pediatric dentist, but it may not always be necessary. Many family practices cater to patients of all ages, and the familiarity of the office may help make children feel more comfortable. Speak with your dentist about the ages they see.
  - Steer clear of negative words. Michael J. Hanna, DMD, a national spokesperson for the AAPD, suggests using positive phrases like “clean, strong, healthy teeth” to make the visit seem fun and positive rather than scary and alarming. Let the office staff come up with their own words to describe processes that won’t seem too frightening.
- By employing these techniques, kids’ dental visits can be more pleasant for all involved, paving the way for a lifetime of healthy teeth.

## How parents can get kids excited about brushing their teeth

Dental hygiene is an important component of a healthy lifestyle, but it’s an element youngsters rarely embrace with open arms. Parents know that getting kids, especially young children, to brush their teeth is not always so easy. In recognition of that, the American Dental Association suggests the following strategies to make brushing teeth something kids will look forward to.

- Make it fun. Brushing teeth may not be considered a fun activity, but who’s to say it can’t benefit from a little levity? The ADA recommends turning tooth brushing sessions into dance parties and/or sing-alongs. Youngsters might be so busy cutting a rug or listening to mom and dad belt out a few hits that they don’t even realize they’re cleaning their teeth at the same time. If singing and



dancing aren’t cutting it, then incorporate another fun activity, like reading a child his or her favorite story, into daily brushing sessions. The ADA advises adults and children to brush their teeth for two minutes twice a day, so activities need not be too advanced. But a fun activity that allows kids to do something other than brush their teeth can be a great way to help them meet the “two minutes,

- two times” guideline.
- Reward good behavior. Parents can reward youngsters who brush their teeth without incident by offering praise or allowing them to pick a bedtime book when brushing at night.
- Put kids’ favorite characters to work. The ADA notes that many popular children’s television shows and books have stories about brushing teeth. Watch these stories with your

children, then reference the stories and characters if kids are reluctant to brush their teeth. Parents also can find toothbrushes and/or toothpaste that feature kids’ favorite characters to get youngsters more excited to brush.

- Become a storyteller. Parents also can make up their own stories, explaining to kids how they can be superheroes who brush away the bad guys that cause cavities.
- Brush alongside your children. Kids love to mimic their parents, so moms and dads can brush alongside their youngsters in the hopes they’ll follow suit.

Many children may never jump at the chance to brush their teeth. But parents can employ a few savvy strategies to make daily brushing sessions more fun for youngsters.

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TEETH  
MATTER

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BACK TO SCHOOL DENTAL EXAMS

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BAY STATE SAVINGS BANK HOSTS FUNDRAISER  
BENEFITTING SERVICE DOGS

*Photo Courtesy*

Bay State Savings Bank is proud to announce the success of its month-long fundraiser in support NEADS, a nationally recognized, ADI Accredited 501 c(3) nonprofit that trains highly-skilled Service Dogs to help people who are deaf or have a physical disability, veterans suffering from PTSD, or children with autism or other developmental disabilities. The fundraiser was held in honor of the Bank's mascot, Benjie, who celebrated his first birthday on June 27. In total, \$6,410 was raised to benefit the NEADS organization, all of which will go directly towards supporting the dogs. Bay State Savings Bank would like to thank everyone who helped support the fundraiser and ensured its success.



ACCURACY WATCH

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

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

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

ISAIAS

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advantage if you don't take a look at each storm to see what you can learn from it," said the chief. "The expectation that the wind wasn't going to be a big deal was something that caught me off guard. I think if we had to do it again, same situation, we may have opened up an emergency operation center but with the combined effort throughout the town I think we handled it well. We were a lot more fortunate than a lot of other towns that got hit harder. As with every incident though you take away what you can from it and learn."

University of Maine  
announces Dean's List

Join the  
Green Gold Team!

ORONO, Maine — The University of Maine recognized 4,210 students for achieving Dean's List honors in the Spring 2020 semester. Of the students who made the Dean's List, 2,769 are from Maine, 1,333 are from 41 other states and 108 are from 43 countries other than the U.S.

Charlton: Matthew Johnson, Grace MacGrath

Charlton City: Isabelle Boria

About the University of Maine The University of Maine, founded in Orono in 1865, is the state's land grant, sea grant and space grant university. It is located on Marsh Island in the homeland of the Penobscot Nation. As Maine's flagship public university, UMaine has a statewide mission of teaching, research and economic development, and community service. UMaine is the state's

only public research university and among the most comprehensive higher education institutions in the Northeast. It attracts students from all 50 states and more than 70 countries. UMaine currently enrolls 11,561 undergraduate and graduate students who have opportunities to participate in groundbreaking research with world-class scholars. UMaine offers more than 100 degree programs through which students can earn master's, doctoral or professional science master's degrees, as well as graduate certificates. The university promotes environmental stewardship, with substantial efforts campuswide to conserve energy, recycle and adhere to green building standards in new construction. For more information about UMaine, visit umaine.edu.

SOUTHBRIDGE — Green Gold Group will be having a Job Fair on Wednesday, Aug. 19 from 4-8 p.m. at the Southbridge Hotel and Conference Center, 14 Mechanic St. in Southbridge.

Green Gold Group is seeking hardworking, dedicated team members for exciting new roles in the regulated cannabis

industry. Available roles include cultivation, harvest and trim team members, lab technician/extraction artist, packaging machine operators, licensed HVAC technician, budtender/retail team, security/transport team and kitchen team. All positions subject to background check/CORI. All social distancing

guidelines will be enforced; therefore, pre-registration is required. Please email HR@greengold.group or call 774-251-9888 to obtain your appointment window. Masks must be worn and hand sanitizer will be provided.

Don't miss out on this exciting opportunity to join the Green Gold team!

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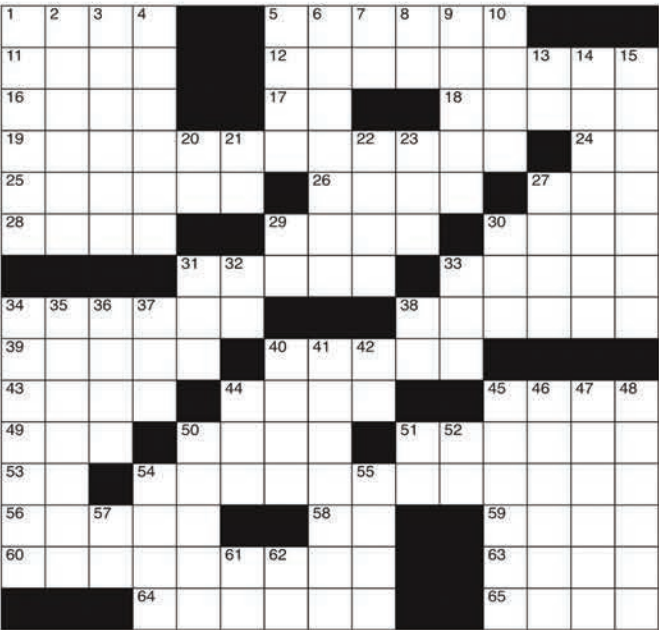


# Local students receive Bachelor's degrees from UMass Amherst

A M H E R S T — Approximately 6,600 students received Bachelor's degrees in more than 100 majors at the University of Massachusetts Amherst as the university held a virtual commencement celebration for the Class of 2020 on May 8.

CHARLTON  
Wyatt Thomas Caswell

Haley Elena Chupka  
Rebecca Frances Davison  
Ariana Marie Faubert  
Jasmine J Inim  
Kimberly Michelle Mazejka  
Bryan William Porth  
Meaghan Ashby Turner  
Maxwell Christopher Winalski  
Eliza Wolkowicz

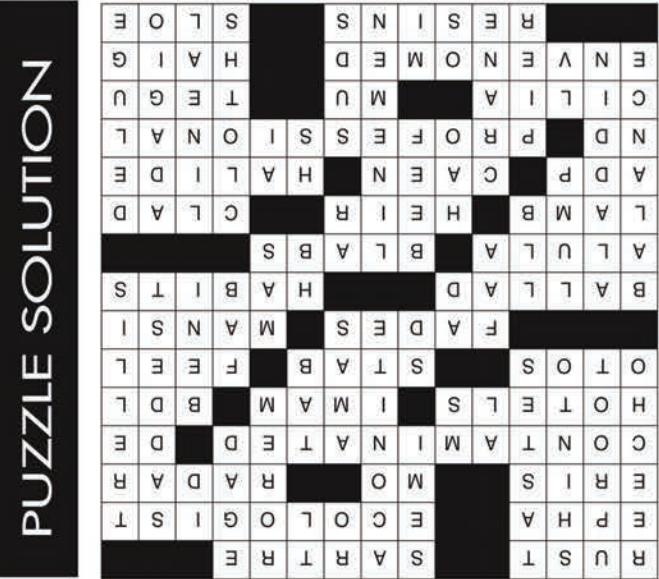


CLUES ACROSS

1. Corrode  
5. Jean Paul \_\_, author  
11. Hebrew unit of dry measure  
12. A type of scientist  
16. Greek goddess of discord  
17. For Red Sox MVP  
18. It checks your speed  
19. Made dirty  
24. The First State  
25. Lodgings  
26. Spiritual leader  
27. Bradley Int'l Airport code  
28. Native American people  
29. Sharp pain  
30. Touch  
31. Slowly disappears  
33. Indigenous Russian people  
34. Narrative poem  
38. Some are bad
39. Small quill feathers  
40. Tattles  
43. Popular Easter entree  
44. Beneficiary  
45. Clothed  
49. Payroll firm  
50. Lower Normandy's largest city  
51. Binary compound of halogen  
53. The Fighting Irish  
54. Skilled, paid worker  
56. Eyelashes  
58. The 12th letter of the Greek alphabet  
59. Large, stocky lizard  
60. Made poisonous  
63. Former US Secretary of State  
64. Sticky substances  
65. A type of gin

CLUES DOWN

1. To return an echo  
2. Displace  
3. Japanese religion  
4. Predilections  
5. Partial  
6. Poisonous plant  
7. Road open  
8. Atomic #81  
9. Accomplished American composer  
10. Oh, God!  
13. Potato state  
14. Most melancholic  
15. Supportive framework  
20. Hollywood's Pacino  
21. A title for women  
22. Popular Grammys alternative  
23. Check  
27. Bolivian river  
29. South Dakota  
30. Wonderful  
31. Supervises flying  
32. Commercial
33. More (Spanish)  
34. Even distribution of weight  
35. "Arabian Nights" hero  
36. Compact mass of a substance  
37. Bachelor of Laws  
38. Halfback  
40. Some of it is ground  
41. They play in the trenches  
42. Atomic #18  
44. Chinese Prefecture  
45. Fabrics  
46. Being in a direct line of descent from an ancestor  
47. In slow tempo  
48. Flood  
50. Long-necked bird  
51. Secondary school  
52. Artificial intelligence  
54. Structure by the water  
55. Lather  
57. What happens there stays there  
61. A bone  
62. The Great Lakes State



# SAYING GOODBYE TO FAMILY IS ALWAYS HARD

Photo Courtesy

On Aug. 6, a small group of family and friends gathered at Quinebaug Lodge to say goodbye, good luck and a big thank you to Bryon and Niki Hicks. Bryon has taken a new position at General Dynamics in Ohio. Quinebaug Lodge presented Wor. Bryon a Certificate of Appreciation. Bryon has been a member since 2010 and has been a cornerstone of this lodge and the members appreciate his unselfish service and dedication. Freemasonry will continue to thrive because of men like Bryon who step forward to show the world what it truly means to be a Mason. Bryon and Niki have volunteered for many, many events and will always be a part of the Quinebaug Lodge family. Members of Quinebaug Lodge will deeply miss Bryon and Niki, and wish them both the absolute best in their new endeavors in life.



# BUILDING

continued from page A1

down, the current plans for the building, details on the existing conditions of both departments justifying the investment and other resources. This website was put together and paid for out of pocket by Charlton's Town Administrator Andrew Golas who in an interview said he wanted to make sure there was a resource online providing accurate information to make sure citizens made an educated decision for or against the debt exclusion.

"From what I heard from the Board of Selectmen and the Building Committee from the last vote is that there was a lot of misinformation that was out there. When I kind of tried to look for stuff about the project there really wasn't a lot online other than the public forums. I figured that leading up to this vote in order for the residents to make the most knowledgeable decision it made sense to put all of the information about the project in one place where they could look and try to be as unbiased as possible to get all the facts," Golas said.

He added that the feeling

of the Board of Selectmen is that the Building Committee "did their due diligence" in looking at options to help make this project cost efficient while properly considering the needs of the town. Captain Barton said he hopes voters will examine all the information provided before they make their decision in November and encouraged everyone to embrace the facts and to make an educated decision.

"Everybody, whether you're completely for it or if you're against it, should still become educated on the project. It is their building. It's the largest project the town of Charlton has ever undertaken. It's a \$28.5 million building at 40,300 square feet, that's a very large building. I really encourage all the taxpayers to do your due diligence and truly get an understanding of the need and the project," said the Captain.

Details about the Charlton Public Safety Building project can be located at [www.charltonpublicsafetybuilding.com](http://www.charltonpublicsafetybuilding.com) where voters can also access a tax impact projection tool and other resources to assist them in deciding whether or not to support the debt exclusion question this November.

# CHARLTON ALMANAC

## OPEN TO CLOSE

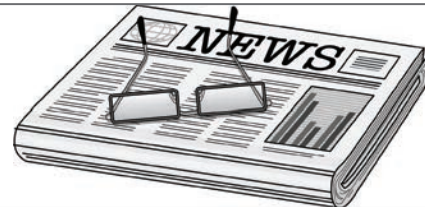
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Tuesdays..... 7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
*Town Clerk (248-2249):*  
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Tuesday..... 7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
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Heritage School ..... (508) 248-4884  
Charlton Middle School..... (508) 248-1423  
Shepherd Hill Regional High School  
..... (508) 943-6700  
Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical  
High School (508) 248-5971 or (508) 987-0326

## CHURCH LISTINGS

- **Charlton Federated Church**, 64 Main St., Pastor James Chase, 248-5550, Sunday worship 10:30 a.m. [www.fedchurchcharlton.org](http://www.fedchurchcharlton.org)
- **Charlton Baptist Church**, 50 Hammond Hill Road, 248-4488, [www.charltonbaptist.org](http://www.charltonbaptist.org), Sunday worship 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.
- **Charlton City United Methodist**, 74 Stafford St. 248-7379, web site: [CharltonCityUMC.com](http://CharltonCityUMC.com), Sunday worship 10:30 am, Sunday School 9 am.
- **St. Joseph's Church**, 10 H. Putnam Ext. 248-7862. [www.stjosephscharlton.com](http://www.stjosephscharlton.com), Saturday Vigil Mass 4:30 p.m., Sunday Mass 8 a.m., Sunday Family Mass 10 a.m., Sunday LifeTEEN Mass 5 p.m., Weekday Mass Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 a.m.
- **Hope Christian Fellowship**, 6 Haggerty Road, 248-5144
- **Assemblies of God Southern New England District Headquarters**, Route 20, 248-3771, [sneag.org](http://sneag.org), Office hours Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Lamblight Christian Church**, 37 Main Street - Grange building 1st Floor, Charlton, Ma 01507, Rev. Stephen Wade, (774) 452-2393 - Pastor's Cell, Sunday Service 10:30am. [www.visitlamblight.com](http://www.visitlamblight.com)
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# Old-fashioned dessert gets a kick from fruit

While the focus of a tasty recipe is often on the finished product, no delicious dish could be crafted without the necessary ingredients. Cornmeal is a versatile ingredient that's used in a wide range of dishes, from pizza to desserts to much, much more.

This slow-cooker recipe for "Cornmeal Pudding" from "The Healthy Slow Cooker (Second Edition)" (Robert Rose) by Judith Finlayson lets the appliance do most of the work. After several hours you are rewarded with a tasty treat.

- Fruit-Studded Cornmeal Pudding  
Makes 8 servings
- 4 cups milk or non-dairy alternative
  - 2/3 cup stone-ground cornmeal
  - 3 eggs, beaten
  - 1/4 cup butter
  - 1/2 fancy molasses
  - 1 teaspoon ground ginger
  - 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
  - 1 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
  - 1/4 teaspoon sea salt

Dried fruit of choice, such as cherries

In a saucepan, heat milk over medium heat, stirring often to prevent scorching, until boiling. Gradually whisk in cornmeal in a steady stream. Cook, stirring, until mixture begins to thicken and bubbles like lava, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat.


In a small bowl, combine eggs with about 1/2 cup of the hot cornmeal, beating until combined. Gradually return to pot, mixing well. Stir in butter, molasses, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt. Transfer to prepared stoneware.

Place a tea towel folded in half (so you will have two layers) over top of stoneware to absorb moisture. Cover and cook on high for 3 hours, until set. About half an hour before the pudding

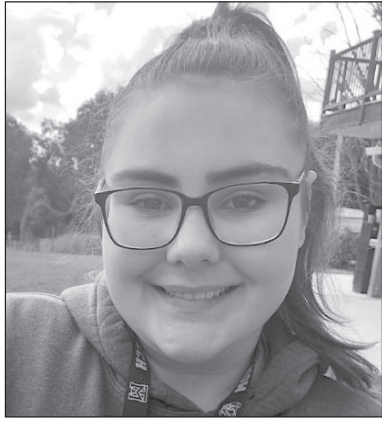


has finished cooking, stir in 1/2 cup dried fruit of your choice. Spoon into individual serving bowls and top with fresh fruit, vanilla ice cream or a dollop of whipped cream, if using.

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## Friday's Child



**Gabriella**  
Age 14

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Gabriella, also known as Gabby, is a smart and creative young woman of Caucasian descent. She is very talented and enjoys painting, drawing, and baking, which are just a few of her creative outlets. Gabby enjoys spending time with friends and family watching television. A typical teenager, she often connects with friends via social media and loves animals. Gabby appreciates her alone time and can be quiet, but at times is very talkative with friends and familiar adults. She has a witty sense of humor and is easy to get along with.

Gabby aspires to attend college in the future and is currently in the cosmetology program at her vocational high school. Gabby is able to build strong relationships with teachers and adults, which helps her accomplish her goals. She thrives when she has a routine with clear expectations.


Legally freed for adoption, Gabby is looking for her forever home. She is self-sufficient and able to take care of her own needs, but hopes to find the love and support of a forever family. Gabby will do well in a family consisting of a single female, two females, or a male/female couple. She would benefit from being the only child or having older siblings in the home. Gabby looks forward to having a support network that is stable and able to stick by her side through all that life has to offer.

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# Easy appetizer for entertaining

Impromptu entertaining can be a fun way to get together with friends or family without the pressures of hosting more formal affairs. But hosts will still need to provide some refreshments for their guests, and having some easy recipes at the ready can make it easy to pull together a few bites in a hurry.

An arsenal of appetizers and small plates at the ready can feed a few or a crowd. By sticking with simple fare of readily sourced ingredients — including staples kept in the refrigerator and pantry — it's a snap to entertain. This recipe for "Flaky Tomato and Mozzarella Tart" from "Real Simple: Easy, Delicious Home Cooking" (Time Home Entertainment) by the editors of Real Simple, is a recipe that can be pulled out time and again for anytime entertaining.

**Flaky Tomato and Mozzarella Tart**  
Serves 4

- All-purpose flour, for the work surface
- 1/2 sheet frozen puff pastry (one-quarter of a 17.3-ounce package) thawed
- 1 cup grape or cherry tomatoes, halved if large
- 1/4 pound mozzarella, grated (1 cup)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Kosher salt and black pepper

Heat oven to 425 F. Line a baking sheet with parchment. On a lightly floured surface, roll the pastry into a 9-by-6-inch rectangle. Place on the prepared baking sheet and refrigerate until firm, at least 30 minutes.

Prick the pastry all over with a fork, then top with the tomatoes and mozzarella. Drizzle with the oil; season with 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Bake the tart until golden brown and cooked through, 20 to 25 minutes. Cut into pieces before serving.

Tip: Be sure to use commercially packaged mozzarella in this recipe. Fresh mozzarella loses its water during baking and will leave the pastry soggy. PC198178

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A challenge...  
and an  
opportunity

School this fall will be an unprecedented experience for students from pre-school all the way through graduate school. With districts ironing out re-opening plans, it's important to remain patient and to withhold judgement. Administrators are working with their respective state guidelines, communities and experts in every aspect of education, and health to keep staff, students and families safe. Now is not the time to be a know-it-all because the fact will always remain, that we don't know it all, and never will.

At this time, it's best to leave things up to the experts and remember that this is only temporary. The powers that be as far as re-opening goes, are doing the best they can, given the unfortunate and unpredictable circumstances they've been put in. The only thing left to do is to be supportive. Anything apart from that is simply counter-productive.

Students of all ages are experiencing all sorts of feelings, and not necessarily in a negative way; however, we do know that some are. Children and teens need each other now more than ever. Parents, extended family members, older siblings and community members need to set the example of what resiliency looks like. Yes, this fall will be difficult, especially for single working parents whose option to home school is null. In those cases, we can only hope there will be some sort of respite offered in each community for those in need.

What we need to remember is that children are resilient, to varying degrees. Most children are capable of working through tough times and managing stress in their own way. We just need to pay attention and keep an eye out. Resilience is something that we all develop as we grow, each time we face a challenge, adversity or any sort of trauma or failure.

As parents, we wish we could protect our children from harm's way or from facing any sort of adversity. There will always be bullies, grief, heartbreak and all sorts of obstacles. Global pandemic is new on the list, but alas here we are. How we react matters. Our children are watching and listening to all of us. Remember that what seems small to us, seems much larger to a child.

Experts tell us to arm your children with confidence to face their problems, so that they know, they have the tools to confront tough things. When they can self soothe and bounce back independently, they grow and become stronger and more resilient.

Oftentimes when parents jump in too much to solve their children's issues (albeit with good intentions), it can weaken their resilience and ability to problem solve on their own. Without the ability to problem solve, children may encounter more anxiety in the future. Of course, age plays a role with guidance and we have faith that most parents know what is best for their children.

One tip from experts is to make sure to spend plenty of one on one time with your child so they know they are loved and supported unconditionally. These positive connections give parents and adults a chance to model resiliency.

Having your child take what's called a 'healthy risk' is important. This simply means, letting them step outside of their comfort zones, knowing that if they fail, little harm will occur. When children avoid taking risks, they are teaching themselves that they aren't capable to tackle challenges.

If your child comes to you with an issue, respond by asking them questions on how their specific problem should be solved. We like this one, and had one reader tell us that she has been having her children watch episodes of the television show "MacGyver," whose main character's defining trait is his ability to think on his feet and improvise his way out of challenging situations. We're not suggesting letting kids figure everything out for themselves, we all need help at times.

Make sure your children know what kind of emotion they are having, and let them know those feelings are normal and will pass. Lead by example. Teach your children that exercise is important and any other activities that promote calm.

While we wish there was a quick fix, there just isn't one. During this pandemic, we need to stay positive and teach our children the power of optimism. There's a quote that explains this perfectly: "The way you perceive a specific situation is determined by your frame of mind. If your frame of mind and thoughts are positive, you will always be in a position to seize the opportunities that are before you."

# OPINION

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

## To the Editor Announcing my candidacy for State Rep

To the Editor:  
I'm the most qualified candidate to serve as your next State Representative for the 7th Worcester District of Millbury, Auburn, Charlton's Precinct 4, and Oxford's Precincts 2 & 3.

I'm an Independent candidate...and I believe in workingG for a living.

After more than 22 years of taking your money, my opponent, Paul Frost's reason for you to reelect him is a "100 percent voting attendance." From the numbers on his website, that means showing up an average of approximately 24 days a year for roll call votes, to cast 12 votes. How long would you last in your job if you only showed up about 24 days a year?

I served 33 years in the Military Reserve in the USANG, USAFR, USNR, and USMC, with "Honor" and "100 percent Attendance." My last deployment was in Afghanistan. As a leading Petty Officer, I helped my units earn "Outstanding Unit Citations." Among my personal awards were «Outstanding Airman of the Quarter», and «Outstanding Sailor of the Quarter.»

My campaign signs have an American flag, and are Red, White, and Blue. Frost's are Yellow.

Over the years, I have never found him at the State House. Use elevator 5/6 at the side entrance, pass by all the janitorial supplies and stored water and furniture, until you come to the locked door of Room 542. That's Frost's office, 15 steps from the Military Wing, and they don't know who he is.

He pleads to keep his job until he can retire at age 60, so that he can put his 3 daughters thru college. Most of us have to work second jobs and take out loans. He hasn't exerted the effort to better himself in preparation for another job. That's no reason to be reelected.

He claims he fights for state local aid

for our town's schools, roads, etc. State Aid is based on formulas of population, road mileage, employment levels, etc. He doesn't "fight" for them. He announces these predetermined payments to the towns in newspapers to impress you.

I was recently reelected to the Millbury Planning Board. I will continue to serve there as well as the Millbury's Ponds and Lakes Commission and Youth Commission.

I remain an active member of Millbury's Veterans' Council, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary, American Legion, and the Vietnam Veterans of Auburn.

I support:

- Law and Order
- The Second Amendment
- Treating destruction and/or harm done to public or private property or people as a punishable crime
- Full funding for local and state police with additional "Restraint Training" like teachers take
- Open dialog in public sessions to discuss and attempt to resolve issues of serious concern, instead of resorting to violence
- Better access to Mental Health Providers
- Better access to Social Workers
- Better Mental Health and Health Care for Veterans
- Reducing and freezing real estate taxes for Senior Citizens
- Reducing interest rates on Student Loans
- iPads and Technology back-up for 1-12 public school students
- Fill in the "Dot" for Dotson.
- Thank you,

TERRY BURKE DOTSON  
MILLBURY

## Giving up is easy. Anyone can do it!

As you read this, I'm checked in at the Holden Cancer Center at the University of Iowa. I came here with a positive plan to improve my health. I was full of optimism and my spir-its were high. The plan was to have my stomach removed, but things do not always go according to plan. When they went in, they found that my cancer was spread and inoperable.

As I've mentioned before, I have Stage 4 Stomach Cancer. There is no cure and I didn't want to lay around waiting for the inevitable end, so I found a Doctor who's a fighter and we are working to defy the odds and extend my life.

In February, I was given nine to 12 months to live by a Doctor that was convinced I was dying. So, I fired that Negative Doctor and began searching for an optimist and found him.

Dr. Kasi walked into the exam room with his entire team and said, "I hear you want to fight this diagnosis?" I said that I did, and he said with enthusiasm, "We are your team!"

I had undergone eight rounds of chemo and on Friday, my stomach was supposed to be removed. Yeah, it's not a cure but our hopes were that it can extend my life up to five years and in that extra time, we'd find a way to extend it five more. That was the plan, but plans change when presented with new information. Now we have a new plan we are optimistically pursuing.

Why am I sharing this personal health info?

Because there is no such thing as darkness. What we call darkness is absence of light. As such, there is no such thing as an insurmountable problem, but only the absence of an idea that creates a solution.

I refuse to give up on my life. I want you to also, not give up on your goals, dreams, and yes, life. Life's short. Go for it. Don't let anyone tell you that you can't achieve your goals and dreams. I have goals. I plan on seeing my eight and ten-year-old grandsons graduate from high school. I suspect I have grandchildren that are not yet conceived or



born that I want to meet and hold in my arms.

My books, "Playing with the Enemy" and "The Final Service" are both now in negotiation to become major motion pictures. I plan on living to see their premier. My book, "Fragrance of Lilacs" is sitting with a publisher now. I plan on seeing it in print and on shelves. I can go on and on ... the point is that I have plans, dreams, and goals that I'm not willing to give up on. I'm stubborn this way. I plan on writing this column ten years from today,

I'm not going to let anyone, other than my creator tell me when it's time to go.

Being optimistic doesn't mean that everything turns out magically perfect. It never does, but being an optimist means you look beyond your problems in search of the solution that makes your dreams come true. In my case, I'm looking beyond a negative diagnosis to find the solution that gives me more life. Without optimism, I'd have given up already ... and I'm just not willing to quit.

What about you? What about your dreams? What was your passion before you gave up and said it was just too hard to achieve?

In the movie, "League of their Own," there is a scene where the star catcher, Dottie Hinson, played by Geena Davis, decides she is quitting and going home before the championship game. The manager, Jimmy Dugan, played by Tom Hanks stops her and has a discussion.

"(Baseball) It just got too hard," Dottie says.

Hinson responds, "It's supposed to be hard. If it wasn't hard everyone would do it. It's the hard that makes it great."

Achieving your goals and dreams isn't easy. Not giving up on your life when someone says its over is ridiculously hard. Not everyone succeeds. Most people are not optimistic.

It's hard being an optimist ... but it's the hard that makes it great.

Never give up. Never give in.

Always look beyond the problem and find the solution.

## How can you prepare for the "New Retirement?"

A generation or so ago, people didn't just retire from work – many of them also withdrew from a whole range of social and communal activities. But now, it's different: The large Baby Boom cohort, and no doubt future ones, are insisting on an active lifestyle and continued involvement in their communities and world. So, what should you know about this "new retirement?" And how can you prepare for it?



FINANCIAL  
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For starters, consider what it means to be a retiree today. The 2020 Edward Jones/Age Wave Four Pillars of the New Retirement study has identified these four interrelated, key ingredients, along with the connected statistics, for living well in the new retirement:

Health – While physical health may decline with age, emotional intelligence – the ability to use emotions in positive ways – actually improves, according to a well-known study from the University of California, among others. However, not surprisingly, retirees fear Alzheimer's and other types of dementia more than any physical ailment, including cancer or infectious diseases, according to the "Four Pillars" study.

Family – Retirees get their greatest emotional nourishment from family relationships – and they'll do anything it takes to help support those family members, even if it means sacrificing their own financial security. Conversely, retirees lacking close connections with family and friends are at risk for all the negative consequences resulting from physical and social isolation.

Purpose – Nearly 90 percent of Americans feel that there should be more ways for retirees to use their talents and knowledge for the benefit of their communities and society at large. Retirees want to spend their time in useful, rewarding ways – and they're well capable of doing so, given their decades of life experience. Retirees with a strong sense of purpose have happier, healthier lives and report a higher quality of life.

Finances – Retirees are less interested in accumulating more wealth than they are in having sufficient resources to achieve the freedom to live their lives as they choose. Yet, retirees frequently find that managing money in retirement can be even more challenging than saving for it. And the "unknowns" can be scary: Almost 70 percent of those who plan to retire in the next 10 years say they have no idea what their healthcare and long-term care costs will be in retirement.

So, if you're getting close to retirement, and you're considering these factors, how can you best integrate them into a fulfilling, meaningful way of life? You'll want to take a "holistic" approach by asking yourself some key questions: What do you want to be able to do with your time and money? Are you building the resources necessary to enjoy the lifestyle you've envisioned? Are you prepared for the increasing costs of health care as you age? Have you taken the steps to maintain your financial independence, and avoid burdening your family, in case you need some type of long-term care? Have you created the estate plans necessary to leave the type of legacy you desire?

By addressing these and other issues, possibly with the help of a financial professional, you can set yourself on the path toward the type of retirement that's not really a retirement at all – but rather a new, invigorating chapter of your life.

*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*

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## LETTERS

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We think you're important enough to tell all our readers to turn to the Opinion pages and read your Letters to the Editor.  
But first, you have to write us!  
Mail your letters to the Charlton Villager, P.O. Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550.  
Or e-mail your letters to the editor at news@stonebridgepress.news  
You'll need to provide your name and place of residence, along with a

phone number, so we can verify the letter is yours.  
We don't have a set limit, but if you keep it around 600 words or so, you're going to have a better chance at seeing all your words in print.  
If you want to write a bit longer about a particular issue, maybe a guest Your Turn column is your cup of tea. If you do that, try to keep it between 700-800 words.  
Remember, libelous remarks and/or personal attacks are a no-no and could lead to your letter not being published.  
So, what are you waiting for? Start writing!



# Keep an eye out for rocks when boating

Due to the lack of rain this year, many fresh water lakes and ponds are extremely low. Boaters need to be aware of structures like rocks and stumps that are normally submerged in some of their favorite waters which can cause serious damage to their motor or boat. Numerous reports by boaters in the last few weeks about hitting some of these submerged structures should be taken seriously. Fortunately, no injuries were reported from the anglers and family's that were involved.

The water quality is also a major concern to boaters and the swimming public. This past week, a local resident called me to report the smell of raw sewage at the lacky Dam Pond area. I visited the area last week and found the pond to be extremely low with very little water flow over the dam. Unfortunately, when the water becomes low the bottom residue at Lacky Pond is exposed, and is still polluted from years of dumping by mills upstream years ago.

Rotting weeds and algae are a common problem with low water conditions. Massachusetts Fish & Wildlife has control of the dam and could raise the water level by using the control arm at the dam. This writer was in charge of the dam's water flow for many years after the completion of the dam, but MFW now has taken responsibility. Residents should call MF&W

Central District or at the Boston office to get the water level raised.

If we do not get some relief by beneficial rain soon, we could see some fish kill at a few pond's in the coming days and weeks due to lack of oxygen. Eating fresh water fish at this time of year is not recommended by the Department of Public Health, from numerous bodies of water in the state. Bottom eating fish are likely to have worms in their meat, and also carry other forms of dangerous chemicals like mercury, which are found in most freshwater fish in local ponds and lakes. Bottom sediment in both the Blackstone River and Mumford River is still highly polluted, and will take many more generations before they are clean enough to swim in.

The Quabbin Reservoir is still open to fishing; however, the boat rentals are still not available to anglers that enjoy fishing on one the cleanest bodies of water in the state, not to forget to mention the great fishing it offers. Calling ahead to check on availability of boat rentals is recommended! Taking your own boat to the Quabbin can become very expensive, if you follow all of the rules in respect to boat washing.

If you are planning to take your



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boat to the Quabbin, you will need to travel to the Western part of the state to have your boat washed and cleaned by an authorized garage. To the best of my knowledge there are no local washing sites in our area, but you can call Fish & Wildlife for more information. The efforts to keep invasive weeds from getting into the Quabbin are a bit overblown, and have become very expensive for the boater and anglers to visit.

You need to make an appointment and pay a substantial amount of monies to have it done. After washing, you are cleared to take your boat to the Quabbin until you decide to use your boat in another lake pond or saltwater. When your boat is washed, it will have a tag affixed to the bow and wench. If it is broken or damaged, you will need to have it washed again. Concerns of invasive weeds being brought into the lake from other ponds on the bottom of boats, are the reasons for the strict regulations. You really need to have two boats, one for the Quabbin and one for the ocean and fresh water lakes and ponds.

The invasive weed problem in the state is becoming worse every year. Local lakes and ponds are covered with aggressive weeds that are main-

ly brought in by waterfowl, carrying seeds on their feathers and also from there feces. Some ponds have become totally covered by invasive species of weeds. Very little is being done to eradicate the weed problem. Purple loosestrife invasive weed is a big problem at Rice City Pond in Uxbridge. It has driven most waterfowl from the area ,and provides very little feed for waterfowl from other plants that were once abundant, like wild rice.

Technical difficulties prevented us from showing a photo sent in this week of Matt Fontain with a nice doormat fluke he caught last week in Rhode Island. The fish weighed five and a half pounds! The fish provided a few good meals for his family to enjoy. He is now hooked on fishing!

Hopefully, the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak is brought under control soon! Numerous outdoor Field Days by local Fish & Game Clubs are starting to plan their annual events, but only if the Covid situation improves dramatically. Life needs to get back to some form of normality! The Whitinsville Fish & Game Club is planning their annual Field Day for September, and others are doing the same. Stay tuned.

Take A Kid Fishing & Keep Them Rods Bending!



Regular readers of this column know that old advertising signs are popular and can be quite valuable. Companies also used other methods besides signs to promote their brands. Gas station pumps featured brand names on their pumps. Soda companies displayed their names on coolers full of their soda. Manufacturers gave clocks and thermometers to country stores and corner

markets to help promote their products. Many advertising thermometers are very valuable, but some can be affordable for novice collectors, too.

A 1991 Chicago Tribune article reported that Galileo “produced a thermoscope, which consisted of a large glass bulb with a long narrow open-mounted neck inverted over a container of colored water, alcohol or mercury.” Gabriel D. Fahrenheit invented a mercury thermometer in 1714 that was similar to those that we are familiar with today.

Most American advertising thermometers were produced between 1875 and 1940, according to the Chicago Tribune. Advertising thermometers were intended to be hung outside of buildings. Some were wood, but they were more typically made of all metal or enamel over metal. Most of the thermometers were vertical with rounded corners. Collectors Weekly’s website says that thermometers became popular in the 1920’s when “they were made by beverage, food, tobacco, automotive, and agricultural firms, as well as the health-care industry. These were hugely popular in rural areas, because knowing the temperature, as well as the wind direction, was key to predicting the weather.”

The usual antique assessment factors also apply to thermometers. Age, condition, and rarity all matter. Some advertising thermometers can be affordable



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

to average collectors. Five 1960’s thermometers including one for Royal Crown soda and one for Camels cigarettes sold for \$70 each at auction last month. A Sealtest Milk round thermometer recently went for \$120.

However, plenty of advertising thermometers are worth much more. A Champion Spark Plugs metal thermometer had two wheels that could be rotated to show different options for “weather forecast” and “check service.” It sold for \$7,000 in 2015. A 1950 rare turquoise colored Coca Cola thermometer that was believed to be one of a few in existence brought \$9,500 in 2016. A round thermometer for Red Hat Moto Oil reached \$11,500 in 2016. A rare Ace High Motor Oil thermometer fetched \$12,000 in 2010. A porcelain Campbell’s soup can with a thermom-

eter in the spot where the gold medal symbol appears heated up the auction floor when it sold for \$16,000 in 2014.

Our Warren, R.I. online estate auction includes some vintage advertising thermometers. The preview will be held on Sept. 12, with bidding ending on Sept. 16. We will also be running an estate sale at a Southborough, Mass. mansion on Aug. 22 and 23. The video of the webinar I presented on getting the most for your estate items is now available on our website. More information will also soon be available on the online auction and estate sale on [www.centralmassauctions.com](http://www.centralmassauctions.com).

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

# Tips to Pick the Fruits (and Vegetables) of Your Labor



TAKE  
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KAREN  
TRAINOR

The pleasures of the New England harvest season are truly bountiful. Ripe, red tomatoes heavy on the vine, stately rows of corn stalks, and pots of leafy herbs promise home grown goodness for the family table.

It’s harvest time and backyard gardeners everywhere are anticipating the well earned fruits of their labor. From plucking peppers to cutting cauliflower, proper harvesting ensures optimum flavor and nutrients from your home garden. Read on for the ways to up the odds of culling “the cream of the crop” from common vegetable and fruit plants.

Experts say the most important rule at harvest time is to pick vegetables daily. Plucking them as soon as they ripen not only offers superior taste, but this practice encourages plant production. Simply stated, harvesting on the day that the produce ripens can help you yield more from your seasonal crop. Furthermore, gardeners should be aware that some vegetables are best harvested when they appear premature. Examples include summer squash, zucchini and green beans, all vegetables can become tough and lose flavor when they are allowed to sit on the vine too long. Seed company Burpee offers expert advice on harvesting common fruits and vegetables:

Herbs. Pinch or cut back herbs fre-

quently to keep them producing more stems and leaves (the parts we eat) and to keep them from blooming, which changes the flavor. If that means you have surplus thyme or oregano, dry it in a brown paper bag. Basil, especially, needs frequent pinching back to keep it bushy and productive. At some point in July or August everybody has too much basil,

Turn To **TRAINOR** page **A13**

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We're celebrating our **Tax Savings Event** this month, and **before August 15<sup>th</sup>** you'll get our **early bird special!**

**Save \$330 on every window and save \$725 on every patio and entry door** plus **6.25% off your entire project and pay nothing for a whole year.<sup>1</sup>** And when you set your appointment by August 15<sup>th</sup>, you'll **get another \$250 off your entire project!<sup>1</sup>**

- From last year we know that these appointments fill up quickly; call today
- This Tax Savings Event is **even better than last year's!**



Early bird special, before Aug. 15<sup>th</sup>

1

**SAVE \$330**  
on every window<sup>1</sup>

2

**SAVE \$725**  
on every patio and entry door<sup>1</sup>  
Minimum purchase of four.

AND

2

**6.25% OFF**  
your entire project<sup>1</sup>

★ PLUS another ★

**\$250 OFF**

your entire project when you set your appointment by August 15<sup>th</sup><sup>1</sup>  
No minimum purchase required.

WITH

3

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Down

**0**  
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**0%**  
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**FOR 1 YEAR<sup>1</sup>**

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# OBITUARIES

## Bryan Adam Ferguson , 35

Bryan Adam Ferguson of Charlton, MA, 35 years old, passed away unexpectedly on August 4, 2020 at home.



Bryan was born February 27, 1985 in Bar Harbor, ME. Bryan graduated from E.O. Smith High School in Storrs, Ct. and received his Bachelor's Degree, with honors, in Electrical and Computer Engineering from Worcester Polytechnic Institute. He was employed by TAB Computers of East Hartford, CT, this was not just a job, but a place Bryan loved as evidenced by how much his clients and coworkers adored him. Bryan had a definite flair for: cooking, grilling and smoking food for family and friends. He made great pizza and loved sharing that passion with others. Bryan was an accomplished musician playing electric and bass guitar, as well as alto saxophone. Bryan was a unique spirit, with an infectious smile, along with a keen mind for movie trivia. He would have a relevant movie quote for any situation that left those around him smiling and appreciating his wittiness. A gentle soul with an empathetic demeanor toward and for others was apparent to all those who had the pleasure of spending time with him. Bryan was an amazing: husband, father, son, brother,

grandson, nephew, uncle and friend. He is survived by his beloved wife Chelsea (Gardner) Ferguson and their children Jesse and Paisley of Charlton, MA; along with his son from a previous marriage, Oakley Ferguson of South Windsor, CT. He leaves behind: his brother Aaron Ferguson and his wife Tara Cole and their children Caleb and Zoe of South Hadley, MA; his mother Pat Ferguson of North Grosvenordale CT; his father Rev. Dr. Ken Ferguson and his partner Amy Curran in Sutton, MA; and his grandmother Klara Zeh Nydam of Upton, MA. Bryan will also be remembered by his extended family of: mother-in-law Gina Gardner and father-in-law Michael Gardner of Charlton, MA, sister-in-law, Alexis Peden and her husband Jonathan Peden of Worcester, MA; his brother-in-law Zach Gardner and his wife Skyler Gardner and their children: Cole, Hunter, and Callie of Georgetown, MA. A private time of remembrance and celebration will be held at the convenience of the family. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in c/o Paisley Ferguson through her Benefit Account at Cornerstone Bank at: 2 Center Depot Road in Charlton, MA 01507 or any branch location. The ROBERT J. MILLER-CHARLTON FUNERAL HOME, 175 Old Worcester Rd., is assisting the family with arrangements. To leave an on-line condolence, please visit: RJMillerfunerals.net

## Patricia Ann Barnes Letourneau, 48

CHARLTON- Patricia Ann Barnes Letourneau, 48, of 1 Old Town Road, passed away peacefully with her family by her side on Wednesday, August 5, 2020 in St. Vincent's Hospital.



She leaves behind her father, Edwin Barnes, and siblings Rebecca Barnes and her partner Jeffrey Caporale of Oxford, Jessica Hast and her husband Derek of Charlton, Jennifer Lotter and her husband Glenn of Charlton, Jill Barnes of Charlton, and Jonathan Benoit and his wife Amanda of Saco, Maine. Patty also leaves behind her 10 nieces and nephews, Cooper, Amelia, Bridget, Samanatha, Nicholas, Wyatt, Gabrielle, Annie, Adam, Emerson, and her grandmother Patricia Demoga. She is predeceased by her mother, Marjorie (Midge) Barnes and her grandparents Merton and Anna Barnes.

Patty graduated from Shepherd Hill in 1990 and went on to Endicott College for Graphic Design. She continued her education at Becker College and graduated as a paralegal and worked for a law firm in Worcester. She enjoyed crafting, drawing, listening to music, shopping, and spending time with family and friends. She loved family gatherings and holiday parties. Patty always wanted to help others and was a dedicated member of the Charlton Federated Church. She was not only an active member, but also helped

in the nursery and taught Sunday school classes for many years. Patty had an infectious laugh that brought a smile to everyone around her.

At the young age of 24, Patty was stricken ill and had multisystem-organ-failure. Patty lived at home where she was cared for and deeply loved by her family. Patty taught us all how to be resilient, compassionate, and strong. She taught us to live every day to the fullest and to take nothing for granted. We take comfort knowing that on her mother's 70th birthday, Patty joined her in heaven.

We would like to thank all the Personal Care Assistants and the Seven Hills staff of Hope Ave, Worcester that cared for Patty throughout the years. We would also like to thank the nurses, doctors and staff at St. Vincent's Hospital. Their compassion and care for Patty and our family in the final days will not be forgotten.

Due to covid, there will be a private service for immediate family only. A celebration of life will be at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts. The funds received will improve the lives of brain injury survivors across the Commonwealth. Donations by mail can be made out to BIA-MA and sent to 30 Lyman Street, Suite 10, Westborough, MA 01581.

THE ROBERT J. MILLER CHARLTON FUNERAL HOME 175 Old Worcester road is assisting family with arrangements. To leave a message of condolence please visit RJMillerfunerals.net

# Debunking hot pepper myths



GARDEN  
MOMENTS  
• • • • •  
MELINDA  
MYERS

Enjoy the spicy heat hot peppers add to your meals without concern for the many myths surrounding these garden vegetables. Here are a few you may have heard but are not true.

Growing both hot and sweet peppers in the garden will not add spicity heat to the sweet varieties. Peppers are normally self-pollinated. If an insect happens to move the pollen from a hot to sweet pepper, it will not affect the flavor or heat of this year's harvest. If you save the seeds from a cross-pollinated pepper for next year's garden there is no guarantee on the results. The offspring from this cross may be hot or sweet, only time will tell.

Label hot peppers when growing, harvesting, and storing to avoid any mix-ups. The sweet banana pepper, for example, can easily be confused with hot banana. This makes for an unwelcome surprise when preparing, serving, and eating.

Consider wearing rubber gloves and avoid touching your face and eyes when working with hot peppers as they can burn. Wash your hands, uten-

sils and cutting boards when finished to avoid any future issues.

Never assume all green peppers are sweet or you will be in for a surprise. Jalapenos are typically harvested when green and others like habanero and Anaheim are hot, whether harvested when green or red. You will also find that hot peppers can be yellow, orange, brown and of course red.

You can turn down the heat when preparing your favorite recipes. Contrary to popular belief, all the heat in hot peppers does not come from the seeds. While partially true, the majority of the capsaicin that gives hot peppers their heat is in the white membrane that houses the seeds. When the seeds are growing, they may also be coated with extra capsaicin. Remove the white membrane and the seeds, just to be safe, if you want to turn down the heat.

The spicy heat of hot peppers is measured in Scoville Heat Units. The ratings are based on the amount of sugar water needed to neutralize the spicy heat in the extracted capsaicin that has been diluted in alcohol. A panel of five taste testers decides when the spicy heat has been neutralized and then assigns the rating. Today many companies use a chemical process (liquid chromatography) but translate their results into the popular Scoville Heat



Red Ember F1 cayenne pepper is an All-America Selections (AAS) winner. Judges described this early maturing pepper as spice but tastier than traditional cayenne pepper varieties.

Units. The Scoville Heat Unit rankings vary from one type of hot pepper to another with Poblano-Ancho rating between 1,000 to 2,000, jalapenos 2,500 to 6,000, habaneros at 100,000 to 300,000 and one of the hottest, the ghost pepper, at 1,000,000 to 2,200,000 Scoville Heat Units. Ratings may also vary from individual plants within a specific type based on individual

plant differences and the growing conditions.

Finally, do not worry if you had a bad day when planting your hot peppers. Contrary to some old adages, planting hot peppers when angry will not make the peppers hotter, but unknowingly taking a bite of a hot pepper may very well change your mood.

Melinda Myers is the

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

# From jail to table

## SHERIFF DELIVERS VEGGIES GROWN FROM ORGANIC FARM AT HOUSE OF CORRECTION

REGION — For the past ten years, the Worcester County Jail & House of Correction has been home to the largest working organic farm located at a correctional facility in the Commonwealth.

Tended to by inmates who qualify and volunteer for the program and by maintenance staff at the jail, the fifteen acre farm grows bell peppers, cabbage, celery, corn, green beans, zucchini, squashes, eggplant, tomatoes and in the fall a bumper crop of pumpkins.

"The mission of our farm is to feed both our inmate population and to help feed the hungry in our community," said Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis.

During the harvest season, the jail donates and delivers on average three hundred to five hundred pounds per day of fresh organic vegetables to food pantries, meals programs, veterans groups and community centers throughout Worcester County to help those who struggle with food insecurity. On Wednesday, July 29, the Sheriff and members from the jail farming staff dropped off freshly picked prison produce at the Webster-Dudley Food Share, Webster and Charlton Senior Centers and Douglas Adult Social Center. All have nutritional outreach programs

that help feed the community and the elderly. Each location received approximately 100 to 200 pounds of fresh organic produce grown at the jail.

"During this pandemic, we never stopped serving the community for one day instead we stepped up more. Our mission throughout has been to help those local families who may struggle with food insecurity have access to nutritious food and meals. We are grateful to the Sheriff's Department for thinking of us and donating hundreds of pounds of fresh organic vegetables from their jail farm to our pantry each week which goes a long way in helping others," said Webster-Dudley Food Share President A.J. Alkire.

"Our center may be quiet at the moment due to COVID, but the need is still there. Many seniors still look to us for our lunch program. These fresh organic vegetables are a wonderful addition to our menu. We truly appreciate the Sheriff's Department thinking of us with this generous vegetable delivery," said Charlton Senior Center Director Elaine Materas.

"We are proud to be home to the region's largest working organic farm at a correctional facility. This farm gives back in many ways; help-



Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis makes a veggie delivery to the Charlton Senior Center in support of their senior lunch program with organic produce grown at the jail farm located in West Boylston. Pictured from left to right are WCSO Farm Director John Travaglio, Charlton Senior Center Assistant Director Katherine Pariseau, Sheriff Evangelidis, Lunch Program Head Chef Jenn Trudeau, Kitchen Assistant Sherri Nedzweckas and WCSO staff member Shaun Mullaney.

ing our inmates with the dignity of work while acquiring the skills and patience of farming all while knowing they are helping so many folks in need in our community." Evangelidis continued. "Last year, our farm fed both our inmate population and over thirty

thousand pounds of fresh produce was donated to help feed the hungry. So far this growing season mother nature and the humidity have been very kind and we are on track for an even more bountiful harvest," said Evangelidis.



## FLOCKED

continued from page A1

those in need during COVID-19 and beyond.

"I presented it to the neighborhood and put in on our Facebook page, asking if people were interested in participating. The idea was that each time a family got flocked they would make a donation monetarily or with food to the Chip-In pantry," Finnegan said. "Nobody knew what anyone else donated. Some families just bought items. Some families donated \$20, some donated \$100. Collectively, at the end, we had \$1,050 and 102 food items for the pantry."

Finnegan contacted Chip-In Pantry

Director Darlene Emco-Rollins prior to announcing the fundraiser to get approval for the event. Emco-Rollins thought it was a fun idea and said the outcome will provide a huge leg up for the organization in its endeavors.

"It was amazing. Everyone in the neighborhood knows each other and when I heard the idea I was told it would also be an opportunity to teach the children to give back to their community. The kids were so excited about doing it and it was a fun way to teach them and get the community involved," Emco-Rollins said.

She added that the pantry has seen an influx of donations and volunteer interest over the past few months as countless individuals and groups have sought to help Chip-In any way they

can.

"In four months out, donations of every kind have tripled or more. Usually, we get a lot of donation in the holiday season, but this has been unbelievable. It's brought the community so close. We've never had so many people ask to help out or give back to Chip-In. It's humbling. We're so lucky as a food pantry," she noted.

Melissa Finnegan said she was proud of the support the event earned from her neighborhood. She feels it accomplished the purpose of giving back and inspiring both children and adults to continue to have a strong sense of community even when the COVID-19 pandemic ends.

"The kids thought it was neat and it taught them that when you get together

there's strength in numbers," Finnegan said. "We are lucky that we live in a great neighborhood and people get excited about things like this. I didn't realize until the end how much we actually had collected. In our minds we just knew whatever we could donate was great, but the end result, to actually make that much money and collect that much food, I was blown away. In our own little neighborhood of 20 to 30 houses, we collected all of that and people were excited."

Finnegan hopes the fundraiser will help inspire other neighborhoods to come together to benefit their communities in their own way, whether that's through another flocking event or something new and unique.



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ON DEPOSIT



ON DEPOSIT



ON DEPOSIT



ON DEPOSIT



**SHREWSBURY** – Waterfront – Flint Pond w/Direct Boating Access to Lake Quinsigamond! The Quiet of Flint, All the Action of Quinsig! Privacy Galore on Sargents Island – 4.27 Acres – 2,000' Waterfront! Beautiful Sunrises & Sunsets! Looking for a Getaway, Principal Residence or Second Home, Winters in Florida, Summers on the Island! Tons of Potential, Do a Little or Do a Lot! 4+ Rm, 1 Bdrm, 1.5 Bath "A" Frame with the Ability to Finish the Walk-out Lower Level, add a Family Rm, Bdrm, Bathroom! Nature Abounds, Visited by Deer, Fox, Eagles & More! In Time for Summer! **\$579,900.00**

**OXFORD** – 377 Main St! 9 Rm Center Hall Colonial! .59 Acre Corner Lot! Charm of Yesteryear! Eat-In Frplcd Granite Kit w/Updated Cabinets, Frplcd Din Rm w/ Built-in China Cabinet & Butler Closet! Gracious Foyer! Spacious Frplcd Liv Rm! Breezeway to a Home Office or an Unfinished Cathedral Ceiling Fam Rm or Craft Rm! Sit on the Front Porch and Enjoy Morning Coffee or Evening Tea! Huge 2-Car Garage w/Loft-Storage Area! Mature Tree Studded Yard! **\$339,000.00**

**WEBSTER** – 10 Wyman St! Webster Lake Neighborhood Access at Lakeside Beach & State Boat Ramp Near-by! 10,000' Lot! 1 Level Living! 11 Rooms, 4 Bedrooms, 2 Baths! Room for the Extended Family! 2 Complete Living Quarters! A/C! LP Gas Heat! Town Services! 2 Driveways! Fenced Back Yard! 2 Sheds! **\$189,900.00**

**DOUGLAS** – 102 SE Main St! Start Packing! Spacious 9 Rm Colonial! 2.23 Acres! Center Island Granite Kit w/Soft Close Cabs, SS Appliances! Slider to 24' Deck! Open Floor Plan! Hickory Wood Floors throughout the Kit, Din & Liv Rms, all w/Recessed Lighting! 1st Flr Office or Possible 4th Bdrm w/Oak Hrdwd Flr! Full Bath in the Hall! 2nd Flr w/Full Dble Vanity Bthrm & 3 Comfortable Bdrms, all w/Beautiful Wood Laminate Flrs! Master w/Cathedral Ceiling, Skylight, Ceiling Fan, Bay Window overlooking the Back Yard and a Master Bath! Lower Level w/2 Finished Rms, Utility Rm w/Laundry and Half Bath! 3.5 Baths Total! Recent C/Air, Heat & Roof! 2x6s 2 Car Detached Garage! Huge Shed! Nearby Nature Trails & Wallum Lake Beach! **\$379,900.00**



ON DEPOSIT



ON DEPOSIT



ON DEPOSIT



ON DEPOSIT



**WEBSTER LAKE** – 112 Gore Rd! NORTH POND! Sucker Brook Cove! 8 Rm, 3 Bdrm, 1.5 Bath Ranch is Ready for You! Southwestern Exposure! Gorgeous Sunsets! Unique Waterfront! An Open Floor Plan! Lake Views from Nearly All Rooms! 2x6 Construction! Energy Efficient Blinds in Every Room! 4 Oil Tanks - Fill Up Once a Year! C/Air Gas Fireplace! Whole House Fan! Meticulously Cared For! Large workshop! 3 Car Garage! Carport! 2 Sheds w/Electric! Back Yard is Perfect for Family Gatherings! Plenty of Off-Street Parking! Summer is Here! **\$539,900.00**

**WEBSTER** – 4 Jeffrey St! 5 Rm, 2 Bdrm, 2 Bath Ranch! 1/4 Acre Lot! Liv Rm w/ Cathedrals & Bay Window! Eat-in Kit w/ Is! Master w/Walk-in Closet & Full Bath! Hall Bath w/Laundry! Freshly Painted! Front & Rear Decks! Partially Fenced Yard! Oil Heat! Town Services! Garage! Lakeside Beach & Boat Ramp Near! **\$249,900.00**

**WEBSTER LAKE WATERFRONT** - 3 Lakeview Rd! Middle Pond – Reid Smith Cove! Ideal Summer or Yr Round 6 Rm Ranch! Western Expo – Beautiful Sunsets! Near All the Excitement that "Indian Ranch" provides, Dining, Concerts & the Indian Princess! An Arched Bridge to Your Own Private Island, a Great Place to Enjoy the Lake from! Open Flr Plan! Being Sold Fully Furnished! Recent Kit w/Quartz Counters, Breakfast Bar, SS Appliances, Tile Flr & Recessed Lighting! Liv Rm w/Hrdwd Flr, 6x14 Lake Facing Picture Window & Stone Frplcd! 3 Remodeled Bdrms w/Ceiling Fans & Hrdwd Flrs! Master w/Bath & Laundry Closet! Screen Porch w/Lake Views! Dock! Carport! Shed! Still Time for this Summer! **\$579,900.00**

**GRAFTON** – 168 Brigham Hill Rd! 8 Rm Garrison Colonial set on 1.3 Acres! 4 Comfortable Bdrms & 2 Full Bthrms! Freshly Painted, Floors Recently Refinished! Spacious Kit w/Lunch Counter! SS Appliances w/Gas Cook-Top! Grand Dining Rm for Family Gatherings! 19x26 Living Rm w/Pellet Stove! Master Bdrm w/Dble Closets & Hot Tub! Bright & Airy Mudroom out to the 2 Car Garage! Furnace & Hot Water Tank 5 Years Young! Radon tested at 2.5! Newer Roof on Garage & Breezeway! New Well Water Tank Installed! Title V in-hand! Property Abuts Grafton Land Trust - Hiking Trails Right Out Your Back Door! Convenient to Routes 90, 9 & 20! Immediate Occupancy! **\$449,900.00**



REDUCED

**WEBSTER LAKE** – 62 Bates Point Rd! Middle Pond! Absolute Prime 51' Level Waterfront Lot w/Western Expo! Beautiful Sunsets! Fantastic Panoramic Lake Views! 11 Rms, 6 Bdrms, 4 Bathrooms, 3,269' AC'd Colonial! Custom SS Appliance Granite Kit! Formal Din Rm w/ Cherry Hrdwds! Lake Facing Liv Rm w/Cathedrals, Cherry Hrdwds! Slider to Waterfront Deck! Spacious 1st Flr Master Bdrm w/Full Bath, Cherry Hrdwds & Walk-in Closet! Frplcd Lower Level Fam Rm! 1st & 2nd Flr Laundries! 2 Car Garage! **\$949,900.00**



**WEBSTER LAKE** - 11 Bay View Rd! One of the Lake's Premier Properties! 9,822' of Nice! .68 Acres of Park Like Grounds! 297' Waterfront! \$4 Million Spent, Nothing Spared! 17 Rms! 5 Water View Bdrms, 5.5 Bathrooms! Brazilian Cherry Hrdwd Flrs, Grand & Spiral Stairways! Elevator, Ground Flr to Master Suite! In-door Resistance Swimming Pool, Hot Tub & Bthrm w/Steam Shower off Exercise Rm! Billiard Rm! Media Rm! Center Isl Granite Kit w/Viking Gas Range, Sub-Zero Frig, Pantry & Breakfast Bar! Open Flr Plan! Din Area, Fam Rm w/Entertainment Center w/Wet Bar! Formal Din Rm, Frplcd Liv Rm & Atrium! Library w/Deck! Waterfront Master Suite w/Office, Bdrm w/Triple Glass Dr to Private Deck w/Lake Views, 3 Walk-in Closets, Bathrm w/Multi-Head Shower, Whirlpool, Dble Vanity, Separate Commode/Bidet/Sink Area! 16 Z's of Updated Geothermal Heat/A/C! Recessed Lights & Fire Sprinklers Through Out! 3 Car Garage! Generator! Slate Roof! Reward Yourself! **\$2,499,900.00**

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**We Want Your Listings!**

## Featured Listing!

WEBSTER - 195-199 THOMPSON RD



3 ACRE COMMERCIAL SITE! APPROX. 550 FT. ROAD FRONTAGE ON STATE HIGHWAY RTE 193 AKA THOMPSON ROAD. STRATEGICALLY NESTLED BETWEEN TWO (2) 1-585 NORTH & SOUTH DR. RAMPS & TWO (2) 1-585 NORTH & SOUTH OFF-RAMPS. PROPERTY DIRECTLY ADJACENT TO 1300' 40'X60' BUILDING. 7,800 SF TOTAL LOWER LEVEL. USE AND ACCESS. THREE DRIVE IN GARAGE. DOOR NATURAL GAS. HIGH TRAFFIC - HIGH EXPOSURE! MANY POSSIBLE USES. WHAT DO YOU HAVE PLANNED? **\$600,000.**

WEBSTER - 56 CUSHING ROAD



**ON DEPOSIT**  
FIRST TIME OFFERED! Meticulously Cared for & Loved - 4 Bedroom / 2 Bath, 1963 Cape! Natural GAS Heat/Town Services! Boiler - Just Like New! Corner Lot. Garage! 2nd Flr - 2 Lg Bdrms! Bathroom, Hardwood Floors, This House is Ready for a New Family, is it YOU?? Call today, Don't Delay! **\$272,900.**

**MILLBURY - 9 LEONE AVE**  
**SORRY, SOLD!**  
Ranch home w/Fireplace! living room. 3 Bedrooms! hardwood floors! Oil Heat. 200 AMP Circuit Breakers! Garage . Manicured Landscaping! assisted sale **\$331,000.**

**WEBSTER - 36 PARK AVENUE**  
**SORRY, SOLD!**  
Well cared for Colonial on Park Avenue! Hardwoods! Formal dining room, eat in kitchen, 3 bedrooms! Hollywood Bath. 1-1/2 baths total. deck! Garage! Freshly Painted! **\$264,900.**

**DUDLEY - G & S DRIVE**  
**SORRY, SOLD!**  
Great location! Painted and ready to move in! Hardwood floors! Brick fireplace & cathedral ceiling! Open floor plan! rear covered porch. 2 large bedrooms. 1 & 1/2 baths! Recent roof in Yr. 2019. assisted sale **\$260,000.**

**DUDLEY - LAND ON PACKARD DRIVE**  
**ON DEPOSIT**  
Privacy!! Off Ridge Drive - 2 abutting Lots offered as a package. Each has there own Deed description. Lot# 19 Contains 27,699 SF of land area, Lot# 20, Contains 24,883 SF of land area. Total 52,582 SF. / 1.2 acre. **\$50,000.**

**LAND WEBSTER/OXFORD/DUDLEY/DOUGLAS**  
**Dudley** - Marshall Terrace 12,000 +/- Sq. Ft. Potential for a 2 family to be built! Town Water, Sewer, **GORE SOLD \$70,000.**  
**Webster - 85 Upper Gore w/View of the Lake.** 1+ acre! Much work done! Artesian well, Septic Design, & Conservation. NEW PRICE **\$115,000**  
**Webster - Cooper Rd** 2 Buildable Lots! Water/Sewer Access, Zoned Lake Residential! **\$49,000. ON DEPOSIT**  
**Douglas-Mount Daniels Lot #2-2.5 Acres** of flat land that abuts Douglas State Forest **\$132,900**  
**Oxford - 4 Leicester St.** approx. 8.47 acres! River frontage! Possible to be subdivided. NEW PRICE **\$89,900**

On the shores of Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg

**WEBSTER LAKE - 28 BLACK POINT RD**  
**BOATER'S & FISHERMAN'S PARADISE!**  
2019 custom cape! New 28 ft poly dock on a 4ft plus deep channel! In quiet lower cove! move to end after central AC! The benefits of Lake Living! Enjoy Sunrise Lake Views from your Expansive Back Deck & Sunset Views from your Farmer's Porch. Open Floor Plan, Cathedral Ceilings, Stone Fireplace, Upscale Gourmet Kitchen w/Huge Island, Sunny Breakfast Area w/Built In Beverage Nook, Vaulted Loft, Formal Dining, Office, Laundry Room, Oversized 2 Car Garage & 2 BRs with 1 Full Bath. 2nd Fl Features, Very Private Master BR Suite, Lg Walk-in Closet, Full Bath w/ double vanity, Private W/C, large Walk-in Tile Shower! 1,500 SF+ Basement for FUTURE ENTERTAINMENT or Possible IN-LAW AREA w/ INSIDE & OUTSIDE ACCESS. Rough Plumbed for Full Bath and Kit.. Central A/C! Check out our Video Tour! **\$649,000.**

**WEBSTER LAKE - 100 LAKESIDE AVE**  
**ON DEPOSIT**  
All you need to live is located on the 1st floor. Grand 2 story foyer, cozy fireplace living room, gourmet kitchen, lake facing dining, formal dining room, media room & spacious 1st floor guest BR Suite w/private bath. Incredible 2nd floor fireplace lake-facing corner master suite w/luxurious private bath, 3 more 2nd floor BRs & full bath! Something Special! **Remember, Timing Is Everything \$1,075,000.**

**WEBSTER LAKE! PANORAMIC VIEWS! BEAUTIFUL SUNSETS! Extraordinary Waterfront Contemporary!**  
Architect designed with Lake Living in mind, Custom Built with Attention to High Quality & Detail. Outstanding open concept, water view from almost every room. Nicely situated on a .25 acre level peninsula, 180' +/- prime lake frontage! Enhanced by a all natural shoreline!  
**ON DEPOSIT**

**LAKE SHIRLEY - 647 RESERVOIR RD**  
**SORRY, SOLD!**  
Lakefront! Lake Shirley! Modern Flare on a Lakefront Colonial! 1st level Formal large entry foyer, living room, gas fireplace, chef kitchen, Impala black granite, center island, 3 season porch, overlooking the lake. 1st Flr bedroom suite w/ shower and jacuzzi tub. 2nd floor Master Suite! Lower level Summer kitchen, full bath, game room. Crown molding & hardwood floors throughout, wired sound system, radiant floors. oversize 2 car garage. Additional Guest House! assisted sale **\$859,000.**



**TRAINOR**  
*continued from page A9*

which is why the Italians invented pesto (find many recipes on the internet).

Tomatoes. There is a huge range of tomato varieties. Many kinds are red when ripe, but some are orange, yellow, striped or even green. Learn what to expect from your variety and monitor the plant closely as its due date nears. Generally, a tomato is fully ripe when it releases easily from the stem. If you misjudge a bit it's no tragedy, because tomatoes will ripen somewhat after picking. But they develop the fullest sweet flavor if they ripen in the sun on the vine. Once you have picked the first few tomatoes of a particular variety, you will get a feel for what a ripe one will look and taste like. Some tomatoes are «determinate» types, which will stop bearing after a few weeks. Most are «indeterminate» kinds, which will keep flowering and setting fruit until killed by frost, although colder weather will slow production. It's a good idea to pick your green tomatoes a week or so before your area's average first frost date. The more mature ones will ripen indoors if they are stored at room temperature, wrapped in newspaper so they don't touch. Or make fried green tomatoes.

Peppers. Peppers are mature and ready to eat when full-sized but still green. If left on the vine longer, they will change color to red, orange, yellow or brown, depending on the variety, and will deepen in flavor and become less crisp in texture. Hot peppers left to change color will get hotter. So whether you pick at the green stage or later will depend on the variety and what you plan to use the pepper for. As with tomatoes, the first few you pick will teach you to gauge ripeness.

Lettuce. It's important to pick lettuce before hot weather encourages the plant

to «bolt,» or develop a flower stalk, which makes the leaves taste bitter. With leaf lettuce and many other greens, you can «cut and come again» while the leaves are young and tender, no more than five inches long. Use scissors to cut the largest leaves individually from the plants. When the smaller leaves get big enough, harvest those. You may be able to come back to a plant two, three or four times, a few days apart, before it gives up in the summer heat. To prolong the lettuce harvest, look for bolt-resistant varieties and sow seeds several times at two-week intervals. A tent of shade cloth or translucent row cover -- or a site in part shade -- also may delay bolting in hot climates. In late summer, sow green seeds again for a fall crop.

Green beans. Green beans are an easy vegetable to harvest. Pick the pods when they are a little shy of their maximum size, to be sure that they are tender, with immature seeds. If you delay, the seeds will mature and harden and the pod will become tough. Don't pick green beans in the morning when the dew is still on the vines; wait until they are fully dry to avoid spreading disease. Be sure to keep up with regular picking to encourage the vine to keep flowering and producing pods.

Peas. For garden peas, pick a test pod and open it when the seeds have begun to swell inside. You're looking for peas that are round but still tender. Pick peas just before you are ready to shell and cook them. For snow peas and sugar snaps, taste a pod when it nears full size. You want a crisp, crunchy, fresh-tasting pod, in which the seeds have started developing but are nowhere near round. Pods left too long on the vine get tough and stringy.

Cantaloupes, muskmelons and honeydews: Harvesting melons can be tricky, even for melon farmers. You can thump the melon and listen for a dull, hollow

sound or sniff it to see if it smells sweet. A ripe cantaloupe or muskmelon will begin to have a tan or yellowish color beneath the corky «netting» on its skin. A honeydew will feel smooth, not hairy. Cut the stem rather than breaking the fruit off, which creates a wound that invites the fruit to rot. Let the fruit ripen for another day or two at room temperature before cutting into it.

Watermelons. When the spot beneath the melon, where it sits on the ground, turns yellowish, rather than white or green, the melon is close to ripe. The rind also gets tougher, so test it with your thumbnail to how easily it dents. For old-fashioned full-sized watermelons, the traditional ripeness test is to thump and listen for a dull, hollow sound, but this may not work as well with the smaller «icebox» varieties. Ultimately, you'll have to cut one open and decide if it's ripe, and use that as a standard for the rest of the crop.

Cucumbers. Check the seed packet to see how large your variety of cucumber will get and how long that is expected to take. But bear in mind that you can pick cucumbers at any stage, depending on what you want to use them for. Smaller ones will be more tender, with thinner skins and fewer or immature seeds. Too-old cucumbers get dry and woody. Like melons, cucumbers should be cut from the vine, not pulled.

Sweet corn. Timing is everything with sweet corn. The kernels begin to lose sweetness and flavor the instant the ear is picked, so the great advantage of growing your own is so you can wait until the last minute. The traditional rule was to get the pot of water boiling to cook the corn and then go out and pick it. Sweet corn is ready to eat when you can feel full, rounded kernels beneath the husk; the silk at the top of the ear is drying out; and a squished kernel produces a milky sap.

Root vegetables. Read the seed packet to see how long it should take before you start checking to see if your variety of carrots, beets, turnips, radishes or parsnips is ready for harvest. When it's about time, loosen the soil gently and pull one up to see how big it is. Root vegetables are more tender and delicate in flavor if eaten younger and smaller; as they get older and larger, they get tougher, woodier and more pungent. If that's okay with you, you can store some root crops right in the cold ground after the tops die. Spread a thick layer of leaves, straw or other mulch to keep the ground from freezing so you can still dig them up, and you may be able to harvest carrots, turnips or parsnips.

**\*\***

Win Dinner for Two at the Publick House

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

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



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Green Gold Group is seeking hardworking, dedicated team members for exciting new roles in the regulated cannabis industry. Available roles include cultivation, harvest and trim team members, lab technician/extraction artist, packaging machine operators, licensed HVAC technician, budtender/retail team, security/transport team and kitchen team.

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