

Neighboring towns want Rte. 140 changes

BY GREG VINE
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

It was just over five months ago that 31-year-old Wayne Thomas of Winchendon was killed in a head-on crash on Route 140, just south of Teel Road. The accident was just one of nearly 60 accidents, two of them fatal, which occurred on the stretch of the state highway between Betty Spring Road in Gardner and the Route 12 intersection in Winchendon from 2011 through 2016.

Now officials from Gardner and Winchendon are pushing state officials to look at ways of improving safety on the increasingly busy artery. Winchendon Town Manager Keith Hickey, Winchendon Police Chief David Walsh, Gardner Deputy Police Chief John Bernard, and Gardner city engineer Chris Coughlin were among those who met recently with representatives of the state Department of Transportation to voice their ideas and concerns.

Hickey said in a recent interview that city and town officials are "concerned about the number of accidents and the severity of the accidents."

He said a high priority for both communities is the potential elimination of at least some of the passing lanes, particularly those with a history of accidents. Coughlin said officials

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Greg Vine photos

Winchendon and Gardner officials are asking the state Department of Transportation to consider the elimination of passing lanes on Route 140, such as this one near the Irving gas station in Winchendon.

Many Mount Students dealing with hunger, homelessness

BY GREG VINE
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

It's difficult to concentrate on homework and professorial lectures when one is hungry. It's also hard for a student to stay focused on class projects and research while at the same time wondering where he or she will sleep on any given evening. But the pursuit of a good education is exponentially more daunting when faced with the challenges of both hunger and homelessness.

However, a shocking number of community college students nationwide must deal with those challenges every day.

Last week, results of a study conducted by the University of Wisconsin were released and many Americans were stunned to learn that fully one-third of American community college students are food insecure, while 1 in 7 are also homeless. Mount Wachusett Community College in Gardner is, unfortunately, not immune from

these social maladies.

Fortunately, however, there is a program at the college designed to help those students faced with food insecurity, homelessness, or both. It's called Students Serving Our Students, or Students SOS.

Jana Murphy, Student Leader in Civic Engagement and an SOS mentor, said the program offers assistance to students dealing with a broad range of issues, but "what we see is that most of the students who come in are food insecure."

Shelly Errington Nicholson, the director of the Stephen A. Brewer Center for Civic Learning, said it's difficult to give an exact figure for the number of students coming to school hungry most days.

"It's hard," she said, "because we know that most of the students who are food insecure are not coming forward for help. Quite often we hear about in anecdotally. But of the students who come to us for help, I would say 80 to

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MWCC hosts naturalization ceremony



Courtesy photo

The country's newest citizens take the oath of citizenship at Mount Wachusett Community College.

GARDNER — Mount Wachusett Community College served as the backdrop welcoming 271 Massachusetts residents from 58 different countries as new U.S. citizens during a naturalization ceremony last week.

The ceremony was carried out by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the U.S. District Court. The Honorable Timothy S. Hillman, United States District

Judge, presided over the ceremonies, with the clerk of the court administering the Oath of Allegiance to America's newest citizens.

As the event began, Mount Wachusett Community College President Daniel M. Asquino addressed the soon-to-be citizens. He encouraged those being naturalized to get involved, reminding them the country was built by immigrants who

strove for change and engaged actively in governing a new country.

"Congratulations to all of you who are about to become a citizen of the United States of America," said Asquino, who explained what it meant to be a citizen. "It is being engaged, voting, taking care of one another, your neighbors and your citizens...as you become citizens

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Hickey presents proposed FY18 budget

BY GREG VINE
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

WINCHENDON — Town Manager Keith Hickey Monday night presented his municipal budget map for fiscal year 2018 to the town's Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee. The total of the proposed spending package tops out at just under \$29.3 million.

In putting together the spending package, Hickey said it was his intent to construct a bal-

anced budget which maintains "reasonable consistency in the tax burden to the Winchendon taxpayers."

In his PowerPoint presentation, Hickey added that he intended for his budget to "deliver an adequate level of critical services." He said he also wants to "decrease reliance of grant funds not yet approved to fund key departmental positions" and to "properly account for indirect costs to enterprise

funds and (the) school department."

The town manager also said he hoped to "accurately predict the funding needs and sources for enterprise funds to eliminate the risk of those funds ending the fiscal year in a deficit position."

Hickey also enumerated seven main goals he hoped to meet in municipal budgets moving forward. Chief among

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Staff photo

The Silver Lake School in Athol was the site of a failed business venture by Brandywine Farms at the same time the company was negotiating for the White's Mill property in Winchendon.

Winchendon not Brandywine Farms first attempt

ATHOL — The town of Winchendon was not the first attempt for John and Dr. Amelia Giovanini doing business as Brandywine Farms to create a multi-purpose agricultural facility. Documents confirm Brandywine Farms failed to open a smaller but similar facility in the town of Athol, despite the town selling them a former elementary school for \$1.

Brandywine Farms was the only party interested in the 13,748 square foot Silver Lake Elementary School constructed in 1920, and located at 245 Silver Lake St. in Athol. The building and its 2.6 acre parcel of land, along with improvements, was valued at \$866,100 as of Jan. 14, 2014. In an effort to find an interested party in both saving the building and to see something productive come of it for the community, the Athol agreed to sell Brandywine Farms the former school for \$1 with both a land development agreement and quit-claim deed signed by both the town and John Giovanini in May 2014.

In the July 2014 development agreement it is stated, "The sale and development of

the former Silver Lake Street School will promote local food production, create new employment opportunities, maintain the architectural and historical significance of the building, and used best development practices where ever possible," much like the current Brandywine Farms project in Winchendon.

Additionally, in a document dated July 18, 2014 a mortgage & security agreement was agreed upon between John F. Giovanini of 48 Athol Richmond Road, Royalston and Phoenix Financial Corp of Stoughton, for the sum of \$50,000 to help develop the property.

In a letter dated Dec. 9, 2014 from Town Manager Shaun Suhoski addressed to John & Amelia Giovanoni, it appears early problems were becoming recognized in the project as Suhoski wrote, "I am requesting that we sit down to review the LDA and make any changes needed to help facilitate your ultimate vision for the property. This discussion should begin as soon as possible as I have learned from staff

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LOCAL

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SPORTS

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WEEKLY QUOTE

Good character is not formed in a week or a month. It is created little by little, day by day. Protracted and patient effort is needed to develop good character.

— Heraclitus

YV starts conversations for more projects

BY JERRY CARTON
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

WINCHENDON — Riding the momentum of the United Way/Youth Venture Spring Showcase, four Murdock students involved in a pair of YV projects talked earlier this week about the importance and progress of their efforts.

Lily LeBlanc heads an anti-bullying team working on getting funding to build a bench which will be symbolic as well as practical. Hannah Turner has continued her 'Blue Hands' effort regarding suicide awareness.

"I was bullied," she acknowledged. "A lot of people are bullied. We want the bench to be a place where people, students and administrators, can go to listen and be heard."

"It should be a 'safe space'. Depression is common. It's not something to be ashamed of."

To that end, LeBlanc and partners

Alec Hart and Cassidy Stadfeld will be preparing to face a panel organized by the Mount's Stephen Brewer Center for Civic Engagement to ask for funding to help move the project along.

"This will be an opportunity for them to present their project and explain why it's worth funding. It's not the same as talking to peers," said MHS faculty YV champion Kris Provost. "They'll be telling professional people why the project is important and what it means."

LeBlanc was unfazed. "I'm really passionate about this. We have this huge packet for the program. I call it 'my baby'," she laughed.

"I'm excited that others might want to be part of this," she said, adding, "I started this about 18 months ago. It's taken a while but it's worth it."

She said she'd even talked with senior center director Sheila Bettro about the possibility of volunteers from the center help build and paint.

Stadfeld recalled that she had been bullied in middle school. "I had the support of loving parents and that helped me a lot," she noted.

"You never know who's been bullied. It really hurts," she reflected, "especially when you know you haven't done anything wrong. I just tried not to listen."

Hart said he was grateful he hasn't suffered from bullying but added he "wanted to help Lily and do this. It's not okay. It's hurtful and wrong and I'm glad to do anything to help," he noted.

Turner said her project, which included blue hand posters throughout the building as well as a day when students who were wearing Band-Aids as a show of support for others would high-five each other, has been moving along. But Turner has a wider, larger goal in mind. She wants the anti-suicide project to expand both to younger grades and other schools.

"We'd do it age-appropriately of course," she said, adding she's getting Rivers Edge co-worker Amber White, who's a mom of younger school-age kids, to help prepare such an approach.

Evan Berry is the coordinator from the Mount. "We feel like this gives students a chance to reach out into a wider community than just the one they have at school and we are always working to assist Youth Venture students in making contributions to that greater community. It's why we want them to deliver their pitch to the panel of people from the business and non-profit world," he said.

"You see the gleam in their eye and you love their energy and enthusiasm," added Berry.

"A lot of people don't have a support system. We want people to know they're not alone," emphasized LeBlanc.



CLYDE'S CORNER

SATURDAY, MARCH 25

SIGN PAINTING EVENT: Join the Crafty Cauldron and your friends for a paint event for a good cause, \$35 a person at 2 p.m. Paint 2 wooden signs in your choice of color and design. Fundraiser to benefit the Kiwanis of Winchendon backpack program. Register in store or online prior to the event, no space will be sold that day. The Crafty Cauldron, 91 Central St., www.thecraftycauldron.net/events.html. Email: thecraftycauldron@yahoo.com.

TOUR OF ITALY: Murdock athletics puts on a 4-course dinner with minestrone soup, salad buffet, pasta with meatballs and cannolis at the American Legion, 295 School St. 5-8 p.m. Advance tickets, available at Murdock High School office, \$14; at the door \$17. To benefit the Carol M. Higgins Memorial Fund.

TUESDAY, MARCH 28

LEARN: Computer classes for adults are offered on Tuesday afternoons from 3:30-4:30 p.m. at Beals Memorial Library and are open to adults ages 18 and older.

CRAFT FOR ADULTS: On Tuesday nights at 6:30 Beals Memorial Library has an adult craft hour providing a place to meet and do crafts. People bring in things they are working on, and can get help on knitting, crocheting, quilting and discuss different ideas.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29

BINGO! Hyde Park residents hold bingo in the community hall every Wednesday night beginning at 6 p.m. It's inexpensive, just two cards for 5¢, and the community is invited! Anyone over the age of 50 is welcome to join in. We'd love to have more players.

SATURDAY, APRIL 1

ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT! Begins at 10 a.m. sharp, gather on the Old Centre Common beginning at 9:30 a.m. Hike to the Militia Grounds with the Easter Bunny. Raindate same time, April 8.

SUNDAY, APRIL 2

DEADLINE DAY: GALA 2017 spring

photography exhibit, calling ALL photographers!!

Entry deadline: Sunday, April 2. Register: www.galagardner.org

MEAT SHOOT: American Legion Auxiliary Post 193 hosts a meat shoot beginning at 2 p.m. Side raffles, including lottery, 50/50 and a gift basket. Never been? Come learn how to win with just a trio of cards, a handful of markers and a bit of luck.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8

MAY BASKET WORKSHOP: FREE workshop, open to everyone. Keep the tradition going! 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the GALA Arts Gallery, 135 Front St. Please register so we have enough materials: www.galagardner.org.

ZUMBA GOLD: Unlimited Zumba from 7-9 p.m. with some of the best Zumba instructors in the area. Saturday April 8 at the Winchendon School's Trustee Hall, 172 Ash St. \$15 per person. Tickets available at the Clark Memorial YMCA front desk, or email Charlotte Rheault at saddleup2000@hotmail.com. All proceeds will help fund The Clark Memorial YMCA's annual campaign, **BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES.** Our annual campaign supports our Scholarship Fund that assists individuals and families with memberships, programs and Before & After School.

SUNDAY, APRIL 9

BREAKFAST WITH THE BUNNY! At the United Parish from 7:30-9:30 a.m., Pack 193's annual Pancake Breakfast! All you can eat pancakes plus sausage, eggs, orange juice and coffee! Come visit with the Easter Bunny and have pictures taken. Adults - \$7 Kids 10 and Under - \$5 Families of 4 or more - \$20. All proceeds benefit local Cub Scouts.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12

GOLDEN AGERS: The Golden Agers hold a meeting at 2 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room at American Legion Post 193, 295 School St. K9 Clyde, with Officer Jim Wirnonen and Chief David Walsh intend to be hand.

THURSDAY, APRIL 13

BOOK DISCUSSION: Beals Memorial Library has a book club that meets at 5:45 p.m. the second Thursday each month, the next meeting is Thursday April 13 Books are available at the library.

OUR NEIGHBOR'S KITCHEN: Our Neighbor's Kitchen, Winchendon's Community Supper, is served on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at 5:30 p.m., at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon, 126 Central St.

Our Neighbor's Kitchen meals are cooked home-style from fresh ingredients. We're supported by voluntary donations at the door, contributions from Winchendon churches and organizations, and many hard-working volunteers.

TRIVIA CHALLENGE: every month it's Franco O'Malley's trivia challenge at Zoe's Restaurant beginning at 8 p.m. Bring a team or join a team and try your memory at this intriguing game of wits. Open to everyone, come on down.

FRIDAY, APRIL 21

OUT OF DARKNESS: We are ready to rock the second annual Out of the Darkness Campus Walk/Suicide Prevention Benefit with special guest, Ryan Hood, on keyboards. In addition to some classic rock from the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s that will be getting you on the dance floor, there are going to be some BIG raffles, a door prize and a 50/50. Donation is \$10 per person, or \$15 per couple at the Winchendon American Legion, 8 p.m.-midnight. We will also be doing our TBR Jukebox Karaoke...where you get to choose a song from our list for \$5, and for \$5 more, you and your friends can sing it with us! All proceeds from this event will go to Team Silver Linings, led by Brittany LaPointe, and Team Peace of Mind, led by Mariah Ackert. Let's make sure no one has to walk alone in the darkness...end the stigma!

SATURDAY, APRIL 22

GALA ART EXHIBIT: opening recep-

tion and art awards at Old Murdock Senior Center 2nd floor auditorium, 52 Murdock Ave. 2-5 p.m. More Info: www.galagardner.org

EARTH DAY: in Winchendon, roll off dumpster will again be sited on Pleasant Street 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Seeking volunteers and donations toward drinks and snacks for workers. Clean up a street, clean up an acre, help keep our town green.

SUNDAY, APRIL 23

VETERANS: Working Wonders in Winchendon is holding a free Veterans' Lunch in the basement back room at the American Legion between 1 and 5 p.m. on April 23. Veterans and their families are invited for an Italian buffet and dessert. There will also be a free raffle for veterans. For more information, visit workingwondersinwinchendon@gmail.com.

THURSDAY, APRIL 27

OPEN MIC: at the American Legion Post 193, 295 School St. Beginning at 9 p.m. Like to sing? Play an instrument? Willing to jam with a few other musicians? Then come on down and join us at the lower level. Always a good time. Open to everyone! Non-smoking venue.

SATURDAY, APRIL 29

ANNIVERSARY BLOW OUT: the 10th anniversary of Fire & Iron will be celebrated with the annual spring blow out at American Legion Post 193, 295 School St. beginning at 7 p.m. Come help us celebrate!

FRIDAY, MAY 19

OPENING NIGHT: GALA 2017 annual spring Art Show with live music opening reception and art awards 6-9 p.m. Show and reception at the American Legion Post 193, 295 School St. Show runs May 19-21. More info and to enroll, www.galagardner.org.

SUNDAY, JUNE 11

COLLAGE WORKSHOP: Instructor: Jill Pottle will teach a class on collage 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the GALA Arts Gallery, 135 Front St. For more information and to register visit www.galagardner.org.

COURIER CAPSULES

MURDER MYSTERY DINNER

Don't Wine if You're Murdered is the theme of a Murder Mystery Dinner at McNally's in Westminster on April 29. at 6 p.m. sharp. Chicken, vegetarian or gluten free dinners will be available. Cost for the evening of dining and entertainment is \$35 per person, but if a table of eight is purchased, there will be a savings of \$30. Wine not included. This event is sponsored by the Friends of the Templeton Elders in support of the Templeton Senior Community Center. For tickets and information, call President, Gail Noel at 978-939-8519.

SATURDAY SPAGHETTI

Jaffrey Troop 33 Boy Scouts are having a spaghetti supper on Saturday, March 25 from 4-7 p.m. at the Jaffrey American Legion Hall.

JOB FAIR

More than 35 companies and organizations will be participating in a job fair

held at Mount Wachusett Community College's Gardner campus March 29.

The event, which is sponsored by the Career Services/Experiential and Service Learning Department at the college, will provide students and community members with an opportunity to explore career options and learn about job openings in a diverse range of fields. At last year's job fair, more than 250 students and visitors were in attendance.

Full-time, part-time, temporary and summer positions will be available from organizations in attendance that will include Abbie Alternatives, Cheshire Medical Center, Gardner Public Schools, Mass Life Sciences, Perkins School, Seven Hills and Yankee Candle.

The event is open to the public beginning at 11:30 a.m. and will run until 1 p.m. Students may attend the event beginning at 10:30 a.m. The job fair will be held in the college's South Cafe.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

DURHAM, NH — The following students have been named to the Dean's List at the University of New Hampshire for the fall 2016 semester.

Delaney Payne of Athol earned Honors; Kendra Payne of Templeton earned High Honors; Nicholas Dubicki of Fitzwilliam earned High Honors; Carly Benik of Fitzwilliam earned Highest Honors; Laura Howard of Jaffrey earned Highest Honors; Lillian Murphy of Jaffrey earned High Honors; Peter White of Jaffrey earned Highest Honors; Rebecca Migotsky of Jaffrey earned Honors; Bethany Fraser of Rindge earned Highest Honors; Elizabeth Valcourt of Rindge earned Highest Honors; and Elisha Hodgson of Rindge earned Honors

Students named to the Dean's List at the University of New Hampshire are students who have earned recognition

through their superior scholastic performance during a semester enrolled in a full-time course load (12 or more graded credits). Highest honors are awarded to students who earn a semester grade point average of 3.85 or better out of a possible 4.0. Students with a 3.65 to 3.84 average are awarded high honors and students whose grade point average is 3.5 through 3.64 are awarded honors.

SPRINGFIELD — Western New England University congratulates 729 students named to the Fall 2016-2017 Dean's List. The following students are named to Dean's List for achieving a semester grade point average of 3.30 or higher. Bethany Desilets of Winchendon majoring in neuroscience - research intensive track and Dillon Obuchowski of Rindge majoring in mechanical engineering - Five-year Bachelor/MSME.

HOW TO USE: THE WINCHENDON COURIER

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BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT



Courtesy photo

WELCOME NEW LITTLE ONE

Jackson Terrence James Bohan, weighing 8 lbs. 2 oz. and measuring 19" long, was born March 16, 2016 at 5:06 p.m. to his proud parents Corey & Megan Bohan.

Transfer station budget and costs addressed

BY KEITH KENT
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

WINCHENDON — Town Manager Keith Hickey addressed transfer station costs as well as its indirect costs during part of a joint meeting between the Selectmen and Finance Committee on Monday.

Hickey explained the transfer station enterprise fund was established as a supporting fund, similar to the water & sewer funds. Hickey informed all present the fund has run a deficit over the last few years and has only recently begun to recover costs through user charges, in addition to converting to a single stream recycling program.

During the meeting Hickey commented, "At the transfer station itself we made some significant changes to in fiscal '17 by moving to a single stream facility and reducing some of our labor costs. I can tell you that in fiscal '17 we believe we will be in the black for the first time in a little while."

Gallant approached Hickey about the possibilities of single stream after it was suggested by transfer station foreman Lee Rice, who has three decades of experience in field of solid waste.

Some costs such as personnel have been trimmed as a result of single stream, as Hickey explained. The station has only one employee, Rice, who has worked alone since the single stream program went live Sept. 22, 2016. The program has just reached the half year mark, and is already showing savings for the fund.

The total proposed 2018 town budget, minus the portion for public schools, is \$16,609,686. The proposed transfer station enterprise portion of the budget is \$197,633 or 1.2 percent of the town budget.

Hickey also pointed out indirect costs at the transfer station rose from \$26,740 in 2017, to a projected \$40,074 in 2018, which represents 20.3 percent of the transfer station budget.

Hickey explained indirect costs in a later interview as, "costs which really

are expenses for the transfer station which are recouped to the general fund for expenses related to different types of insurances we have; such as workers' compensation, property liability insurance, employee health insurances, and the employee's pension plan, which are based on a percentage of the transfer station vs the overall budget."

It should be noted, the transfer station foreman is an employee of the DPW just as highway, water, and sewer department employees are, and receives the same contribution towards the retirement plan as all other DPW employees.

These indirect costs indicate a \$14,000 increase in projected costs. There are several options to offset this increase. The first is to increase the costs of both large and small bags by \$1 each. The second is to sell the "Roll-Off" truck the station previously used to haul all the town generated waste and recycling to the transfer station in Jaffrey. Hickey said the truck could potentially fetch around \$10,000. Hickey also said the town hung on to the truck for a year to make sure it realized the anticipated savings under the new single stream program.

"We have seen an increase in the number of people utilizing the transfer station and we would like to see more. However, the only current potential in increasing our balance is by increasing our fees and we are really trying not to do that. I feel pretty confident that between now and the May annual town meeting we could find ways to eliminate the bag cost. We want more people to use that fund, but we also want to make sure it breaks even," said Hickey.

Hickey also addressed costs associated with illegally dumped roadside trash or waste picked up on the side of the roads by both citizens and town employees, and how the costs to dispose of the trash is carried by the transfer station fund. Hickey explained he has begun to address the BOS about the cost of disposing of such rubbish. The question is if the town should have funds appropriated in the operating budget

under public works to fund the cost of the illegal roadside trash disposal.

DPW Superintendent Al Gallant advised Hickey the costs were estimated to be between \$6K and \$10K per year.

On Tuesday Gallant was asked if there is a policy of logging and documenting the collection of illegally dumped road side trash and waste. Gallant provided a copy of logged entries of trash brought to the transfer station beginning Sept. 22, 2016, through March 10.

The log sheets show a total cost of \$1,217 as of the end of calendar year 2016, with a total disposal cost of \$1,427 through March 10. For the period recorded, which is just shy of six months, the towns expense at \$1,427 is only 24 percent of the minimum one year cost projection of \$6K.

While far short of \$6,000 minimum quoted by Gallant, it should be noted the majority of illegally deposited roadside wastes realized are during the summer and early fall months. As Gallant explained, "Once all the snow melts on the sides of roads, you're going to see items all over the place which need to be picked up and disposed of, and that all comes at a cost. We have one road here in town where we know there are many televisions dumped, and their removal and disposal, like all other items, will come with a cost."

At the Monday Selectmen's meeting Selectmen Audrey LaBrie asked Hickey, "Since we no longer use all the containers for the individual recycling, what is going to happen to them? Are they just going to sit there are rot? Can we sell them? Do we own them, or does the state own them?"

Hickey replied, "It could be a combination of all of the above. Some could have been purchased by the town, and Al Gallant thinks some could have been provided by Mass DEP. We would like to sell any surplus containers which are ours, and give back any that belong to DEP so they can give them to somebody else. We will explore this and discuss it with the Board."

ACCURACY WATCH

The *Winchendon Courier* 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 three in a timely manner. If you find a mistake, call (978) 297-0050 during normal business hours. During non-business hours, leave a message in the editor's voice mailbox. The editor will return your phone call. Or contact the editor at the following email: ruth@stonebridgepress.news.

Old Murdock Senior Center Calendar

Please find below the activities listed for the month of April 2017 for the Old Murdock Senior Center. At this time of year, any activity can be cancelled at the director's discretion. All activities are weather dependent (if the weather is bad, we'll cancel an activity). In the case of inclement weather, please call the center before venturing outside. For information or to register for programs, call for rides or to come to lunch served daily at 11:30 a.m., call the Center at (978) 297-3155.

- Weekly Events**
MONDAY
 Wii Bowling 9:30 a.m.; chair exercise 9:30 a.m.; Yoga 10 a.m.; pool, card games and shuffleboard available.
TUESDAY
 Wii bowling 9:30 a.m.; pool, card games, shuffleboard.
WEDNESDAY
 Wii bowling 9:30 a.m.; pool, card games, shuffle board; Bingo 12:30 p.m.
THURSDAY
 Wii bowling 9:30 a.m.; pool, card games, shuffle board.
 Special this month

- Monday, April 3: Market Basket 9:15.
 Thursday, April 6: Let's Make May Baskets!
 Friday, April 7: Peanut Auction 10:30
 Monday, April 10: Market Basket 12:30.
 Wednesday, April 12: Market Basket Shopping 9:30.
 Thursday, April 13: Fallon Rep 10 a.m.-noon.
 Monday, April 17: **CENTER CLOSED**
 Tuesday: April 18: Senior Whole Health Rep 10 a.m.-noon.
 Wednesday, April 19: Market Basket 9:30.
 Friday, April 21: Peanut Auction 10:30
 Monday, April 24: Market Basket 12:30.
 Wednesday, April 26: Market Basket 9:30.

NEWS BRIEFS

Holy Week at the United Parish Church

39 Front Street Winchendon
www.unitedparish.com

Palm Sunday April 9 10 a.m.
 Parade of Palms. Come and receive your palms, as we learn about Jesus journey into Jerusalem! Followed by coffee hour after service for fellowship!
 Boy Scouts Breakfast 7:30-9:30 a.m.: the boy scouts are serving a breakfast before Palm Sunday service. Includes egg, sausage and all you can eat pancakes with coffee and juice provided. For adults cost \$7 and kids (10 and under) \$5.00; family of 4 or more \$20. Please come and enjoy a wonderful breakfast and support our Boy Scouts

Troop 193 before listening to the word of God with a full belly!

Good Friday April 14 7 p.m.

Our choir director, Jayne Thompson, has been working tirelessly with the Choir for our annual Easter Holy Week production of: "The King Is Coming" Cantata by Russell Mauldin. This emotional and spiritually filling cantata will lead us on the path of Christ's final days here on earth and help us to understand the beauty of His Resurrection on Easter Sunday. Please join us and watch this wonderful and uplifting performance!

Easter Day April 16
 Sunrise Service 6 a.m.
 Olde Centre Church Top of High Street

Worship with Jesus' followers as they discovered the empty tomb during the

dawn of Easter Morning. The Rooster has been known to cock-a-doodle-doo during the service to alert everyone that the dawn is breaking!

Easter Service 10 a.m.
 United Parish Church

Please join us to hear a re-performance of The Easter Cantata "The King Is Coming" by the United Parish Choir and listen to Pastor Cal's message of Jesus' Resurrection! We hope you leave with the feeling of Gods Love in your heart.

* Following the service with an Easter Egg Hunt outside for the little ones!

HELP FOR THE LIONS CLUB



Courtesy photo
 Athol Savings Bank donated toward the costs of bringing James Montgomery back to Winchendon for St. Patrick's Day. Back row: Lion Joe Allen with granddaughter Olivia, Roy Graves of Athol Savings Bank; Middle: Lion Vicki LaBrack, Christine Gibbs & Kathleen Matewsky both of ASB; Front: Michael Toomey of ASB, Lions Joni LaPlante & Ken LaBrack

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WINCHENDON COURIER

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EDITOR: RUTH DEAMICIS

VIEWS

Opinion and commentary from Winchendon and beyond

EDITORIAL

Speed and extra lanes

What does the public think? The Powers That Be, in two towns and the state, have been examining the dangers associated with the stretch of Gardner Route/Rte. 140 between the intersection with Rte. 2 and where it ends in Winchendon.

We, being very parochial in our views of course, are pretty much interested in the stretch here in our borders, but many of us drive that entire 12 miles down to get onto the highway to go east too; so let's not forget we are all impacted by these decisions made a few miles from here.

First inclinations seem to be to eliminate the passing lanes entirely and to lower speed limits.

We are going on record right here as saying while posting a lower speed limit might be OK, though unless it is much more highly patrolled it won't matter, the concept of eliminating the second lanes is ludicrous.

If anything, the entire length should be made four lane.

Eliminating the second lanes will make it more dangerous, not less; as impatient drivers take risks in attempts to pass illegally when stuck behind someone they consider too slow or impeding their passage.

Having been behind a few of those, or a larger truck struggling to get up the hills between here and Gardner or here and Betty Spring Road, it is very conceivable.

So, eliminating passing lanes? Bad idea.

Creating more of them? Probably a better choice to help drivers make better choices as they scurry (and all of them are always in a bigger hurry than we care to realize) to the destination.

We are not going to control them by making it harder. We need to make it easier. And there is plenty of room past the Spring Street intersection all the way to the Betty Spring intersection to widen the entire road. Yes, we might have to take some land, but it would solve many problems.

We are addressing this backwards.

In an entirely different vein, the Winchendon Courier needs to make a huge correction and what better way than here.

Tina Leduc Santos is an extremely busy volunteer, and among her passions is the Girl Scouts. She was a Brownie leader for a period of time, but now chooses to mentor others and to help in any way possible with the cookie sales and the existing troops in town.

She did an interview with a correspondent during the recent cookie sale, and we got some information wrong. We want to be sure credit is given correctly to those who spend so much time giving girls so much strength and purpose.

It is the Girl Scout cookie and its sales that is celebrating 100 years this year; not Girl Scouting itself. And in itself that is a great celebration. Hope you got yours, because the sale is now over, and the local troops were very successful this year.

Starr Desmond, who took on a project of making and donating catnip toys to A Better Tomorrow, is a junior Girl Scout with Troop 64509. Her very active Girl Scout career has included the project with the shelter and shipping gifts to soldiers in Afghanistan.

The local Girl Scout troops meet with others from surrounding towns on a regular basis and part of the fun of meeting with others is swapping homemade pins. The organized meets recognized specific Girl Scouting events such as World Thinking Day.

There are several troops in Winchendon, for all ages; but as the girls get older and become more busy, sometimes it is necessary to combine age groups. That is why the local

Cadettes are combined with Ambassadors and Seniors locally.

The Scouts have specific ceremonies celebrating movement from one age group to another, called bridging, and the girls 'fly up' to the next level. This is often done with much pomp and circumstance...and fun. The ceremonies help the young women celebrate these important milestones and others, such as earning specific important badges or awards.

The local Scouts help celebrate the town's veterans by participating in parades and placing flags, they take part in the Summer Solstice and they have been instrumental in the Wreathes Across America.

So, we salute these young women who are learning to be strong and independent; learning to think for themselves and learning life skills with the help of the volunteers such as their leaders and mentors.

We may still have missed some of the wonderful things local Scouts do, but we know the Scouts themselves would be missed even more if we didn't have them actively in Winchendon. So thank you all, and please continue.

LETTERS
POLICY

Letters to the editor are always welcome, and may be sent to ruth@stonebridgepress.news, or The Winchendon Courier, 91 Central Street, Winchendon, MA 01475. Be sure to include a name and residence. Please refrain from sending letters via fax, and be sure to supply a home address and phone number to allow for confirmation. Allow at least 48 hours for a response. Letters must be submitted by noon Friday to ensure publication in the following week's issue. Every effort will be made to accommodate late submissions, but inclusion can not be guaranteed. The rules of good taste and libel will, of course, apply to all submissions. Personal attacks will not be published. The editor retains the right to edit all letters.

What Chuck wrought...



JOURNEY
OF THE
HEART
.....
JERRY
CARTON

Chuck Berry died last weekend. How influential was he? John Lennon reportedly once said, "if you give rock-and-roll another name you'd call it Chuck Berry." How's that for influential?

I never saw Berry perform, though I know a couple people who have. I never saw that quartet Lennon was in either, though I know people who said they were at the 1965 Shea Stadium concert and kept the ticket stubs to prove it.

Berry, not Elvis, was the more accurate founder of rock. He influenced Elvis. He influenced everyone in every genre. Whatever you listening to, it was in some way influenced or inspired by Chuck Berry. As has been noted in his obits, Berry's signature song, "Johnny Be Good," was included when Voyager was launched for a very deep space probe that continues to this day. Who knows who or what might even find it in the time capsule we

sent out there?

I'm sorry I never got to see him, but that fact did make me stop and think who I have seen. I was at Merriweather Post Pavilion in Columbia, MD that famous night in 1970 when a Who concert triggered an alleged riot (fences being knocked down) which in turn triggered a two-year ban on those nefarious rock shows.

When the powers that be relented and allowed bands to show up again, they made sure to keep it wholesome. For several summers between the late '70s and early '80s, we bought season ticket packages to see the likes of Kenny Loggins and Jim Messina, Tom Petty, the Beach Boys, Jimmy Buffett and above all, Jackson Browne and the woman whom we thought might be a future First Lady, Linda Ronstadt, the girlfriend of then-and-now California Governor Jerry Brown. Concerts were back, but the "safe" kind.

That was okay by me because those performers were to my taste anyway. I never liked hard rock or acid rock. Led Zeppelin? Pass.

We had a ritual, too. We'd generally have dinner at a then very trendy-for-young-professionals like us (yes Andy, Courtney, Michael, I really was

once a young professional in the vicinity of your ages now) called Clyde's which sat on the edge of a man-made lake. Much of the planned community of Columbia's "natural" sites were very much man-made. Everything was planned out for the city halfway between Baltimore and Washington. Clyde's was an easy walk to Merriweather. Good seats went for something like \$10 or so. Lawn seats were a bit cheaper and programs, posters and the inevitable t-shirts all sold for a couple bucks. Those season packages we bought? You did it by mail. You'd clip the application out of the Sunday paper sometime in early April for the concert season which began in June, fill it out and mail it in, or you could go to a department store which included a Ticketron booth and buy them there. You'd have several package options and I remember some animated debates about which one we'd choose.

We went to a lot of concerts. Our season tickets were for five or six shows if memory serves, but we went to plenty others, bought lawn seats, sometimes to see the same band we'd have seen the night before. That was especially true with Browne and Buffett. I think we went every night they played for

years.

I first saw Neil Diamond do 'Sweet Caroline' at a picnic at Sargent Shriver's house in September, 1972.

And it wasn't just summers at Merriweather. We went to plenty of concerts at a long since torn down sports arena called the Capital Centre (correct spelling) out in the wilds of Landover, which claimed to be 20 minutes from downtown DC. Ha. It took 20 minutes from the entrance to get to congested and poorly laid out parking lots. But we saw some great shows there. Richard Pryor. The Beach Boys/Chicago together. The Stones. Billy Joel. And the Boss, several times.

To this day there remains a debate over the first Springsteen concert. I have been told the first time we saw him was at school, just before he crashed the covers of TIME and NEWSWEEK. I have no memory of that at all but people whose recall hasn't slipped as much as mine insist it happened so I'll take their word for it.

Anyway, all these performers, each and every one, owed a debt of gratitude to Chuck Berry. He paved the way for them and because he did, he created a million memories for a lot of us too. Pretty cool.

The bulk of this column was completed before we learned of the death of Jimmy Breslin, the cocky, irreverent and incredibly talented columnist who plied his trade at several New York newspapers, though never at the Times. After all, Breslin and the old gray lady would have been a match made in journalistic hell. Breslin had an insight and style few columnists could come close to matching. Perhaps his most famous work came in either November 1963 when he wrote a poignant story about Arlington National Cemetery gravedigger Clifton Pollard being chosen to prepare the grave of President John F. Kennedy that horrific weekend, or when he wrote regularly about David Berkowitz, the infamous "Son of Sam" serial killer in 1978.

Whatever he was penning, though, Breslin did it his way which was far, far different from anyone else's. He was in short, a writer's writer and that's a respectful compliment of the highest order.

Finally this. It was 12 years ago to the day, March 24, 2005 when this column first appeared in these pages. Who ever thought it'd still be going? Ironic, isn't it, where a crisis can lead? See you next week.

Authorities recover the holy grail of football jerseys

A powerful and collaborative inter agency effort among law enforcement including the city of Houston Police Major Offenders Division, the Texas Rangers, the FBI, and even Mexican authorities succeeded in quickly solving what was one of the greatest sports memorabilia heists of all times when it was announced on Monday, March 20 that Tom Brady's stolen game worn Super Bowl 51 jersey had been located and obtained across international lines in Mexico.

Those who say it was "Just a jersey" they may want to think again. Due to a multitude of factors, you would have to have a prized Honus Wagner baseball card in its best condition like the one sold in April 2013 for a staggering \$2.1 million dollars to rival the Brady Jersey. That's keeping in mind the Wagner card of treasured lore among sports fans was manufactured in 1909.

The game worn jersey of TB-12, was not only worn in the Super Bowl but



ANYTHING
NEAR &
FAR
.....
KEITH
KENT

was worn by the quarterback who along with his teammates manufactured the greatest comeback of all time in the 51 championship games of the Super Bowl era.

While Brady wore the "Holy Grail of NFL Jerseys" already valued at a minimum of \$500,000

to \$1 million depending on which auction house valuation you go by, he became the "Only" Super Bowl Era QB to win a fifth Super Bowl. He broke the records for attempted passes, total passing yards (466) and many other records including leading his team to the greatest Super Bowl comeback in league history. Simply put, Brady now owns just about every single quarterback Super Bowl record which exists, only adding to the value of the hallowed jersey for many years to come and he isn't even done yet. The most valuable attribute with this jersey in my humble opinion is its rightful owner would be the very first to give all the credit to everybody else on his team. A true class act.

How about the efforts of multiple law

enforcement agencies? Hats off to all the men and women who helped track down the location of the item. Yes, I am sure if all added up the total cost of the investigation was far more than the value of the jersey. However, a stand had to be taken and a crime of this financial value could not just be simply ignored and tossed to the curbside as it would send a "Go-For-It" message to other future criminals.

The culprit as of Monday's announcement would not yet be named by authorities however in a very disturbing announcement; Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo stated it was a person with "Media Credentials" who had access to the locker room. A true shameful disgrace to the profession.

Additionally, recovered at the crime scene, was Tom Brady's game worn Super Bowl Jersey from the Pat's 4\ fourth Super Bowl victory in Super Bowl 49 over the Seattle Seahawks.

While this criminal seems to have thought he or she would not get caught, a famous movie phrase comes to mind from Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, when the ancient Knight guarding the Holy Grail looked at a

Nazi who drank from the wrong cup and said, "HE CHOSE POORLY."

Let's be honest. This heist had nothing on the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum theft where 13 nearly priceless works of art were stolen in 1990. However, in the sports world, many of its very best judges have described Brady as either a Rembrandt or a Picasso for his great works of art at the professional field even though Brady would be the very first to deny such.

Members and fans can now put this theft behind them in Patriot Nation while the Pats chase a sixth title. This has all become part of their storied mystique as the greatest NFL dynasty of all time, for no other team in league history has accomplished all which they have under both free-agency and the salary cap.

In the end following the greatest Super Bowl comeback of all time, there were also great victories for law enforcement, sports fans, and especially children, as it was again proven to thieves, crime doesn't pay.



Gardner Road work beginning in May

BY KEITH KENT
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

WINCHENDON — While officials from two towns and the state are examining safety issues with Rte. 140, plans for its repair are moving forward with DPW Superintendent Al Gallant attending a meeting with Mass Highway District II officials in North Hampton Tuesday to discuss upcoming scheduling of the work.

Gallant is pleased to announce the project is a go, emphasizing the project is due to begin May 1 subject to weather or other mitigating factors, and must be completed per contract stipulations this coming summer by July 30.

The contractor is P.J. Albert Paving & Excavating of

Fitchburg, who won the bid for the job with a bid of \$544,859. The company is known for parking lots, driveway construction, drainage, and complete road construction. It also specializes in curbing, catch basins, sidewalks, fine grading, asphalt paving, and more.

Work completed will involve a roughly 1.1 mile section of Route 140, which extends from the intersection of Teel and Gardner Road, to 400 feet before the traffic lights at the intersection of Gardner Road and Spring Street.

Gallant explained, "The last 400 feet of Gardner Road has the wiring and sensors under it for the traffic lights, and as the road is in good condition, there is no need to dig it up, especially with all that lies underneath it."

The project was begun with Gallant making an appeal to Mass Highway in summer 2016. Gallant explained, "I started with the state in mid-summer last year begging them to help me. They came down and together we all rolled the road, and we all agreed it is its time since that section of the road hasn't been done since the 1990s."

Aspects of the project will include highly reflective center-line stripping, resetting any guard rails as necessary, and the fixing or replacement as necessary of any culvert pipes or drain grates as well as resurfacing work.

As part of what Gallant called an "Old Handshake Deal" from years ago, Gardner Road is plowed by the state under District II, and in return

the town of Winchendon plows the Route 202 section of Maple Street, as plowing Gardner Road would take much more time and work hours due to its wider width.

In an effort to save significant funds for the town Gallant asked the contractor if the town could place Winchendon DPW trucks in line to receive the asphalt road grindings. Gallant said, "I am pleased to say they said we could have all that we want, and at \$16 per cubic yard we are going to save the town a ton of money. I am going to take as many as we can truck, because we can use road grindings in the town for roads all year long. I am hoping we can get at least few hundred cubic yards for free out of this as we only have to truck it, but we may get 300 to 400."

The grindings will be kept in piles at the town highway barn on Glenallan Street, and at a savings of \$1,600 per 100 cubic yard, taxpayers could potentially realize a savings of \$6,400.

One location already targeted for receiving the road grindings is the northern end of North Central Street, with Old Country Road being another possibility as the town recently discovered it is responsible for 2,000 feet of the road.

Gallant said, "That road project can be done for \$40,000 and hoping to be able to use some of those road grindings to cover the top of it."

Expect traffic delays to begin May 1 on Gardner Road and plan accordingly for them to last no later than July 30.

NEWS BRIEFS

Free land use planning seminar planned April 6

Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, and Agricultural and Conservation Commissions from the towns of Royalston, Phillipston, Templeton, and Winchendon are sponsoring a workshop and dinner for farmland and forestland landowners interested in learning about resources to manage and care for their land. This free session will present information on farm succession, forestry management, land conservation, and estate planning.

The dinner and workshop will be held at the King Phillip Restaurant on Thursday, April 6 from 6-8 p.m. The King Phillip Restaurant is located at 35 State Road Route 2A in Phillipston.

The owner of the King Phillip, Craig Twohey, who recently protected his own land, is hoping for a big turnout.

"As they say they quit making land, so it is important that we all work towards conserving a lot of the gems that are right in our local backyard," said Twohey.

An estate plan helps ensure that your assets — including your land — get distributed according to your family's goals and financial needs. Learn how to assemble information, to choose knowledgeable advisors, and to talk with your family and heirs about the future of your land.

The free session will feature Richard Valcourt and Fletcher Clark, experienced foresters

who help landowners explore forestry management options, as well as Samantha Stoddard from Farm Credit East and Jim Hafner from Land for Good, who assist landowners with farm succession, farmland leasing and financial planning.

Please reserve your free seat and dinner by registering in advance. Call regional conservation coordinator Maggie Hensel at (978) 248-2055 x 29, or email farmconservation_amerincorps@mountgrace.org to pre-register.

New MWCC president scheduled to speak

The next edition of the North Central Massachusetts Chamber's popular *Good Morning North Central* breakfast series is scheduled Thursday, March 30 from 6:45 a.m. to 9 a.m. at the Doubletree by Hilton, 99 Erdman Way, Leominster. The March edition is sponsored by Avidia Bank.

The *Good Morning North Central* series is a high-profile, fast-paced and educational breakfast program geared towards executives, senior managers, professionals and business owners. Each of the programs has a business-oriented focus and features popular speakers to present on topics of interest to local businesses.

The featured local speaker for the March edition is new Mount Wachusett Community College President, Dr. James Vander Hooven who was approved by the Board of Higher Education on Tuesday, Jan. 17. Dr. Vander Hooven will be only

the third president of MWCC since its founding in 1963. The program also includes a presentation by Ashley Ellefson, director of operations, of The Drone Racing League.

Vander Hooven is currently serving as the vice president for enrollment management at Landmark College in Putney, VT. In this role, he serves as the college's chief enrollment officer, manages recruitment activities, enrollment and admissions processes, and administers the Office of Financial Aid. He also oversees the Office of Transfer, Career, and Internship Services.

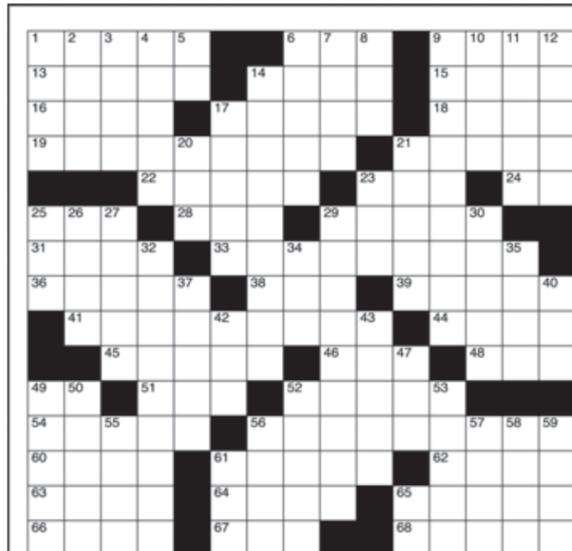
Prior to joining Landmark College, Dr. Vander Hooven was president of Tohono O'odham Community College, a tribal college located on the Tohono O'odham Reservation in Arizona. In that role, he oversaw the \$9 million construction of a new main campus, strengthened programs in the areas of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) and developmental education, and represented the Tribal Colleges in annual presentations on Capitol Hill.

Ellefson will be presenting on the growing market of E-Sports, how the Drone Racing League fits into this emerging market, and how communities can take advantage of this new wave of sports entertainment. DRL launched in January 2016 as the only global professional drone racing organization, hosting five professional races in its inaugural season. They are currently in the middle of filming for their upcoming 2017 Championship Race Series, which includes six races that culminate in a championship

and crowning the World's Greatest Drone Pilot.

The cost is just \$25 for Chamber members/\$40 non-members and includes a breakfast buffet. Season tickets are also available for purchase. Pre-registration is required. For more information or to register, please contact the Chamber at 978.353.7600 ext. 235 or visit www.northcentralmass.com.

The North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce (northcentralmass.com) is a business advocacy, economic development organization working to create and sustain relationships among businesses and between businesses and the community. With 1000 member firms, employing over 25,000 people in the region, the Chamber is working to foster economic opportunity in Fitchburg, Leominster, and surrounding communities. Find the Chamber online at northcentralmass.com or on Twitter at @NCMChamber.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Pea stems
- 6. Type of music
- 9. Leader
- 13. Distant
- 14. 5,280 feet
- 15. Beloved Yankee great
- 16. A female domestic
- 17. Free from alcoholism
- 18. Ribosomal ribonucleic acid
- 19. Entertains with song
- 21. Wooden shoe
- 22. Female horses
- 23. Group of males
- 24. Sodium
- 25. Revolutions per minute
- 28. Neither
- 29. Woody climbing plant
- 31. Dismounted
- 33. Orbits the earth
- 36. Female parents
- 38. Separates acids
- 39. Origins
- 41. Stuffing and mounting animal skins
- 44. Rupture
- 45. Fathers
- 46. Large primate
- 48. Shape-memory alloy
- 49. Halfback
- 51. "Family Guy" daughter
- 52. Irish mountain chain
- 54. Paired
- 56. Drinks
- 60. Death notice
- 61. Skirts
- 62. Fertility god
- 63. Where a curve intersects itself
- 64. Red Sea port
- 65. Mozambique seaport
- 66. Leaver
- 67. The human foot
- 68. Crash

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Excessively theatrical actors
- 2. Wings
- 3. French river
- 4. Internet device
- 5. Where Tony Bennett left his heart
- 6. Flowering shrub that bears gooseberries
- 7. Brews
- 8. For each
- 9. Dictatorships
- 10. Slavic person in Saxony
- 11. Nobel laureate Shmuel
- 12. Lasso
- 14. Tones down
- 17. Lunar period
- 20. Leavened Indian bread
- 21. Military elite
- 23. One thousandth of an inch
- 25. L.A. footballer
- 26. Land plan
- 27. A satellite of Saturn
- 29. "Cat Ballou" actor
- 30. Obscure aspect of Sun God and a group of asteroids
- 32. Indicates the fare
- 34. ___ and feather
- 35. Round Dutch cheese
- 37. Begat
- 40. Relaxing place
- 42. ___ Hit'an of Alaska
- 43. Belgian city
- 47. Organ of hearing and balance
- 49. Isolated Southeast Asian people
- 50. "Power Rangers" villain
- 52. Yellow-fever mosquitos
- 53. Heavy cavalry sword
- 55. Laundry detergent
- 56. A way to wait
- 57. Mother and wife of Uranus
- 58. Justly obtain
- 59. Stony waste matter
- 61. Helps you find places
- 65. Oil company



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POLICE LOG

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

TUESDAY, MARCH 14

12:09-3:51 a.m.: building checks, secure; 3:25 a.m.: MV stop (River Street) verbal warning; 6:21 a.m.: disabled MV (Teel Road) assisted; 9:50 a.m.: animal complaint (CVS) assisted; 10:57 a.m.: summons service (School Square) served; 10:58 a.m.: summons service (Cedar Street) unable to serve; 2:29 p.m.: traffic hazard (Front Street) refer to other agency; 2:56 p.m.: tree down on wires (Snowbound Club) refer to other agency; 3:31 p.m.: traffic hazard (Pleasant Street) call canceled; 3:32 p.m.: officer wanted (Lincoln Avenue) spoken to; 3:47 p.m.: assist citizen (Baldwinville Road) assisted; 4:07 p.m.: traffic hazard (Gardner Road) unable to locate; 4:48 p.m.: animal complaint (phone) message delivered; 4:55 p.m.: unwanted party (Spruce Street) spoken to; 5:15 p.m.: assist motorist (Grove Street) assisted; 5:26 p.m.: assist motorist (Central Street) assisted; 5:34 p.m.: fire unknown type (Glenallan Street) refer to other agency; 5:51 p.m.: accident (Ash Street) report taken; 6:07 p.m.: general welfare check (address not printed) secure; 6:18 p.m.: tree down on wire (Mill Glen Road) refer to other agency; 6:30 p.m.: ambulance (Second Street) refer to FD; 6:42 p.m.: accident (High Street) report taken; 6:50 p.m.: traffic hazard (Teel Road) refer to other agency; 7:16 p.m.: FD call (Ipswich Drive) assisted; 7:37 p.m.: carbon monoxide incident (Lakeview Drive) refer to FD; 8:18 p.m.: ambulance (Goodrich Drive) transport; 8:24 p.m.: MV stop (Central Street) spoken to; 9:01 p.m.: unwanted party (Spruce Street) spoken to; 9:19 p.m.: neighbor dispute (Glenallan Street) spoken to; 10:03 p.m.: officer wanted (Maynard Street) spoken to; 10:23 p.m.: MV stop (Brown Street) verbal warning.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15

12:18 a.m.: fire alarm (Hyde Park Drive) refer to other agency; 12:59-4:05 a.m.: extra patrols and building checks,

secure; 4:44 a.m.: burglar alarm (Otter River Road) secure; 7:39 a.m.: ambulance (Walnut Street) transport; 8:50 a.m.: summons service (Central Street) unable to serve; 10:07 a.m.: accident (Gardner Road) report taken; 10:46 a.m.: summons service (Cedar Street) unable to serve; 10:48 a.m.: disabled MV (School Street) MV towed; 10:59 a.m.: ambulance (Front Place) transport; 12:45 p.m.: officer wanted (Elmwood Road) gone on arrival; 1:28 p.m.: ambulance (Pearl Drive) transport; 2:04 p.m.: MV stop (Spring Street) spoken to; 2:09 p.m.: general info (Royalston Road North) property returned to owner; 3:47 p.m.: lift assist (Teel Road) services rendered; 4:06 p.m.: larceny (Eagle Road) summons: Anthony J. Diaz, age 42 of 105 Eagle Road, Winchendon: larceny over \$250 by single scheme; 4:20 p.m.: assist other agency (School Street) services rendered; 5:19 p.m.: general info (Mill Street) info taken; 5:59 p.m.: harassment (Mechanic Street) report taken; 6:20 p.m.: summons service (Main Street) unable to serve; 6:54 p.m.: burglar alarm (Memorial School) secured building; 7:10 p.m.: assist other PD (Spruce Street) unable to locate; 7:35 p.m.: investigation (Eagle Road) info taken; 8:07 p.m.: investigation (Teel Road) info taken; 8:18 p.m.: 911 hang up (Teel Road) spoken to; 9:40 p.m.: missing person (Cedar Terrace) unable to locate; 11:56 p.m.: extra patrols, secure.

THURSDAY, MARCH 16

12:49-1:50 a.m.: building checks, secure; 7:23 a.m.: accident (Elmwood Road) report taken; 7:56 a.m.: summons service (Main Street) refer to other PD; 8:34 a.m.: summons service (Oak Street) unable to serve; 8:45 a.m.: MV stop (Spring Street) written warning; 9:11 a.m.: MV stop (Elmwood Road) info taken; 10:20 a.m.: animal complaint (Maple Street) refer to ACO; 11 a.m.: assist citizen (Front Street) refer to court; 11:19 a.m.: elderly welfare check (address not printed) spoken to; 11:29 a.m.: elderly welfare check (address not printed) spoken to; 11:55 a.m.: MV stop (Gardner Road) verbal warning; 12:16 p.m.: general info (Mill Glen Road) info taken; 12:55 p.m.: assist other PD (Main Street) assisted; 1:06 p.m.: fraud (Teel Road) report taken; 1:37 p.m.: ambulance (Winter Place) no

FD service required; 1:59 p.m.: fraud (41 Juniper St.) report taken; 2:36 p.m.: assault (Spruce Street) report taken; 2:48 p.m.: investigation (Spruce Street) info taken; 5:41 p.m.: 911 call non-emergency (Ipswich Drive) refer to other agency; 5:55 p.m.: assist other agency (Cottage Hill) call canceled; 7:34 p.m.: MV stop (Gardner Road) traffic citation; 7:58 p.m.: MV stop (Central Street) verbal warning; 8:43 p.m.: MV stop (Main Street) verbal warning; 9:17 p.m.: officer wanted (Mechanic Street) summons: Danielle Denis, age 26 of 12 Mechanic St., Winchendon: two counts A&B on police officer; 9:49 p.m.: officer wanted (Pearl Drive) refer to other PD; 9:59 p.m.: burglar alarm (One Stop Plaza) secure; 11 p.m.: lift assist (Hyde Park Drive) services rendered.

FRIDAY, MARCH 17

12:19-1:47 a.m.: building checks, secure; 4:24 a.m.: accident (Central Street) report taken; 5:58 a.m.: disabled MV (Gardner Road) spoken to; 6:44 a.m.: accident (Central Street) report taken; 6:52 a.m.: ambulance (Central Street) transport; 7:10 a.m.: animal complaint (Spruce Street) refer to ACO; 7:22 a.m.: ambulance (Hyde Park Drive) transport; 7:29 a.m.: MV stop (Highland Street) advised officer; 9:24 a.m.: ambulance (Central Street) transport; 10:17 a.m.: investigation (Main Street) info taken; 11:12 a.m.: general welfare check (address not printed) message delivered; 11:42 a.m.: suspicious other (Royalston Road North) spoken to; 11:49 a.m.: fraud (Teel Road) report taken; 12:50 p.m.: summons service (Oak Street) unable to serve; 1:28 p.m.: harassment (Franklin Street) report taken; 2:23 p.m.: 911 call non-emergency (Eagle Road) no PD service required; 2:49 p.m.: animal complaint (Spruce Street) refer to ACO; 3:16 p.m.: MV operating erratically (Spring Street) unable to locate; 4:28 p.m.: property damage (Spring Street) refer to court; 5:33 p.m.: MV stop (Spring Street) written warning; 6:35 p.m.: MV stop (School Street) report taken; 6:39 p.m.: animal complaint (Old Gardner Road) returned to home; 7:32 p.m.: summons service (Central Street) served; 7:39 p.m.: assist other PD (Rte. 119) unable to locate; 7:53 p.m.: disabled MV (Glenallan Street) assisted; 9:27 p.m.: suspicious MV (North Ashburnham Road) gone on

arrival; 10:06 p.m.: ambulance (Pleasant Street) transport.

SATURDAY, MARCH 18

12-3:13 a.m.: building checks and extra patrols, secure; 3:41 a.m.: MV stop (Benjamin Street) spoken to; 3:59 a.m.: suspicious person (Rite Aid) spoken to; 4:41 a.m.: suspicious person (Mr. Mike's) assisted; 8:56 a.m.: FD call (Hyde Park Drive) services rendered; 9:45 a.m.: threats (Valero's) spoken to; 10:11 a.m.: MV stop (Baldwinville State Road) verbal warning; 11:30 a.m.: ambulance (Pleasant Street) transport; 12:24 p.m.: MV stop (Gardner Road) traffic citation; 12:44 p.m.: MV stop (High Street) verbal warning; 12:50 p.m.: burglar alarm (Murdock High) false alarm; 1:33 p.m.: accident (Forristall Road) report taken; 3:03 p.m.: suicide threats (Pearl Drive) removed to hospital; 6:28 p.m.: property found (Central Street) refer to other PD; 7:11 p.m.: property found (Spruce Street) info taken; 7:50 p.m.: ambulance (Pond Street) transport; 8:12 p.m.: accident (Gardner Road) report taken; 9:18 p.m.: MV operating erratically (Gardner Road) spoken to; 9:52 p.m.: assist other agency (River Street) refer to DPW.

SUNDAY, MARCH 19

12:08-3:47 a.m.: building checks, secure; 4:18 a.m.: ambulance (Central Street) transport; 10:04 a.m.: structure fire (Mellen Road) extinguished; 10:36 a.m.: lift assist (Monomac Road West) removed to hospital; 1:08 p.m.: burglar alarm (Baldwinville State Road) secured building; 1:55 p.m.: ambulance (Hyde Park Drive) transport; 2:18 p.m.: VIN inspection (Maple Street) assisted; 3:31 p.m.: burglar alarm (United Parish) call canceled; 4 p.m.: ambulance (Pearl Street) transport; 4:50 p.m.: officer wanted (Banner Place) refer to court; 5:46 p.m.: holdup alarm (One Stop Plaza) accidental; 6:45 p.m.: MV operating erratically (Maple Street) unable to locate; 7:13 p.m.: MV stop (Spring Street) verbal warning; 9:36 p.m.: fraud (Spruce Street) report taken; 9:50 p.m.: suspicious other (Baldwinville State Road) spoken to; 10:31 p.m.: ambulance (Countryside Motel) transport; 11:49-11:56 p.m.: building checks, secure.

NEWS BRIEFS

Bringing the work to the workers

According to Winchendon Fire Department on Monday March 20 the mountain literally came to Mohammed as a trash truck with its load on fire pulled into the fire station on Central Street to address the smoky problem.

The fired department reports, "A trash truck driver stopped at the station today and told our secretary his truck was on fire. Winchendon Firefighters were just returning from another call. We had the driver dump his load of trash in the parking lot behind the station and we extinguished the fire."

One photo shows a small gas grill with a propane tank attached that was in the trash. Propane tanks should NOT be thrown in the trash for pickup and is extremely dangerous for firefighters when fires occur.



Winchendon Fire Department courtesy photos

The culprit, a small camp stove, with its propane tank still attached, had been the source.



The truck had to empty its load onto the pavement to extinguish the blaze and find the source of the fire.

Rite-Way hearing moved to June

WORCESTER — The case of Winchendon resident Dwayne Pelkey and three others from Rite Way who are accused of attempting to bilk MassHealth of nearly \$2 million has been continued until June 1, when there will be a pretrial hearing.

Pelkey, Rite Way president Michael Davini of Rindge, Gary Carbonello

of Leominster and Lynn Maguire of Abington were indicted last fall on charges they participated in a scheme where, argued Attorney General Maura Healey's office, the company "fraudulently and repeatedly billed MassHealth for transportation services that were never provided, including claims for individuals who were hospitalized in inpatient settings, no longer used the company's services or were deceased on the claimed date of service".

The indictment reported the alleged fraudulent claims took place between 2011 and 2014. Pelkey was charged with one count of larceny over \$250 and one count of reporting a false claim to Medicaid.

Westminster-based Rite Way, which served clients in Winchendon and other towns, closed abruptly in September

2015. The company had been providing MassHealth members with nonemergency rides to various methadone clinics.

But the AG's office alleged the company, under investigation since 2013, was at the same time paying clients \$50 cash rewards or offering gift cards to Visa and Dunkin Donuts in exchange for referrals.

"We allege that in order to rack up millions of dollars in payments from the state, this company orchestrated a massive false billing scheme for transportation services they never provided or were not necessary. To protect the integ-

egrity and success of our MassHealth program we need to make sure companies are not intentionally taking advantage of taxpayers and patients who are truly in need of those services," said the Attorney General's office when the indictments were announced.

Davini's attorney, Michael Angellini, disputed the charge. "This is essentially a billing dispute," he said.

"It's not a billing issue when you're talking about kickbacks we allege," replied Health and Human Services Secretary Mary Lou Sudders.

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OBITUARIES

Elizabeth S. 'Betty' (Johnson) Boutell, 79

TEMPLETON — Elizabeth S. "Betty" (Johnson) Boutell, age 79, of 101 Baldwinville Road, died peacefully Thursday morning, March 16, 2017 at her residence, with her family at her side.



She was born in Templeton on Nov. 12, 1937, daughter of the late Victor and Edris (Uddman) Johnson and graduated from Templeton High School in 1955. Betty was a lifelong resident of Templeton.

Betty was a member of Faith Lutheran Church and the former Covenant Lutheran Church and Immanuel Lutheran Church. She sang in the church choir and sang with the former Straight from the Heart Singing Group. She and her late husband were members of Four Hearts as One Square dancing team.

Betty was a very kind and giving person. She volunteered for several years with the Fellowship Table at Chestnut Street Methodist Church. Betty was one of the founders of PTO in Templeton and was a member and past president of Templeton Women's Club. Betty was a member of the Class of 1955 Reunion

Committee and was president of the Past Presidents Club in this area. In addition to loving her family, she loved animals and children.

Her husband of 40 years, Clifton "Red" Boutell, died in 1995. She leaves four children, Jeffrey Boutell and his wife Jean of Fitchburg, Cindy Richard and her husband Tom of Templeton, Robin Henrie and her husband Jean of Ashburnham and Randy Boutell and his wife Jessica of Templeton; seven grandchildren, Justin Richard and his wife Carey, Brandon Richard and his wife Kristin, Nicolas Richard and his wife Krystal, Noah Richard, Jace Henrie, Cameron Henrie and Desyre Miller, and one great grandson Owen Richard. A brother, Ernest Johnson, preceded her in death.

Funeral services were held Saturday, March 18, 2017 in First Church of Templeton, Templeton Common. The Rev. William Ault officiated. Burial will be in Wildwood Cemetery, Gardner.

Memorial donations may be made to the Gardner Animal Shelter or Templeton Animal Shelter.

Stone-Ladeau Funeral Home (stone-ladeau.com), 343 Central Street, Winchendon was entrusted with arrangements.

Mary Catherine (McNamara) L'Etoile, 89

WINCHENDON — Mary Catherine (McNamara) L'Etoile, age 89, passed away peacefully at her home Thursday, March 16, 2017.



She was born July 25, 1927 in Hempstead, LI to the late Edward J. and Nora A. (Landers) McNamara. She resided in Winchendon for 86 years.

Mary married the late Joseph A. L'Etoile, who passed away Nov. 5, 2016 and they had celebrated their 68th anniversary. They were best friends and sweet hearts for over 73 years.

Mary leaves behind her son, Michael E. L'Etoile of Winchendon; a daughter Jane Pineo and her husband Philip of Gardner; 16 grandchildren, 23 great grandchildren; a sister, Carol Lemieux and her husband Roland of Leominster and many nieces and nephews. A son, Joseph J. L'Etoile, passed away Dec. 19, 2016. A sister, Susan McNamara Johnson preceded her in death.

Mary graduated from Murdock High

School in 1944 and from Fitchburg Teacher's College in 1948. She started her teaching career in Winchendon public schools teaching at Woodcock and White schools. She opened Mrs. L'Etoile's Kindergarten in 1956 and educated hundreds of young children until she retired in 1986.

Mary was a member of St. Vincent de Paul Church in Baldwinville and was a former member and religious education instructor at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church. She was a much beloved woman, who touched hundreds of people with her quiet generosity.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Tuesday, March 21, 2017 in St. Vincent de Paul Church, 1 Forest St., Baldwinville. Burial followed in Massachusetts Veteran's Memorial Cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to Murdock Alumni Association or to Forward in Health.

The family would like to extend its love and appreciation to Dr. John Harrington and GVNA Hospice.

Stone-Ladeau Funeral Home (stone-ladeau.com), 343 Central St., Winchendon is directing arrangements.

Francis J. Oates, 92

WINCHENDON — Francis J. Oates, age 92, of 286 Front St., died peacefully Monday evening, March 20, 2017 in Baldwinville Nursing Home, with his family at his side.



A lifelong resident of Winchendon, he was born on Oct. 4, 1924, son of the late Fred and Lillian (Brow) Oates and was educated in Winchendon schools.



Francis proudly served his country during World War II as a member of the United States Army Air Corps. He served with the Pathfinder Squadron as an aide to the commander. He had operated a family trucking business.

Fran was a member for over 70 years of Eugene M. Connor Post 193 American Legion and was a member of Lt Frederick Wilder White Post 2158 VFW.

He was a past president of Winchendon Rod and Gun Club and had been a member of St. Laurent Camping Association. His hobbies were woodworking, putting, playing bingo and making trips to Foxwoods.

His wife of 49 years, Helen R. (Woodard) Oates, died in 2002. He leaves four children, Steven F. Oates of Fitzwilliam, Rhonda J. Goodnow and her husband Richard of Fitzwilliam, Laurie F. Boisvert and her husband Mario of Winchendon and Cindy F. Duvarney of Fylmar, CA, 11 grandchildren and 19 great grandchildren. A sister, Lucille Thompson, preceded him in death.

Graveside services will be held later in the spring in Riverside Cemetery at the convenience of the family. There are no calling hours.

Memorial donations may be made to Winchendon Little League, 295 School St., Winchendon, MA 01475.

Stone-Ladeau Funeral Home, 343 Central St., Winchendon is directing arrangements.

Theopie 'Teddie' (Mohtares) Wahl, 89

PHILLIPSTON — Theopie "Teddie" (Mohtares) Wahl, age 89, formerly of 7 Samuel Drive, died peacefully Thursday, March 16th in Quabbin Valley Healthcare, Athol, with her family at her side.



She was born in Ontario, Canada on Oct. 1, 1927, daughter of the late Theodore and Despina (Saitanidou) Mohtares and graduated from Parkdale Collegiate High School in Toronto, Canada.

She later graduated from University of Toronto with a degree in physical therapy and Moody Bible Institute in Chacago, IL. Teddie lived in Gardner from 1956 to 1990, when she and her husband moved to Phillipston.

Teddie worked at Heywood Hospital in Gardner for 21 years as head of physical therapy until her retirement. She

was a member of Bethany Bible Chapel in Winchendon and had been a member of Bethany Baptist Church in Gardner. Her hobbies were playing the piano, knitting and skiing in her younger days.

Her husband of 63 years, Rev. Phil D. Wahl, died in 2015. She leaves five children, Walter Eric "Rick" Wahl and his wife Linda of Gilbert, AZ, Cynthia Ahearn and her husband Shawn of Gardner, Mark Wahl of Colchester, VT, Robert Wahl and his wife Michelle of Dearborn Heights, MI and Bruce Wahl and his wife Barbara of Gardner; twelve grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Private burial will be in Wildwood Cemetery, Gardner.

Memorial donations may be made to Alzheimer Association, 309 Waverley Oaks Rd, Waltham, MA 02452.

Stone-Ladeau Funeral Home (stone-ladeau.com), 343 Central Street, Winchendon was entrusted with arrangements.

Walter J. Young, 88

KEENE, NH — Walter J. Young, age 88, of 625 Court Street, died peacefully Monday morning, March 20, 2017 at his residence.



He was born in Rindge on Jan. 10, 1929, son of the late Elisha C. and Anna (Miller) Young and was raised in Rindge. Walter graduated from Murdock High School in Winchendon, in 1945. He had lived in

Keene since 1985.

Walter worked for 35 years for the Department of Transportation for the state of New Hampshire until his retirement. He previously worked in Winchendon and Rindge. Walter was a volunteer firefighter or the town of Rindge for many years and retired as its Fire Chief. Walter was one of the first Fire Service Training Instructors for the state of New Hampshire. He had been a Deputy Forest Fire Warden and a Special Forest Fire Warden for the state of New Hampshire.

Walter was also a member of Charity Lodge #18 F&AM Masonic Lodge of Jaffrey, a member of the Scottish Rite

and was a 32nd degree mason.

He leaves his wife, Virginia (Ringland) Young; two children, Faith Young of Jaffrey and Walter Young Jr. and his wife Patty of Rindge; two grandchildren, Heather McLain and Zachary J. Young and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his brothers and sisters, Elisha H. Young, Warren Young, John S. Young, Ardis A. Larochele and Eileen L. Sellars.

A Memorial and Masonic funeral services will be held Friday, March 24, 2017 at 1 p.m. in First Congregational Church, Rindge Common. A reception will be downstairs in the church hall immediately following the service.

There are no calling hours.

Burial in the spring in Hillside Cemetery, Rindge will be private.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Charity Lodge #18 F&AM Masonic Lodge, 161 Wellington Road, Jaffrey, NH 03452 or to First Congregational Church, PO Box 451, Rindge, NH 03461.

Stone-Ladeau Funeral Home, 343 Central Street, Winchendon, Mass., is directing arrangements.

SEND OBITUARIES at no charge to Editor Ruth DeAmicis, by faxing (978) 297-2177, or by e-mailing the editor at ruth@stonebridgepress.news.

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The circus was in town!

BY APRIL GOODWIN
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

WINCHENDON — When the up-beat cadence of classic circus music plays, thoughts of child-like wonder and joy begin to dance in the minds of those who hear it. Memories of a simpler time filled with buttery popcorn, funny clowns, magicians, and more bring a wistful longing for carefree days spent at the circus. For the town of Winchendon, children and adults of all ages had the pleasure of experiencing the joy of a circus when the Yankee Doodle Circus came to town at Murdock Middle High School.

An all-star cast of circus stars from around the world, including members from South America, Brazil, and Russia, entertained their way into the laughter and hearts of those who attended. Though the circus was small, consisting of only six performers, the delight and laughter were immense. Mike Naughton, circus producer and "America's Best Dressed Ringmaster," started the Yankee Doodle Circus back in 1985 as what was supposed to be a one-time event — now, his circus performs in approximately 90 schools every year.

Acts at the circus' Murdock performance included a balancing act, several performances by a lovably funny clown, a jaw-dropping juggler, and a couple of magic skits. The performers put a large emphasis on audience engagement, encouraging audience members to clap their hands, stomp their feet, and cheer the performers on. During several of the acts, audience members were chosen from the crowd to come down to the ring and help the performers out. Both children and adults laughed and played along, bringing another element of enjoyment to the show. Young children also danced around the front of the ring, enthralled by the performances, during the entire circus.

Besides the main entertainment, there were baked goods, toys, fresh hot popcorn, face painting, and "practically indestructible balloons" for sale as well. Murdock Student Council also held a 50/50 raffle that evening. Funds raised in the raffle will be used to benefit the American Cancer Society Relay for Life.

With the audience keeping a fond hold on the simple feeling of joy when a circus comes to town, Yankee Doodle Circus bid farewell saying, "Until next time, may all your days be circus days."



Mat Plamondon photos



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SPORTS

Fixing the Madness...



TALKING SPORTS

JERRY CARTON

You know what's wrong with the tournament? Too many sixth and below place teams from the power conferences. A big part of the appeal of the whole "March Madness" thing, aside from visions of winning your pool, is the possibility of upsets, especially the first two days. So here's what should be done to increase the chances

of those supposed 'shockers' — limit the power conferences to five bids. If you can't finish in fifth place, you have no business going anywhere but the NIT. That would clear the way for deserved second bids for leagues like the Ivy and Patriot and A-10 and Southern and others. This would make the whole thing even more interesting and involve schools who otherwise have no shot unless they win their conference tournament. Why not?

Meanwhile, the Sweet Sixteen began last night without last year's champion Villanova nor Duke nor Louisville nor Michigan State, all of whom are usually forc-

es deep into the tournament, though other usual suspects Kentucky, Florida and North Carolina remain standing. Xavier has been impressive. So has Michigan. South Carolina has made the most of the Gamecocks' first appearance in a long time and Northwestern, though the Wildcats went out in the second round of their first-ever invite, did win an opening round game. It was fun to see South Carolina eliminate the perpetually and arrogantly obnoxious Blue Devils and I liked watching one-time Dookie Chris Collins, now the Northwestern coach, have a meltdown after an admittedly egregiously bad call went

against his team. I grant that rarely happened in Durham so maybe it was a shock to Collins that he didn't automatically get the call? Anyway, I thought 'Nova was going to repeat. Now? Who knows? North Carolina. Just a guess.

Here's what's not a guess but fact. The great Gale Sayers has dementia. Here's another fact. Dwight Clark, recipient of "The Catch" in the 1982 NFC title game, has ALS. Both men's families believed football contributed to their illnesses. Last week a congressional committee reported lots of NFL team doctors through the years have regularly doled out pain medications in violation of various

laws.

I see parents celebrating the success of Pop Warner and other young football programs and freshman and junior varsity as well as varsity high school programs. Why in God's name would anyone celebrate 10-11-12-13, even 14 year-olds playing tackle football? Why would any parent sign a permission slip knowing what we now know? Sure, there are risks in every sport, but the evidence is mounting that tackle football poses a greater potential risk for youngsters than any other. Why chance it?

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

A softball star reminisces about dedication

BY JERRY CARTON
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

WINCHENDON — It was a decade ago when Murdock varsity softball was launching a rebirth. That 2007 team just missed qualifying for Districts, going to the final out of the final game of the season before falling to Lunenburg. The Lady Devils reached the post-season a year later and that's where they've remained every spring but once since. The foundation for the long run of success was laid by that '07 squad.

Ali Christian (now Keddy) was a member of that squad and she recently reflected on both that softball experience and where her life has taken her in the last 10 years, including marriage and two sons.

"I didn't play t-ball but I played everything else, minors, majors with the Cardinals, middle school, JV and then varsity. I loved softball. I was really passionate about it and I wasn't afraid to show that and I wasn't afraid to say what I was thinking," Keddy recalled.

"I even remember telling coach (Dan)

Tenney where to go when he put freshmen and sophomores on the team. To say I was outspoken was putting it mildly. I was a mouthy kid, I'm surprised no one smacked me, but I spoke out and spoke up because I was so passionate. I really cared," she mused.

"She did. For sure, and that was a good quality," noted Tenney.

"He was a great coach, though," Keddy said. "I learned a lot. We were taught fundamentals. I did cheering too, but I liked softball a lot better because I got more of a rush from that and also because you, well, I, didn't have to think about what to do next. We were taught well. We knew instinctively what to do and I think that made it more fun. Also, in softball, you knew whether you won or lost. Cheering competitions were more subjective. I liked how definite winning and losing were. I was playing with my friends and that was fun, too," she remembered.

Keddy had hoped to continue her career at Franklin Pierce University but, "I was only there for one semester. It just didn't work out. I switched to the

Mount and I was working as an EKG tech and waitressing at the Colonial for a couple months and then Friendly's for a few years."

Right now Keddy is working at the front desk of the Winchendon Health Center, ("it's crazy, never boring and I like the job because I like being able to help people") but she's also taking courses to become a medical assistant and has longer-term plans to be a phlebotomist.

"Eventually, I'd like to be a department manager," she said.

With a husband and two sons (Logan is 6 and Vinny is 1), Keddy's busy at home, too.

"I'll be 28 in June but sometimes I don't feel like an adult," she laughed, "but here I am, doing the whole adult thing. I love being a wife and mom but I definitely have career goals too."

Any regrets looking back?

"I wish I hadn't quit softball. My temper, I guess, got the best of me in '08 and I'm going to tell my kids — don't quit anything once you start it. That's a lesson I've learned. I wish I'd stuck it



Courtesy photo

Ally (Christian) Keddy with her family

out. You never know what life is going to throw at you, but I'm happy overall about how things have turned out in my life," said Keddy.

SPORTS BRIEF



Courtesy photo

Membership to the Mount Wachusett Community College Fitness and Wellness Center through the new Veterans Move program includes classes.

Fitness and Wellness Center offering new veterans program

GARDNER — The Mount Wachusett Community College Fitness and Wellness Center is now offering a new program called Veterans Move that provides veterans and their spouses full memberships at the cost of \$15 per month when obtained on a physician's referral.

The program came directly from a need in the community, with many physicians seeking an affordable facility in north central Massachusetts for their patients, said Director of the Fitness & Wellness Center Jared Swerzenski. Before this, many veterans have been making use of the facility in Bedford, which is almost an hour away, he said.

"When I was approached with the opportunity to create this program, I thought it would be a great partner-

ship. Many of these veterans are suffering from significant joint and knee ailments and will be able to use the pool and equipment to help with rehabilitation," said Swerzenski. "Mount Wachusett Community College has created such a positive environment for veterans with the school's varied programming and support systems so this program is a natural fit for the MWCC Fitness Center."

MWCC Fitness and Wellness Center supports veterans in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The facility includes a six-lane, Olympic sized swimming pool, three full-size indoor basketball courts, two regulation racquetball courts and state-of-the-art weight training/cardiovascular equipment. In addition, the center offers more than 90 free group fitness classes a week, which include Zumba, Yoga, Group Active, Group Groove, Group Power, Silver Sneakers and much more, all led by certified instructors and trainers.

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Wearing o'the green in Winch

Jeff Millman photos

It was everything from step dancers to rockers in Winchendon Friday for St. Patrick's Day as both Kiwanis and Lions held fund raisers on the Irish day!



Winchendon Courier Classifieds



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HELP WANTED JOB FAIR

Wednesday, March 29 at Mount Wachusett Community College. More than 35 companies will be on hand to discuss opportunities. The event is open to the public beginning at 11:30 a.m. and will run until 1 p.m. Students may attend the event beginning at 10:30 a.m. The job fair will be held in the college's South Cafe.

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AIS, Inc., a multi-million dollar office furniture manufacturer based in central Massachusetts will be hosting an Industry Match-Making event at their state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Leominster. The company will be seeking to meet with small businesses throughout New England who provide services and/or materials to the manufacturing industry. The event will be held on Thursday, March 16 8:30am-noon. Advanced registration is required in order to participate in the event. Small business representatives interested in expanding their business opportunities with AIS, Inc. can register online at <https://tinyurl.com/AISMeetGreet>

JOB SEEKERS

Job Seekers Networking Group hosted by North Central Career Center and Greater Gardner Chamber of Commerce. Meetings are open to all job seekers and are held on Wednesdays from 1-2 p.m. at the Chamber conference room, 29 Parker St. 2nd floor, Gardner. Contact the Chamber at (978) 632-1780.

EMPLOYERS

These help wanted ads are FREE! Contact the Courier to find out how to get help for your business by calling (978) 297-0050 x 100 or email ruth@stonebridgepress.news.

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secured, peaceful, friendly, well maintained, quiet & drug free building. Independent group of older gentlemen to co-habitat, hallway & bath facilities are shared. 1 parking space, dumpster use, heat/HW included, electric included (except AC in summer). \$475 per month. References, income verification, first & last to move in. Applications available: Dick's Place Barbershop, 298 Central St. (978) 297-2281.

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BRANDYWINE

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that you are planning various events from 'vendor fairs' to hydroponic lessons and more at the property."

The letter continues, "This scattered approach to re-purposing this site is leading to confusion about what you are planning, about what is allowed and not allowed, what permits are required or not."

The letter further goes on to address any changed uses of the building necessitate the need for a formal code review as sited in a section of the LDA.

Like Athol then, the town of Winchendon in current day still awaits necessary plans from the Giovaninis for what the projected site and usage of 155 Mill Circle site will look like along with other developmental information.

Much as Winchendon Town Manager Keith Hickey has stated in previous interviews, the town of Athol was confused about what the use would look like, design plans, and other factors.

On Jan. 13, 2015 Suhoski again in a letter reminded the

Giovaninis that the amended and restarted LDA from the previous fall town meeting required terms be renegotiated and amended. In demonstrating an effort to work with the Giovaninis, Suhoski wrote, "Therefore I again ask that we review the LDA and your consolidation plan for the property, so that we can make any needed changes to help facilitate your ultimate vision for the site."

Additionally, in the letter Suhoski addressed the installation of four pellet stoves which were installed on the site without any application for, or the approved legal permitting for the facility. It was noted the permit application was \$35, with a fine failure to possess the permit of \$100 for each violation.

A letter of response by the Giovaninis dated Jan. 19 to Suhoski addressing the multiple code violations stated, "The pellet stoves were only a temporary measure to keep the pipes from freezing and keep the plants alive," as a steam heat specialist would be in within the next several days to restart the system."

Suhoski was asked, as the town of Winchendon has already been accused of not working with the Giovaninis, was the town of Athol ever accused of the same? Suhoski simply replied, "Yes, we were accused of not working with them."

During the spring of 2015, Brandywine Farms and the Giovaninis while falling behind with the then failing Silver Lake Street School project, were engaging the town of Winchendon to obtain a TIF agreement for the building purchased at 155 Mill Circle negotiated under then Town Manager James Kreidler. A TIF was agreed upon and voted at town meeting May 18, 2015.

The TIF has since then recently been legally declined by Brandywine Farms as the Giovaninis exercised a legal right to do so.

Many of the former TIF agreements were not adhered to, including being behind \$39,441 in back taxes, and a lack of job creation, leading to the town to place four liens on the property in an effort to obtain taxes owed.

In September 2015, a legal

"Order Of Notice" was as required by law posted in the local Athol area newspaper on behalf of Massachusetts Land Court Department of the Trial Court, as Phoenix Financial Court was moving forward in the process of repossession of the 245 Silver Lake St. property for which the \$50,000 loan was granted, just 16 months after obtaining the loan to improve a property it purchased for \$1.

The last section of a chronology report obtained about the project stated the following, "Due to a lack of funding, the Giovaninis are slow to get things started. They were relying heavily on a USDA grant to renovate the building, which they did not get. They did get an occupancy permit for using the building for agricultural purposes. Many of the difficulties with Brandywine Farms stemmed from their belief they were exempt from many permitting and zoning (Building and Health) regulations because of the "Right to Farm Act. They in fact were not. However, the building inspector did allow a lot of leeway. For example, we exempted the Registered Design

Professional requirement for the renovation, even though it was a stretch. We allowed retail in the building (stretched from the definition to encompass agriculture-related retail) in June, 2014 before we got the rezoning approved. There are a number of other examples like this. Even though we approved the zoning to make the full vision possible, it appears they didn't have the capital to pull it through."

The Silver Lake School building at 13,748 sq. ft. was only 14 percent of the size of the currently proposed 100,000 sq. ft. Winchendon facility, with its 2.6 acres of land only being 5 percent of the 54 acre Winchendon site.

It should also be noted that for a time, Brandywine Farms unsuccessfully attempted to sell the property it obtained for \$1 from the town of Athol before it was ultimately foreclosed by Phoenix Financial Corp.

Suhoski ended his statements concerning the project saying, "All I will say is we are comfortable in saying Athol worked extremely hard to try to help the Brandywine Farms project succeed."

BUDGET

continued from page A1

those goals was the replenishment of the Stabilization Fund to a level of 5 percent of the overall town budget, and continuing to pay down the \$3.55 million loan approved by state lawmakers to plug a deficit of that amount in town finances which had been discovered in late 2014, and disclosed to residents and taxpayers early the following year.

Among standout spending items in the budget is a proposal to add \$101,000 to next year's snow and ice removal account, and plans to purchase a number of vehicles for the fire, public works, and school departments. A proposal to construct a sally port for the new police station is also included.

The construction of the sally port is easily the most expensive item among proposed capital improvements.

"It's upward of \$675,000," Hickey said Monday night. "We've asked (the) Robinson Broadhurst (Foundation) to pay for nearly a half-million dollars of

that project."

Hickey has broken the cost of the sally port into three payments from FY18 to FY20. In addition to Robinson Broadhurst potentially providing just over \$187,000 each year, the town manager plans to use \$23,000 a year from the state 911 Support and Incentive Grant the police department receives on an annual basis. The balance, nearly \$20,000 in each of the three fiscal years, would be covered by Winchendon's property taxpayers.

"What I'd like to propose to do," said Hickey, "is to borrow that money with the understanding — which would be included in the warrant article language — that if we don't receive Robinson Broadhurst funds, the funding doesn't move forward. Robinson Broadhurst seems to be enthusiastic about the project, but they've also said they'd like to see some town 'buy-in.'"

Also included in the capital plan is a \$97,975 expenditure as the first payment toward a new, \$435,000 pumper/tanker for the fire department. The balance would be paid in equal increments

over the following four fiscal years. Winchendon taxpayers would bear the full cost of the vehicle. The new truck would replace a tanker/pumper that is more than 20 years old.

"The fire chief, in proposing this, has looked at both used and demo fire vehicles," said Hickey, "and if we're able to acquire a used or demo vehicle that makes sense for this community, we will definitely take advantage of doing that. I'm taking about a very slightly used truck, not a 10-year-old truck — and I'm sure there are some out there — but I really don't think it would be cost-effective to lease an older truck. We've also had a company come in and take a look at the existing truck. That truck needs, at a bare minimum, \$150,000 worth of work to have it continue to work through the next five to ten years. I'm suggesting it's not cost-effective to repair that fire truck."

Of the full \$29.3 million spending package, nearly \$15.4 million would go to the school department. Just over \$3.7 million will cover the cost of pensions and employee benefits, \$2.7 million would be

committed to public safety, about \$1.9 million would go to general government, and public works would receive just under \$1.2 million. State assessment, debt service, culture and recreation, and health and human services would account for the remainder.

So, where will the money come from to pay for the budget?

State aid will chip in 46.1 percent toward the total. Real and personal property taxes will cover 40.1 percent of the tab. Local receipts would account for 9.5 percent, free cash for 2.7 percent, indirect charges — water and sewer revenues — for 1.4 percent, and transfers from other accounts would be applied to 0.3 percent of the package.

The town manager's fiscal proposal is at this point, just that...a proposal. A series of public hearings held by both the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee must still take place before a final package is presented at the May 15 town meeting. Voters at that time will have the final say.

MWCC

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and leave us today, make our democracy better than it is now."

Former state Senator Stephen Brewer reminded those gathered of the commitment the United States has made to immigrants; offering a promise of welcome. To these new citizens being welcomed, he emphasized the refrain of E Pluribus Unum — out of many one — that epitomizes the melting pot that is the United States.

"You become a part of the greatest country in the world and we welcome you," Brewer told the gathered crowd.

Gardner Mayor Mark P. Hawke took a somewhat lighter tone as he noted that although the crowd represented members of 64 communities, none of those gathered to become citizens were from Gardner. He spoke of Gardner's history as a location for immigrants and the positive impact they had on the area's

culture and economy before encouraging those at the ceremony to become a part of the future of the city.

"We do have a rich history of immigrants in the city and I seriously do hope you consider the city of Gardner if you ever consider relocating in the future," said Hawke to laughter from the audience.

The real stars of the event were the 271 citizenship candidates who originated from the following 58 countries: Albania, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brazil, Burma, Cambodia, Canada, People's Republic of China, Colombia, Cote D'Ivoire, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Hong Kong, India, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russia, Senegal, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Syria, Taiwan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uruguay, and Vietnam.

The candidates reside in the following Massachusetts cities and towns: Acton, Ashburnham, Auburn, Bedford, Billerica, Boston, Boxford, Bradford,

Burlington, Cambridge, Chelmsford, Clinton, Concord, Danvers, Dracut, Dudley, Fitchburg, Georgetown, Gloucester, Greenfield, Groton, Haverhill, Holden, Holyoke, Hudson, Lancaster, Lawrence, Leominster, Littleton, Lowell, Manchester, Marlborough, Maynard, Methuen, Middleton, Newburyport, North Adams, North Andover, North Billerica, North Oxford, Palmer, Paxton, Pepperell, Petersham, Pittsfield, Reading, Salisbury, Shrewsbury, Southborough, Southbridge, Springfield, Sudbury, Templeton, Tewksbury, Webster, Wenham, West Springfield, Westborough, Westfield, Westford, Westminster, Wilmington, Winchendon, and Worcester.

As he closed the ceremony, Judge Hillman again encouraged the new citizens to make use of their new-found rights and become involved.

"I am proud to call each and every one of you a fellow American," said Hillman. "Perhaps you or one of the children in this room today, hopefully more than one, will become a great leader of this nation."

For more information on USCIS and its programs, visit www.uscis.gov.

140

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in Gardner would simply prefer to see all passing lanes between Westminster and Winchendon done away with. He also said it would probably be a good idea to eliminate the acceleration lanes at the intersection of 140 and Pearl Street/Route 101.

Hickey added that MassDOT officials also seemed open to the idea of reducing speed limits on the highway.

Although Route 140 is a state highway, the law enforcement along the roadway has fallen largely to local police departments.

"As I understand it, the State Police did assume greater responsibility for patrolling the road for a short time," said Hickey. "After a bit, however, they cut back on their patrols and the burden for patrolling fell back to Gardner and Winchendon."

Because of staffing and budgetary issues, added Hickey, the likelihood of increased patrols is problematic. He said both communities appeared willing to apply for grants that would "allow for specific, dedicated patrols on Route 140 to try to reduce the speeds. Speed itself is a real problem. If we could get more patrols

out there, that might eliminate some of the speeding."

The town manager noted that MassDOT currently has plans to resurface a portion of Route 140, starting near the Route 12 intersection.

"We asked the DOT to consider implementing any changes they thought were appropriate prior to starting the project. So, if there's a passing lane they can eliminate, they can repave it in that manner. Basically, we'd like to see the passing lanes reviewed and if they're unsafe, get rid of them."

Coughlin said Deputy Chief Bernard raised the possibility of placing Jersey barriers along the center of portions of the highway. Bernard thought the barriers might cut down on the number of lane departure crashes.

"However," said Coughlin, "the state pushed that off as being too expensive."

The meeting concluded with the state agreeing to study several issues. Such items include an evaluation of passing zones, the evaluation of regulatory and warning signs, the development of a highway marking plan, and conducting a speed zone study. The state hopes the study can be completed by the end of April.

Officials from Winchendon and Gardner are asking the state Department of Transportation to consider taking steps to improve safety along Route 140, including reduction or elimination of passing lanes and passing zones. A fatal crash occurred last October in a passing zone just south of these intersections with Old Gardner Road (l) and Teel Road (r).

HOMELESS

continued from page A1

90 percent are dealing with the issue, on top of whatever else may be going on their lives. But we know we're not reaching a large population."

"One of the things we've found," Nicholson continued, "is that students who have been on free or reduced lunch throughout high school, or throughout their whole K through 12 experience, come here and end up asking 'you guys don't do that?' They're not prepared for either having to buy lunch or bring lunch, and being a community college we don't have a meal plan. With residential colleges, you live on campus — you have a meal plan."

"So a lot of students, when they first get here, ask, 'how am I going to eat?'"

Nicholson said SOS helps students who are already receiving SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs) benefits hang onto those benefits while attending college. The agency overseeing the SNAP program may make the mistake of assuming a student may no longer apply because they are receiving scholarships, for instance. She also said SOS helps those who are applying for what used to be called "food stamps."

Student Leader in Civic Engagement and SOS Student Coordinator Stevie LaBelle said it's often the older students who fail to avail themselves of the program's services.

"A lot of times they don't want to disclose what's going on at home," she said,

"because they already feel like they're overcoming challenges coming back (to college) at a later age. Sometimes they don't want to disclose how bad things are, especially if they have children. There's always the added stigma of 'what are you doing in school if you can't even provide for your family?' Well, they are trying to provide for their family by coming back to school."

Murphy said SOS is working with the Gardner Community Action Committee to train student mentors so they can assist MWCC students in filling out forms and applications for assistance while on campus, rather than having to visit the offices of the CAC or other agencies. She said this will be particularly helpful to those students who also lack reliable or consistent access to transportation.

In addition, SOS and the CAC are putting together an effort that will allow students greater access to the local food pantry.

"What we see a lot is that the hours of the food pantry interfere with the students' class time," she said. "So they have to decide; do they go to class or do they go to the food pantry?"

A system is being set up for grocery boxes, which are put together at the CAC office on Pleasant Street, to be transported to the college campus for pick up by students who need them.

SOS also assists students who are homeless find at least temporary shelter, while also providing help with filling out forms for those applying for Section 8 housing assistance.

Nicholson said one of the difficulties, again, is transportation.

"We might help someone find a shelter in Leominster, or Fitchburg, or Winchendon," she said, "but then how do they get from the shelter to school?"

It was also noted that many single mothers are hesitant to inquire about shelter, because the Department of Family and Child Services may separate their children from them.

"There really aren't many shelters in the area who accept children," she said.

LaBelle added that SOS will sometimes refer students to other campus-based programs which deal with issues of mental health.

"When someone is dealing with food insecurity or homelessness, or both, while at the same time trying to handle the stress of keeping up with school work and maintaining grades, it can become too much for some people to deal with without some kind of help," she said.

Nicholson, LaBelle, and Murphy all agree more needs to be done in the greater Gardner area to raise awareness about issues of homelessness and hunger among local college students. That, they believe, would generate more public support for programs designed to help those trying to get ahead in order to become self-sufficient.

"People aren't going to college to avoid working," said Nicholson. "They're going to college to better themselves, to provide security for themselves and — in many instances — for their families."





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