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Friday, April 17, 2020

Webster delays election and town meeting; emergency orders multiply

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

WEBSTER – Local elections and Town Meeting will be delayed until June because of the pandemic. Selectmen voted unanimously last week to push the town election from May 4 to June 15, and Town Meeting to June 22, based on a recently approved state law enabling towns to do so, provided they hold both before June 30. Town Administrator Doug Willardson said he didn't want to wait until June 29 for either event because "it's too close if things go wrong." Regarding Town Meeting, he noted the Selectmen could make the change now because the warrant

hasn't yet been signed. After that point, only the Moderator can do so. Moderator Ted Avlas agreed, noting he can delay it after posting up to 30 days, "but not past June 30 at this point, although that's subject to change." He recommended – and the board agreed – to schedule it for Bartlett High School at 6:30 p.m., but without specifying an exact location there. If possible, he hopes to hold it outdoors to ensure social distancing, as other moderators he's spoken to are doing, but might use the auditorium or cafeteria. Willardson noted they'll post signs directing people to the site. Chairman Randy

Becker said he hopes "people will be able to go out and about" by then. The law they were referring to is Chapter 45 of the Acts of 2020, signed by Gov. Charles Baker last month. Among other things, it requires towns changing their election date to hold a voter registration day 10 days before then (which is also the registration deadline); to accept all absentee ballots for the original date on the new date (but also allow people who voted absentee to vote in person if their absentee ballot has not yet been counted); and allow "any eligible voter to vote early by mail." It

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Courtesy

VISITING FROM A DISTANCE

Reader Mimi Strzelewicz recently paid a visit to her mother, Kathy Perry, at Lanessa Nursing Home in Webster. Due to the facility's social distancing safeguards, they could only communicate through Perry's window, but were still grateful for a chance to see one another.

Oxford Finance Committee OK's \$2 million in requests

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

OXFORD – In a remote meeting that did not follow state requirements for having all votes be by roll call, the Oxford Finance Committee unanimously approved sending \$2 million in capital spending requests to Town Meeting. Among the largest of the items were \$500,000 to augment Chapter 90 road spending, \$150,000 for DPW vehicles, \$137,500 for Fire Department breathing gear, \$126,000 for a new math curriculum, \$139,000 for a small trash truck, and \$85,000 to repave part of North Cemetery.

Many of the items will go to DPW. The Chapter 90 funds will be added to what Oxford gets from the state (roughly the same amount annually), but town officials have said that will only keep roads at the level they are now. To catch up on long-deferred repaving and other projects, the town is also exploring the possibility of seeking voter approval for a \$15 million road bond – three chunks of \$5 million every five years. Chairman John Eul said the second of those bigger items was pared down from the original \$550,000 request for two new multi-use vehicles and a rebuilt one to

replace four older trucks. The \$150,000 will be available at DPW Director Sean Divoll's discretion "for him to determine what he can do with his fleet for that money." Divoll said he wants to explore "some variables" in how to fund new vehicles, using the current street sweeper five-year lease as a model. Regarding the trash truck, Divoll said it's not one of the big crusher trucks, but uses a pick-up chassis to collect trash at parks and cemeteries. He currently has two fulltimers doing that 10 hours a week using a dump-truck body, from which they throw bags into the DPW's dumpster. This truck will enable them to haul it directly to the transfer station and therefore run more efficiently, possibly having seasonal staff do it rather than fulltimers, he said. He said about half of North Cemetery's roads were recently paved, and are "well-attended by people who want to walk and ride" there. But the rest of its roads – including the one going past Clara Barton's historic grave – are in bad shape. He noted this has been one of

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Dudley Health Director urges diligence

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY – While the town of Dudley has done well to adjust to the new standards during the COVID-19 pandemic, the town's Health Director is urging citizens to remain diligent even as the town's case count remained at a stable 13 recorded cases as of Easter Sunday. Dudley Health Director Tom Purcell spoke to the Board of Selectmen during an online meeting on Thursday, April 9 where he reported that the previous week's total of 13 recorded coronavirus patients had not changed. Three days later the number remained the same. Purcell said that while Dudley has yet to see a huge wave of recorded cases, the possibility is still there but he feels the people of Dudley have done a fine job making adjustments to their practices

to help keep the situation under control. "They're beginning to take this disease very seriously. This is not the time to let up guard. We're going to be in for a rough patch for the next three to four weeks. We're one of the lower communities around but things can all of a sudden turn bad really quick," Purcell said. "All I can ask is that the good residents of the town of Dudley be patient with the stay at home order and the social distancing. Be vigilant with hand washing and hygiene. I encourage the residents to wear masks if you can. It isn't going to hurt to wear them. It may very well help." Thus far no issues have been reported from the senior housing in Charlton. Purcell checks in one a week and while there have been general concerns about

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Dudley examines ways to make Transfer Station cost effective

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY – Even though the COVID-19 virus has slowed things down a bit, Dudley officials continue to do business as usual addressing issues pertinent to citizens and exploring more economic practices as budget season gets underway. One area the town believes they can be more economically efficient is with its recycling and transfer station situation which both selectmen and Town

Administrator Jonathan Ruda said during a meeting in March should be reevaluated with the current contract set to expire at the end of June. Currently, Dudley has 873 permit holders for the transfer and recycling station including 323 which are senior citizen discounted permits and two non-resident permits. The Town Administrator calculated that as of 2018 Dudley's population totaled 11,682 with 71 percent living in family households which works

out to just over 5,000 eligible permit holders in the town including 1,515 family households and 3,505 non-family households. Looking at the 5,020 eligible permit holders, 4,149, or 83 percent, of them utilize other means of disposal for their trash. While the recycling center continues to produce income for the town the cost has reportedly overshoot the financial return leading to a loss of just under \$66,475 in the last

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Courtesy

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU

St. Joseph School sixth grade student, Isabella Mello, thanks essential workers by hanging a flag that she created on her mailbox. For more images of students showing their love for the community, see page A6.

A Note to Readers

This week's edition of the paper might seem a bit smaller than you are accustomed to, but rest assured, this is only temporary. Due to the unique circumstances we are all living under at the present time, local sporting events and community activities have wisely been canceled as we all try to stay closer to home and practice social distancing. As we ride out this temporary interruption of life as usual together, we urge you to continue supporting the local businesses that advertise in your newspaper. They have always been here for you through good times and bad, and now, more than ever, they need you to be there for them in any way you can. Amid this temporary absence of local events and municipal meetings, we are also looking to celebrate the many quiet heroes in our communities who have gone above and beyond to make this situation easier for those most affected by it. Let us know if there is someone in your community who you think should be recognized by e-mailing news@stonebridgepress.news. Above all, know that we have been your trusted source for local news for generations, and we plan to be here for you to generations to come, in print and online at www.stonebridgepress.com



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How to support local businesses during mandatory restrictions

The outbreak of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 throughout the United States in March 2020 transformed American lives in ways many might never have imagined possible. Social distancing recommendations and restrictions on gatherings of more than a handful of people had a ripple effect on the economy that adversely affected many small businesses.

Small businesses are the backbones of local communities. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, small businesses make up 99.9 percent of all businesses in the United States and employ 59.9 million employees. The SBA notes that the accommodation and food services sector is the second largest small business industry. Many of these businesses have been hit especially hard as more and more of their regular customers stay at home in the wake of government advisories promoting social distancing.

But small businesses are vital to local communities, and there are ways to support them and help them stay afloat as they confront the challenges posed by the COVID-19 outbreak.

- Order delivery. It's still possible to enjoy foods from your favorite local restaurants. Many restaurants that had not previously done so have begun to offer delivery services, be it curbside or at-home, and this can provide a great respite for families who have had to cook three meals a day at home for their entire families for extended periods of time. Curbside delivery has made it possible to get takeout meals without compromising social distancing recommendations.
- Recognize that more than food is available for takeout. In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York announced relaxations on laws governing what can and cannot be obtained via takeout, allowing takeout on goods that were previously



ously restricted in regard to takeout. For example, Cuomo announced that the New York State Liquor Authority intended to temporarily relax regulations regarding the takeout and delivery of alcohol. Utilizing such services can be a great way to support local businesses while still adhering to recommendations designed to slow the spread of COVID-19.

- Purchase a gift card. Gift cards can help small businesses generate revenue at a time when their doors are largely closed to the public. This can be vital to these businesses' survival, and it gives consumers something to look forward when life returns to normal.
- Help market local businesses. Spread the word when local businesses deliver in the wake of the restrictions put on them due to COVID-19. Share these experiences via social media or online reviews, and urge your neighbors to patronize these businesses.

Local businesses are suffering during the COVID-19 outbreak. But communities can come together to support business owners and their employees to help these vital businesses stem the tide.

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Here at Quaboag Rehabilitation and Skilled Care Center the health and safety of our residents, staff and community are very important to us. We are doing everything recommended and required by the CDC and then some to keep us all safe.

For our elder community members a few things that you can do at home to keep yourselves safe...

- Restrict visitors – Visit loved ones through the window, outside while remaining at least 6 feet apart or video chat when possible.
- Call your local senior center or Tri-Valley Elder Services if you need help with services or obtaining groceries/meals.
- Call your local grocery stores to find elder shopping hours and only shop during that time period.
- Wash your hands frequently with hot soapy water.
- Stay home as much as possible.

We want to thank all of our dedicated staff for taking care of our residents in every department. We appreciate you all so very much and are humbled by your dedication.

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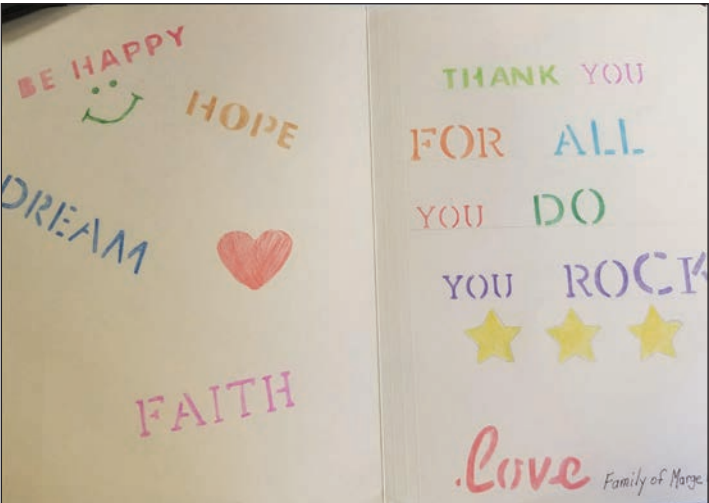


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Brookside Rehab staff, residents grateful for community's support

WEBSTER — The staff and residents at Brookside Rehab would like to thank those in the community that have sent and dropped off letters, cards, candy, art work, and most recent the words of encouragement by our neighbors. To all of you who have supported us, although you may think what you have done is a small gesture it has had a great impact in our spirits and brightened our souls.

We have received homemade masks and headbands that are not just beautiful, but have tremendously helped our staff. Shout out to Sylvia Stepien and Jennifer Jonis Connor for your thoughtful creations.

Your kind words, generosity, and support for us means more than you know or that we can express. It shows us just how great of a community we are blessed to be in.

Thank you to the families and loved ones of our residents for your support, understanding, and patience at this time. Just know they are doing well and we are taking care of our residents in every possible way to keep them healthy, happy, and entertained.

We will get through this together.



MAPFRE launches Staying Home refund to support policyholders

WEBSTER — MAPFRE Insurance today announced its Staying Home Refund program, which will return 15 percent of April and May premium to its voluntary personal auto policyholders in Massachusetts, totaling over \$30 million. On average, most policyholders will receive a credit of approximately \$40. A similar credit will be provided to the company's personal auto policyholders in its other states of operation for the same time period. The MAPFRE Staying Home Refund program is subject to regulatory approval.

"We understand that our policyholders are facing a number of challenges, as we all focus on the health and safety of our loved ones," said MAPFRE USA President & CEO Alfredo Castelo. "We know that many of them are driving less as they stay at home during this time, and our program recognizes this change in driving behavior. We are committed to being there for our customers, so they can focus on what is most important to them."

MAPFRE is also offering flexible payment options, and urging customers to contact them with any questions or concerns about their policies.

ABOUT MAPFRE INSURANCE

MAPFRE Insurance®, rated "A" (Excellent) by A.M. Best Company, serves policyholders in 14 states across the United States. It is the 20th largest private passenger auto insurer and 21st largest property and casualty insurer in the United States. It is also the largest auto and home insurer in Massachusetts. MAPFRE Insurance is part of MAPFRE Group, a global insurance company with a world-wide presence.

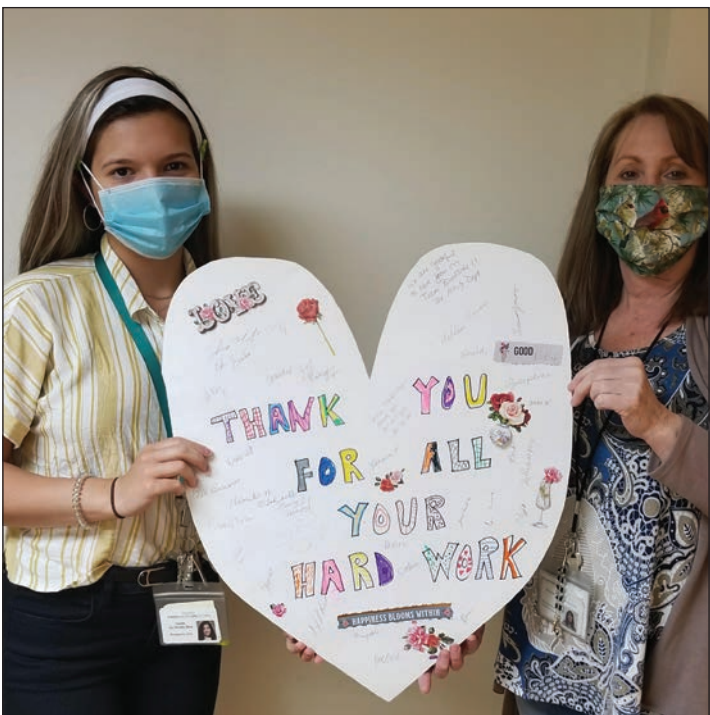
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Registry announces additional licensure deadline extensions

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) continues to thoroughly review its licensing protocols and credential requirements to identify additional measures that

can be implemented to reduce non-essential travel, reduce the need for customers to visit RMV Service Centers, and ensure proper “social-distancing” can take place under Gov. Charlie Baker’s declaration of

a State of Emergency the week of March 9.

The following new changes to service delivery and organizational protocols are now or are about to be in place as follows:

Professional credentials for School Bus Certificates, School Pupil Transport Licenses (7D), Inspector Licenses, Driving Instructor Licenses and Driving School Licenses that have expired or are expiring, between March 10 and April 30, will be extended for 90 days after the State of Emergency is lifted. These credentials should all be considered “active” as the RMV implements the system changes to reflect that status in the near future.

Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) holders are now able to renew their licenses online if they are self-certified in the Non-Excepted Interstate (NI) category for medical certification.

All passenger and motorcycle road tests (Class D and Class M) have been cancelled through Monday, May 4, 2020.

Reminders About Other Previously Announced Changes:

Driver’s licenses, ID cards, and Learner’s Permits, including Commercial Driver’s Licenses & Permits (CDL/CLP), that have expired or are expiring between March 1, 2020, and April 30, 2020, have had a 60-day extension applied to the current expiration date and do not need to be renewed at this time. Customers holding a license or ID marked “Limited-Term” that expired between March 1 to April 30 should visit Mass.gov/RMV for more information and to check the validity of their credential. CDL Medical Certificates that expire on or after March 1 until April 30 will be extended until June 30 to prevent license

downgrades and elective medical visits, as well as alleviate demand on medical providers.

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the RMV has implemented a strict no walk-in policy at a limited number of Service Centers that remain open to the general public. Service for necessary in-person transactions are available by appointment only. Customers should visit Mass.gov/RMV to make a reservation at an open Service Center or find information on over 40 transactions that can be conducted online, by phone, or by mail.

Non-Classroom Drivers Education – through a temporary policy, the RMV is allowing driving schools to offer online driver education training and written testing during this emergency period only. The RMV will continuously monitor the current emergency and will keep you informed about the timeframe in which driving schools can offer alternative training.

Effective April 1, 2020, all of the passenger plate registrations that have expired in March or will be expiring in April have been extended for 60 days. Registrations that expired in March have been extended until May 31 and registrations that expire in April have been extended until June 30. Registration renewals can continue to be performed online at Mass.gov/RMV during this time. Customers seeking to do so in-person will not be able to make an appointment and should delay their visit to a Service Center at this time.

The annual motor vehicle safety and emissions inspection stickers that expire on March 31 and April 30 have been extended 60 days and all motorcycles with inspection stickers originally set to expire on May 31 must be inspected

by June 30. The RMV is also extending the time during which newly registered vehicles must be inspected based on the purchase date.

Class D and M Learner’s Permits knowledge exams have been suspended through May 4. Commercial Learner’s Permit tests are available to be taken at the Milford and Wilmington RMV Service Centers during normal business hours and commercial road tests continue to be conducted by the Massachusetts State Police.

Massachusetts State Police are still conducting road tests for Commercial Driver’s Licenses (CDLs), but require anyone taking these road tests to bring and wear a mask or face covering for the entirety of the test.

The National Safety Council (NSC) and the RMV have previously announced the cancellation, through May 4, of the following Massachusetts in-person classroom driver safety classes: eight-hour Driver Retraining Program, 4-hour Driver Attitudinal Retraining Program and the four-hour State Courts Against Road Rage (SCARR) Program. The RMV has temporarily approved an alternative way to deliver the statutorily required content in the form of an online course. For a limited time, participation in the online course will fulfill the in-person class requirement. Additional information is available at <http://drive.nsc.org> and impacted customers can expect to receive specific instructions directly from NSC.

For details on all of these extensions and additional information on RMV services and the RMV’s response to COVID-19, visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/rmv-covid-19-information>.

Second Chance continues to help pets despite dinner auction postponement



Courtesy

Second Chance Worcester Community Veterinary patient Izzy visiting for an appointment.

Second Chance programs that help pets in need,” said Second Chance CEO Sheryl Blancato. “Right now, the need is great. All three of our vet hospitals are seeing a dramatic increase in pets needing urgent medical care. We need to be here for all these pets.”

To conserve surgical supplies, all non-essential surgeries have been rescheduled and they are directing all emergency surgeries to the North Brookfield vet hospital, which has an increased surgical capacity and an advanced care unit for critical patients. Additional safeguards have been put in place to protect the staff and pet owners so they can remain open and caring for those in need.

place.” Second Chance hospital staff bring pets into the hospital and while pet owners talk to the doctors from the safety of their cars. “At our Worcester hospital, one pet owner stashed homemade masks and a gift card inside their cat’s carrier, along with a note thanking Second Chance for ‘staying open to care for everyone’s babies.’”

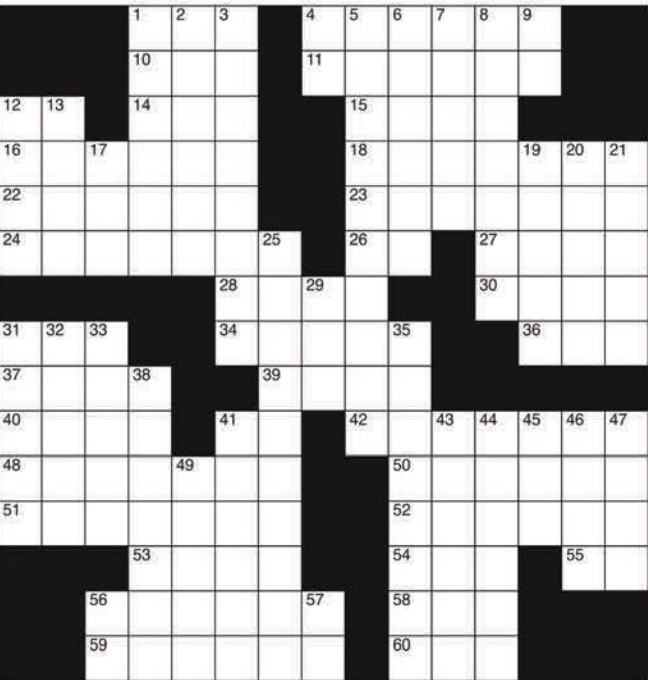
Blancato added that she knows times are challenging right now for everyone. For those who are able to help, donations can be made online at secondchanceanimals.org/donate, on the Second Chance Facebook page or via mail to 111 Young Rd., East Brookfield, MA 01515.

According to the non-profit’s Facebook page, on a recent day two very sick dogs arrived at Second Chance’s Springfield hospital within an hour of each other, both requiring emergency surgery. Both patients’ care was transferred to the North Brookfield hospital where medical staff worked well into the night, saving both their lives.

“We are touched by the support of pet owners who are grateful we’ve been able to stay open with precautions in

EAST BROOKFIELD — COVID-19 may have forced Second Chance Animal Services to reschedule their annual dinner auction to Oct. 3, but the nonprofit will not let the postponement interfere with the important work of serving pets that need help right now. Pets will continue to need medical care and emergencies will happen, so Second Chance continues to care for pets with urgent medical needs at their three Community Veterinary Hospitals.

“For 20 years, the annual dinner auction has provided major funding for all the



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Revolutions per minute
- 4. Hymns
- 10. Brew
- 11. Did not acknowledge
- 12. Atomic #77
- 14. Partly digested food
- 15. Not one
- 16. Lesotho capital
- 18. Copyreading
- 22. Living organism that feeds on organic matter
- 23. One’s biological father
- 24. An aggregate of molecules
- 26. Equally
- 27. Khoikhoi people
- 28. Jump in figure skating
- 30. Lantern
- 31. TV network
- 34. Georges __, French philosopher
- 36. Sharp, shrill bark
- 37. Albanian monetary units
- 39. Launched Apollo
- 40. One who graduated
- 41. Exist
- 42. Passed by
- 48. Very unpleasant smell
- 50. Graduates
- 51. Seedless raisin
- 52. Self-protection
- 53. Clue
- 54. Life-savers
- 55. Ingest too much
- 56. Misrepresented
- 58. Small Eurasian deer
- 59. Most mocking
- 60. Soviet Socialist Republic

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Flower cluster
- 2. A form
- 3. Inner organ regions
- 4. Local law enforcement
- 5. A citizen of Senegal
- 6. Positively charged electrodes
- 7. Connects granules
- 8. Business practice
- 9. The Mount Rushmore State
- 12. Leader
- 13. Hindu queen
- 17. Proofreading mark
- 19. European country
- 20. Greek mythological nymph
- 21. Grandfather
- 25. Clears
- 29. Amount of time
- 31. Mollusks
- 32. German municipality
- 33. Body part
- 35. City of Angels hoopsters
- 38. Suffocate
- 41. Pleasing to the eye
- 43. Poplar trees (Spanish)
- 44. Ship officer
- 45. Individual investment account (abbr.)
- 46. Prefix meaning within
- 47. Ceased to live
- 49. Day by day
- 56. Not color
- 57. Condition of withdrawal (abbr.)



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WEBSTER POLICE DEPARTMENT (943-1212)
For emergencies, call 911
WEBSTER FIRE DEPARTMENT (949-3875)
Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Saturday 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

AdCare outpatient
now provides telehealth
treatment for those
struggling with
substance abuse

WORCESTER — In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, AdCare Hospital has taken additional steps to safeguard patients accessing outpatient treatment. Starting April 6, AdCare began providing telehealth treatment for substance use care offered at locations in Worcester, West Springfield, Boston, Quincy and North Dartmouth, MA, as well as in Warwick, RI. Patients can now access Intensive Services (IOP), Early Recovery Groups (ERGs), Individual and Family Treatment virtually with a licensed counselor. AdCare's outpatient offices remain open to provide services as needed.

For more information, visit <https://adcare.com/programs/telehealth-rehabilitation/>

"We are doing everything we can to protect the physical health and safety of our patients and staff," said David Hillis, Jr., vice president of outpatient services.

"Telehealth services are the safest way for our patients to stay connected to treatment and recovery," said Jane Jolly, director of outpatient operations. "Bringing telehealth services to our patients - many of whom also struggle with anxiety, stress and isolation - helps break down the latest barrier to treatment erected by the pandemic."

AdCare's parent company, American Addiction Centers, is also offering free virtual support meetings for the public for those who need encouragement and a supportive community.

About AdCare Outpatient Services

Experience matters. For nearly 45 years, AdCare Hospital, New England's only level-4 SUD hospital centrally located in Worcester, Massachusetts, with outpatient locations throughout Massachusetts and Rhode Island, has provided individuals and families with life-changing alcohol and drug treatment. In March of 2018, AdCare joined AAC (OTC: AACH), a national treatment provider, operating facilities across the United States. To learn more, please visit americanaddictioncenters.org.

DUDLEY POLICE LOG

DUDLEY — The Dudley Police Department reported only one arrest during the week of April 6-10.

Mark Racine, age 32, of N. Grosvenordale, Conn. was arrested on April 8 in connection with multiple out of agency warrants.

Open Sky Community Services
releases clinical video series,
“Coping during COVID”

WORCESTER — Open Sky Community Services has released a multi-part clinical video series entitled “Coping during COVID,” to offer evidence-based recommendations and tips to support the community through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Open Sky clinical leaders Suzy Langevin, Director of Dual Diagnosis Services, Stefanie Gregware, Vice President of Clinical Services, Barent Walsh, Ph.D, Senior Clinical Consultant, Andrea Wolloff, Director of Evidence-Based Practices and Kerrin Westerlind, Assistant Director of Evidence Based Practices are amongst those offering evidence-based recommendations to assist others in this time of need.

"Social distancing is essential from a public health standpoint but it's wreaking havoc on us emotionally," explains Dr. Oliver Joseph, psychiatrist and Chief Medical Officer at Open Sky. "It's increasing isolation, anxiety, depression and other negative emotions."

The series is intended to offer guidance and assistance for those looking to manage such emotions. The videos will be available on the Open Sky YouTube Channel as well as on the organization's website.

While many of Open Sky's direct care staff cannot work from home and are continuing to show up for shifts in residential programs, supporting individuals living in their own homes, delivering medication and needed supplies, others are rising to the challenge presented by the pandemic using non-traditional remote ways to support individuals and families, such as Telehealth counseling services, Zoom meetings, and telephone outreach. The videos in the series were created by clinicians working remotely in an effort to provide a helpful resource both for individuals served by the organization and the larger community.

More virtual and digital programming is upcoming from Open Sky Community Services as the organization adapts to the challenges of continuing to serve its communities through non-traditional means during this time.

For more information about Open Sky Community Services, please contact Lorie Martiska, lorie.martiska@openskyccs.org.

Health Foundation of Central
Massachusetts provides \$371,000 in
response to COVID-19 Crisis

WORCESTER — In response to the coronavirus public health crisis, The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts has expedited \$371,000 in supplemental funding to 27 non-profits serving Central Massachusetts.

The following non-profits were awarded funding:

Abby's House, Ascentria Care Alliance, Community Legal Aid, Easter Seals of Massachusetts, Fitchburg State University, Friendly House, GAAMHA, Inc., Health Care For All, Health Law Advocates, Jeremiah's Inn, LUK, Inc., Massachusetts Association for Community Action, Massachusetts Budget & Policy Center, Massachusetts Housing & Shelter Alliance, Massachusetts Public Health Association, Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Neighbor to Neighbor Massachusetts, Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation, Quinsigamond Community College Foundation, RCAP Solutions, Riverside

Community Care, Seven Hills Foundation, South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, Worcester Regional Food Hub, World Farmers, and YWCA of Central Massachusetts.

"The Board of the Foundation devised a three-pronged strategy for helping area non-profits in response to coronavirus. The top priority to bolster current grantees' projects and to address special circumstances has been accomplished with this distribution of supplemental funding," stated Jan Yost, President of the Foundation.

The Foundation's Activation Fund remains open, with Letters of Intent due April 30, 2020. Further allocations to address gaps and the long-term impact of coronavirus will be informed by government and private funding and determined in the months ahead, she explained.

The Foundation was established in 1999 with the proceeds from the sale of Central Massachusetts Health Care, Inc., a physician-initiated, not-for-profit HMO. The Foundation currently has assets of approximately \$67 million and has awarded grants totaling over \$44 million.

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#TP0093V



NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$39,665~~
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Friday's Child



Hi! My name is Angel and I love to laugh!

Angel is a boy of Hispanic descent with a contagious smile. He is very inquisitive and loves to laugh. Some of Angel's favorite activities are reading, playing video games, playing outside on his scooter and going to the playground. He also loves Disney and Pixar movies, especially the Cars movie. Angel is a very bright child, with an excellent memory.

Angel attends a specialized classroom for children on the Autism spectrum. The school has a focus on language and literacy development, and Angel is also able to receive Applied Behavior Analysis during school time. According to his foster mother, Angel loves to learn and does well in class. Both his teachers and foster mother have noted that Angel responds well to structure and that he can be very active.

Angel is legally freed for adoption and will do best with a family that is nurturing and patient. Angel has a lot of energy and an active family would be ideal for him. His social worker prefers Angel to be placed in a two parent home either with no other children or with children who are older than him.

Who Can Adopt?

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

The process to adopt a child from foster care requires training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you, and if so, to help connect you with a child or sibling group that your family will be a good match.

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



To sponsor Friday's Child call Mikaela at 508-909-4126 or email Mikaela@stonebridgeoress.news



Megan Gajewski — Courtesy

KISSES IN QUARANTINE


Nana (Joan Boisvert) returned from Florida last week to her home in Dudley, which resulted in her needing to be quarantined. Her youngest grandson (Logan Gajewski) wanted to go see her and give her a kiss.

Mother's Day Honors

Publish Date: May 8, 2020
Deadline date: Friday, May 1 @ 4 pm

The Webster Times would like to honor all Mothers and Grandmothers in the May 8th issue.
The deadline for honors is Friday, May 1 at 4 pm.
Cost is just \$20 per 2.4" X 2" block.
(Double blocks available @ Double the cost)

SAMPLE:



Mom, Of all the moms in all the world, nothing brings me more happiness than to know you're ours.

With love from
John, Mary, and
Jennifer

Please email a photo and a special message (or an In Loving Remembrance message if deceased) to
Patricia@stonebridgepress.news;
OR mail or drop off to the
Webster Times
25 Elm Street, P. O. Box 90
Southbridge, MA 01550.
All photos will be returned. Please write your name and address on the back of your photo.

Please help your postal workers stay safe

To the Editor:

During these challenging times, postal employees are working hard to ensure residents stay connected with their world through the mail. Whether it's medications, a package, a paycheck, benefits or pension check, a bill or letter from a family member, postal workers understand that every piece of mail is important. While service like this is nothing new to us, we need our communities' help with social distancing.

For everyone's safety, our employees are following the social distancing precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local health officials. We are asking people to not approach our carriers to accept delivery. Let the carrier leave the mailbox before collecting the mail. With schools not in session, children should also be encouraged to not approach a postal vehicle or carrier.

If a delivery requires a signature, carriers will knock on the door rather than touching the bell. They will maintain a safe distance, and instead of asking for a signature on their mobile device, they'll ask for the resident's name. The carrier will leave the mail or package in a safe place for retrieval.

We are proud of the role all our employees play in processing, transporting, and delivering mail and packages for the American public. The CDC, World Health Organization, as well as the Surgeon General indicate there is currently no evidence that COVID-19 is being spread through the mail.

With social distancing, we can keep the mail moving while keeping our employees, and the public, safe.

MIKE RAKES
DISTRICT MANAGER
U.S. POSTAL SERVICE – GREATER BOSTON DISTRICT



Courtesy

ST. JOSEPH STUDENTS SHOW THEIR LOVE FOR COMMUNITY

Although St. Joseph School students continue their virtual schooling, their love and compassion for the community is still visible through their acts of kindness at home. Continually working to embody the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy so they may transform their community, students and teachers have been focusing on one of the most important works of mercy: praying for the living and the dead. Through their intercessions with God, they seek to unite us during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, St. Joseph School students are participating in the Happy Heart Hunt by creating and displaying hearts of gratitude for essential workers in their windows, as well as on their doors and mailboxes. Other students have created beautiful pieces of art to show how much they miss their classmates as well as how much they love and appreciate Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Please watch for all these incredible creations as you drive through the community. For more information regarding St. Joseph School and its commitment to providing a Foundation for Life to all its students, please visit www.sjs-webster.com or call 508-943-0378 for more information. Applications for the 2020-2021 academic school year are now being accepted.

LEGALS

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Division
Docket No. WO20PO309EA
Estate of:
Gary W. Grenon
Also Known As:
Gary Grenon
Date Of Death: 11/19/2019
INFORMAL PROBATE
PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above-captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner Noreen C. Chuplis of Charlton MA a Will has been admitted to informal probate.
Noreen C. Chuplis of Charlton MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond. The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be

filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
April 17, 2020

Invitation for Bids
Complete Streets Sidewalk Project – Webster, MA

The Town of Webster is seeking written quotes to perform sidewalk improvements along approximately 1/3-mile of East Main Street (Route 12), and minor related work to Slater Street and Park Avenue. Proposed improvements include cement concrete sidewalk and curb ramp construction, drainage

structure and pipe installation, installation of granite curb, traffic signs, pavement markings, landscaping, and other incidental work. The Town shall only accept and open bids from prospective bidders that are prequalified in the appropriate category of work by MassDOT. Sealed bids must be hand delivered with all legally required forms as stipulated in the bid packet by Monday, May 11, 2020 at 2:00 PM, to the Webster Town Hall, 350 Main Street, Webster, MA 01570; Attention: Doug Willardson, Town Administrator. The IFB will be released on Monday, April 20, 2020 at 8:00am, at which time electronic copies of the contract documents will be available via the following website: www.theengineeringcorp.com/bids
April 17, 2020

Public Notice

The Annual Town of Webster Election has been postponed from May 4th to June 15th in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The last day to register to vote will be Friday, June 5th. Those interested in voting absentee or early can obtain additional information on the Town's website. The Special and Annual Spring Town Meetings have been postponed as well. These will be held at 6:30 pm on Monday, June 23rd at Bartlett High School.
April 17, 2020



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BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Lessons from another pandemic

A recent conversation with someone who experienced the Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918 prompted a bit of research into that era on our part, and what we found was that things back then were, in many ways, not so different.

The Spanish Flu infected one third of the world’s population, and roughly 675,000 people died in the U.S. as a result. Interesting to note is that this particular strain of the flu virus did not, in fact, begin in Spain, but most likely somewhere in the farm belt of the United States. The name was born from the fact that infection reports in the Iberian Peninsula were particularly high, and Spanish King Alfonso XIII fell ill from it.

In 1918, Washington, D.C. public health officials tried to warn citizens of the symptoms and how the disease was spread via posters. One poster read, ‘INFLUENZA’ Spread by droplets sprayed from nose and throat. Cover each cough and sneeze with handkerchief, spread by contact, avoid crowds, if possible, walk to work, do not spit on floor or sidewalk, do not use common drinking cups and common towels, avoid excessive fatigue, if taken ill, go to bed and send for a doctor. The above applies also to colds, bronchitis, pneumonia and tuberculosis’ The virus began to spread rapidly due to the close proximity in military encampments during the First World War. The disease was a very contagious H1N1 strain of the flu.

What we know from our 1918 counterparts is that social distancing does work. Newspapers downplayed the flu, and President Woodrow Wilson had his own family and staff were infected. During that time, Wilson didn’t pay much attention to the pandemic. In fact, no public statement from him was ever made in regards to it. His focus was on the war.

We’ve heard that over the next few weeks, we will see a dramatic surge in confirmed COVID-19 cases. We’ve also read reports that the curve is flattening in some places. This does not mean that folks should think the pandemic is over. Everyone should, of course, still be practicing social distancing among the many other precautions we’ve heard about.

In 1918, schools were shut down and public gatherings were banned. By the summer of 1919, the flu pandemic came to an end. Individuals either passed away or developed an immunity to it. In 2008, researchers discovered a group of three genes that caused a person’s bronchial tubes and lungs to weaken which paved the way for bacterial pneumonia. This is what made the Spanish flu so deadly.

Back in 1918, the first outbreak dwindled into spring, however it re-emerged during the fall. The Spanish flu came in three waves. The first was in the spring of 1918 that included mild symptoms. That fall the flu mutated into a more deadlier version, that hit those between the ages of 20-40 the most.

During the winter, the third wave hit and by the spring time the illness was no more.

An October newspaper excerpt from 1918 reporting the cancellation of Halloween read, “Because of the “flu” epidemic, there is to be no Hallowe’ening this year. The Board of Health has strongly urged against any demonstrations and the Burgess today, issued orders that there be no observance of the Hallowe’een season. Howard Heinz, of the Federal Food Administration has issued an appeal to the people against the waste of food-stuffs, during this season. Corn, beans, peas, apples, pumpkins, etc should not be used. Every year thousands of pumpkins are cut up and wasted in making Jack-O-Lanterns. The same wasteful practice has applied to apples in the time honored Hallowe’en sport of bobbing for apples. It is not the purpose of the food administrator to discourage harmless little celebrations in the home, but this year it is imperative that every scrap of food be saved.”

VIEWPOINT

Life is a mystery

BEYOND THE PEWS

.....

BY FR. LUKE VERONIS
SAINTS CONSTANTINE AND HELEN ORTHODOX CHURCH WEBSTER

Life is a mystery. It is a mysterious journey of joys and pains, of love and of suffering. It's so easy to look around and see how beautiful life is, and yet how unfair life is as well. Think of the family you come from. Look at the country in which we are born? Reflect on the opportunities, as well as the grave challenges you've faced throughout your life. When we carefully look at our life story we can surely see that each of us have been blessed in countless ways, while we may also see how we've faced greater difficulties and challenges than others. We may think that some have journeys which seem much easier than our own. Of course, only God knows the real and entire life story of each person, and when we come face to face with Him on the last day, only He will truly know what He gave us, and what we did with all He gave us.

Life is a mystery.

We are all engulfed in this coronavirus pandemic and how it has changed our lives. No one could have imagined something shutting down own entire globe. No one knows when it will end, how it will end, and all the damage that it will leave behind. Our world has changed, and maybe parts of this change will last.

Life is a truly a mystery.

Where is God in the midst of this crisis, and in the midst of any terrible tragedy that occurs in life. Well, as we celebrated the journey through the Passion of Christ last week - through His betrayal, rejection, arrest, torture, suffering, and death - we realize that life's mystery includes what happened to Jesus Christ in His own life. Our God isn't a God who stands at a distance watching our pain and suffering? He isn't simply with us, as a companion, but He actually is there experiencing all our trauma and tragedy Himself. God isn't someone who doesn't dirty Himself with the horrors and ordeals of life. He is right there in the middle of the tragedy, standing with the people who are suffering, suffering Himself with the people. He is tasting the hatred and rejection of others; He Himself is being maimed and murdered along with His beloved children!

Yes, God is all-powerful and all-mighty, yet the paradox we experienced through Christ's week of Passion during Holy

Week is precisely that the Lord is the God of mystery. He voluntarily accepts to be betrayed, rejected, despised, tortured, and viciously murdered on the Cross. He willingly accepts to die and go into the darkest depths of Hades, tasting the greatest horror of humanity, death itself.

God is with those who are suffering from the coronavirus, He is with the families that have lost loved one, He is with the frontline healthcare workers who are risking their lives to save other, He is with those who have lost their jobs and who are worried about paying next month's rent, He is with all those who are afraid, alone, anxious, scared, and stressed out.

Life is a mystery - a life full of the mystery of suffering, of illness, of violence, of darkness, of evil and of death. We can see it every day in the news around the world, as well as from people we know, and maybe even from our own life experience.

Yet, what we remember and celebrated on Pascha (Easter Day) is that the mystery of life doesn't end with evil conquering goodness, with hatred winning over love, with darkness outlasting the Light, or with death prevailing over life! Jesus did not remain in the tomb! Death could not contain Him! Christ experienced His Passion yet rose out of the tomb and stands victoriously alive today! And this victory is what gives meaning to life, to our life, especially when it seems like such a mystery.

On Holy and Good Friday, one hymn in the Orthodox Church beautifully expressed this ultimate victory. We sang, "Hades was pierced in the heart and was consumed by the force of Divine Fire for the salvation of the world." Yes, Jesus Christ suffering a humiliating and painful death on the Cross, He was buried and left for dead, just like all humanity before Him, yet the story did not end there!

Christ is Risen, and through His Resurrection He pierced Hades in the heart and brought salvation to the world. Jesus revealed a different ending to His story, and a different ending to our story!

THE DEADLINE to submit letters to the editor and commentaries for next week's newspaper is Friday at noon. **SEND ALL ITEMS** to Editor Brendan Berube at THE WEBSTER TIMES — news@stonebridgepress.news

The effect of COVID-19 on recreation



CHIEF'S CORNER

STEVE WOJNAR

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts continues under the state of emergency to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus. As a police department, we are continuing to respond when and where needed to provide service to the residents. The officers of our department are doing a great job under these

very difficult circumstances and my hat is off to all of them. We have received several inquiries about the availability of parks and recreational areas here in town. I wanted to give some information on this subject.

The state recommends minimizing outdoor recreational time to limit potential exposure to COVID-19. Stay within solitary or small groups and avoid gatherings of ten or more people. Participate in only non-contact recreational activities. They recommend you leave a park or other area, should large gatherings begin to build, and stay home if you are ill, over age 70, and/or part of a vulnerable population. Some of these simple measures will limit your exposure risk.

Most parks in Dudley are closed or limited. When the state established rules to limit activities and group sizes, local jurisdictions are following suit. Activities such as basketball games, the use of jungle gyms, slides, swings, etc. may be unavailable for the most part. It is important for recreational activities to maintain the “social distancing” requirements (by staying 6 feet or more apart). Some places (such as our Municipal Complex Fun Zone) will be closed completely, as it can be a challenge to provide the proper sanitation for the equipment. As for many other parks or trails, “passive” styles of recreation, such as walking or jogging, will be allowed. People still want to get out and exercise or enjoy nice weather when it is here. Please respect the “social distancing” of others and try to use the proper sanitation measures whenever possible. Officers on patrol will be monitoring these areas and will be addressing situations where appropriate. Your cooperation in greatly appreciated.

In addition to the “social distancing,” everyone is encouraged to avoid close contact, minimize shaking hands, and avoid people who are coughing or sneezing. If you are sick or are in a higher risk category, feel free to use a mask and/or gloves. If you do use these in public, it is important to learn the proper way to wear them. They are designed to protect people. If they are not cleaned or disposed of properly, there is a risk of contamination to your car, home, or personal belongings. Please follow the instructions for safe use. Whether or not you are sick or not, always be cognizant of your condition when visiting with others. You do not wish to spread viruses and germs to those at risk. Pay attention to local, state, and federal health department updates as the situation develops. Hopefully, we will be back in full swing soon with as limited negative impact as possible.

Thanks again for your questions and comments. Please send them to me at the Dudley Police Department, 71 West Main St., Dudley, MA 01571 or email at swojnar@dudleypolice.com. Opinions expressed in this weekly column are those of Chief Wojnar only and unless clearly noted, do not reflect the ideas or opinions of any other organization or citizen.

Put tax-smart investing moves to work

The tax return deadline has been extended until mid-July, but you may have already filed your taxes. If you were not entirely happy with the results, you might start seeking ways to change the outcome for next year. And one area to look at may be your investment-related taxes.


To help control these taxes, consider these moves:

Take full advantage of tax-deferred investments. As an investor, one of the best moves you can make is to contribute as much as you can afford to your tax-deferred accounts – your traditional IRA and 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored plan – every year. If you don't touch these accounts until you retire, you can defer taxes on them for decades, and when you do start taking money out, presumably during retirement, you may be in a lower tax bracket.

Look for tax-free opportunities. Interest from municipal bonds typically is exempt from federal income tax, and, in some cases, from state and local income tax, too. (Some municipal bonds, however, may be subject to the alternative minimum tax.) And

if you qualify to contribute to a Roth IRA – eligibility is generally based on income – your earnings can be withdrawn tax-free, provided you've had your account for at least five years and you don't start taking withdrawals until you're at least 59 and a half. Your employer may also offer a Roth 401(k), which can provide tax-free withdrawals. Keep in mind, though, that you contribute after-tax dollars to a Roth IRA and 401(k), unlike a traditional IRA and 401(k), in which your contributions are made with pre-tax dollars.

Be a “buy and hold” investor. Your 401(k) and IRA are designed to be long-term investments, and you will face disincentives in the form of taxes and penalties if you tap into them before you reach retirement age. So, just by investing in these retirement accounts, you are essentially pursuing a “buy and hold” strategy. But you can follow this same strategy for investments



FINANCIAL FOCUS

DENNIS ANTONOPOULOS

held outside your IRA and 401(k). You can own some investments – stocks in particular – for decades without paying taxes on them. And when you do sell them, you'll only be taxed at the long-term capital gains rate, which may well be less than your ordinary income tax rate. But if you're frequently buying and selling investments you've held for less than a year, you could rack up some pretty big tax bills, because you'll likely be taxed at your ordinary income tax rate.

Be prepared for unexpected taxes. Mutual fund managers are generally free to make whatever trades they choose. And when they do sell some investments, they can incur capital gains, which will be passed along to you. If this is a concern, you might look for funds that do less trading and bill themselves as tax efficient.

While taxes are certainly one factor to consider when you invest, they

Thank you from a grateful nation

It's easy to take some occupations and services for granted until something causes us to take notice and appreciate what they do. 9/11 developed a deep and sincere appreciation for police officers and the men and women of the fire department. I think superficially before we watched them in action on 9/11, we knew they put their lives in harm's way to protect us, but as the twin towers fell, it burned into our collective memories the risks they took and sacrificed they made on that fateful day.

It's commonplace now to run across a man or woman in military uniform and thank them for their service, as we should. They are both the first line and last line of our defense. They earn and deserve our eternal gratitude.



POSITIVELY
SPEAKING

GARY W.
MOORE

There is a new kind of war raging across the globe. It's not against an armed enemy threatening to send missiles into our cities and there's not an invasion force staging to take away our freedoms. Instead, it's a microscopic virus with a technical name that a few short months ago we'd never heard, but today, it's upon everyone's lips across the globe.

COVID-19 has created a pandemic the likes of which have not been seen since 1918. It's global in nature. It harms and kills not because of political or racial differences. It infects us because it can ... and is.

Our troops in uniform may be called into a support mission as this virus continues to expand. The men and women of the police and traditional fire department may also be called into support, but the front line of this war is being fought by a different uniformed group and the risks are as great as if they were armed and facing a foreign invader.

An army in scrubs ...

Their uniforms are referred to as scrubs and the risks they are taking to protect us are as deadly as bullets and bombs. Today, this battle is being fought and will ultimately be won by medical tech's, nurses, doctors and all those in the health care system that support them.

I'm fortunate to have as my family doctor, a man who is also head of internal medicine at my local hospital. He hasn't had a day off in a long time. I'm currently having a health issue unrelated to COVID-19 and he answers my emails and returns phone calls late at night, after he's spent twelve or more hours at the hospital. My Doctor, like

many others, is a leader and a hero in this war.

A good friend of mine is CEO of our local medical center. He's working around the clock in a community that is suddenly exploding with new cases. I sent Phil a text a few days ago to express my gratitude and encourage him. He's a great CEO and is providing the leadership we need in this battle, as are many others.

The infantry in this fight, and those who are at most risk are the techs and nurses. They are in close contact with the enemy trying to take over our bodies. While we are all trying to self-quarantine and social distance ourselves from each other, our nurses and techs are rushing in to take our blood pressures and temperatures. They are purposefully and willingly coming in direct contact with patients who are infected, not because it is their job but because it is their calling. I think it takes a special type of bravery and dedication to put on those scrubs and walk into the healthcare facility armed only with a stethoscope and a mask. I'm afraid that once this crisis has come to an end, the sacrifice made by our healthcare workers may potentially be shocking. We already owe them a debt we can never repay.

I spoke with Maddie, a local RN at my cancer center. I asked her if she was afraid.

She responded, "I listen to the news and come to work fearful that we will not have the supplies we need or not enough beds. So far, we do. My greatest fear is of course becoming infected. I cannot treat and serve you if I am in the bed next to you."

I was struck by the dedication of this married RN with two little girls at home. Her fear is that she may not be able to take care of her patients. I'm humbled and touched by her dedication.

So once social distancing is a distant memory, please give your doctor, nurse, tech and support staff a hug and a hearty thank you. Their dedication and bravery are inspirational. They deserve no less.

Gary W. Moore is a freelance columnist, speaker and author of three books including the award-winning, critically acclaimed, "Playing with the Enemy." Follow Gary on Twitter @GaryWMoore721 and at www.garyw-moore.com.

A Roundup of Reader Tips and Tricks

As social distancing is keeping us close to home, many people are discovering new and easier ways to get things done and "make life a little easier." Read on for the newest round of Reader Tip submissions.



TAKE
THE
HINT

KAREN
TRAINOR

And remember readers, send in your favorite hints and you could win a fabulous three course dinner for two at the Publick House in Sturbridge!

This reader has found an ingenious way to "track the trek."

This tip could help if people alternate and really social distance! Did you know the standard distance for above ground telephone poles in the U.S. is 100 feet apart? If you hike past 24 poles, turn around and walk home, you have walked a mile plus!

Viola Bramel
Northbridge, MA

This moneysaving tip is something worth getting fired up for!

Use pine cones for a great fire starter. They burn quick and hot, due to the sticky sap on them, and they are all over the ground where you have native pines. Collect them and save for use and keep them dry.

Paul Davignon
Uxbridge, MA

A reader shares her timely recycling hint:

I do a lot of gardening and my age is catching up to me. Yesterday I went outside to do some clean up in my beds. This past winter our flannel sheet had a rip and I kept it for a purpose. I laid it down on the ground as it is large enough to kneel or sit. It is better than a small kneeler that has a limited area. The sheet is a good choice for me - easy to move around and a large surface area.

Rita Lemieux
North Brookfield, MA

You know cinnamon as a tasty spice; this reader knows it's a great garden aid!

Here are some uses for cinnamon in the garden

- 1) Cinnamon is a proven fungus fighter. Dampening off covers an array of diseases that attack seeds and kills them. It is caused by fungi and soil conditions.
- 2) Mushrooms don't like cinnamon, a little dusting of cinnamon and watch them disappear from your garden.
- 3) Rooting hormone - just apply cinnamon to the stem when you plant the cutting.
- 4) Ant deterrent - we love cinnamon, ants do not. Sprinkle around your garden beds to kill ants and keep them away.
- 5) Plant wounds - dust some cin-

namon on the wound to encourage healing and prevent infection.

6) House plants - cinnamon helps get rid of mold and mildew in your plants. Sprinkle on soil and watch plants flourish.

7) Gnat problem?

Cinnamon gets rid of gnats in seedlings + plants and keeps them away.

Bob Bourdeau
Fiskdale MA

This smart sewer is (literally) making her mark:

As a quilter/sewer, I have found my heat erasable pen most useful when sewing "in the ditch" or close to the seam line with two like fabrics. Just run the pen down the seam and it marks where to sew or not. Also when I want to stop sewing before a point I can mark that too. A quick touch with a hot iron and the markings are gone. Pen should be an alternate color to fabric.

Joanna Gallant
Whitinsville, MA

Forget about freezer burnt food -this simple tip helps prevents waste!

I keep a list of freezer contents on the side of the refrigerator. When we've eaten something I delete it from the list.

Terry Maiorana
Ashford, CT

Prize Winner

Congratulations to Rita Lemieux of North Brookfield, whose name was drawn for Dinner For Two at the Publick House. She submitted the timely recycling tip above.

Win Dinner for Two at the Publick House

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

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

FOCUS

continued from page A8

should probably not be the driving force. You need to build a diversified portfolio that's appropriate for your risk tolerance and time horizon. Not all the investments you select, and the moves you make with them, will necessarily be the most tax efficient, but by working with your financial and tax

professionals, you can make choices that can help you move toward your long-term goals.

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



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OBITUARIES

Henry J. Kotarba, Sr. 86



DUDLEY – Henry J. Kotarba, Sr., 86, formerly of Mason Road Extension, died Easter Sunday, April 12, 2020 in Webster Manor after a period of declining health. His wife of 56 years, Rita S. (Leveille) Kotarba, died in 2016.

He leaves 3 children, Susan Rebis and her husband Ryszard of Southbridge, Joseph Kotarba and his wife Rebecca of New Bedford, and John Kotarba and his wife Cathleen of Webster; 10 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; nephews and nieces. He was preceded in death by his son Henry Kotarba, Jr. in 2011, by his brother Karol Kotarba, and by 2 sisters, Phyllis Greka and Anna Kubic.

He was born at home in Dudley on June 26, 1933, a son of John and Mary (Wolak) Kotarba and was a lifelong resident. He graduated from Bartlett Trade School in Webster.

He served in the United States Army during the Korean Conflict and then in the Army National Guard for 14 more years, retiring as a master sergeant in 1966.

He first worked as a heeler in Bates Shoe Company. He was a building maintenance supervisor at the American Optical Company in Southbridge for 16 years and then worked for Wackenhut

Security Agency at Galileo Fiber Optics in Southbridge for 25 years.

Mr. Kotarba was an active member of Holy Trinity Polish National Catholic Church in Webster all his life. He served as chairman of the church council for 40 years and belonged to the Diocesan Council; he was a delegate to the national convention in Scranton, PA. He was a lifelong member of the Polish National Alliance, serving as its financial secretary for 49 years as well as being an insurance agent for the Polish National Alliance during those years. He was a member of the Polish National Union for 18 years.

Mr. Kotarba was a Little League coach while his children were in the program. He instructed map reading and compass reading to all local boy scout troops for several years.

A funeral will be held at a date to be announced. Donations in his name may be made to Holy Trinity Polish National Catholic Church, 68 Lake St., Webster, MA 01570. Arrangements are under the direction of Sitkowski, Malboeuf & Hickey Funeral Home, 340 School Street, Webster.

www.websterfunerals.com



JoAnna Maynard, 81

SPENCER – JoAnna Maynard, 81, of Maple Street, died Sunday, April 5, 2020, at Harrington Memorial Hospital in Southbridge. She is survived by a brother, Rene Maynard of Georgia, two sisters, Deloris Jastrzebski of Dudley and Robin Yates of Sturbridge; and many nephews and nieces. She was predeceased by a brother, Joseph Maynard who died in 1993; and three sisters, Elaine Triplett who died in 2003, Lois Leduc who died in 1993, and Jane Ray-Berger of Southbridge who died in 2015. She was born in Oxford,

daughter of the late Albert and Annie (Ray) Maynard, and lived in Oxford for many years prior to moving to Spencer.

Due to the gathering restrictions in Massachusetts, a Mass at St. Roch's Church and burial at St. Roch's Cemetery will both be held privately. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to St. Roch's Church, 334 Main St., Oxford, MA 01540. Paradis-Givner Funeral Home in Oxford is directing the arrangements. paradisfuneralhome.com

Kristin F. Wilson, 38



Kristin F. Wilson, 38, of Webster, died Saturday, April 4, 2020.

She leaves behind children, brothers, sisters, and a step-father. Along with many other friends and family. She was loved greatly and will be truly and deeply missed. She struggled throughout her life and is now at peace. She will be cremated and ashes will be spread with her mothers in the mountains of New York as per her wishes at

a later date.

Funeral services will be private and at the convenience of the family. After cremation, her ashes will be scattered with her mothers in the mountains of New York.

The Shaw-Majercik Funeral Home, 48 School St., Webster, MA has been entrusted with her arrangements.

A guest book is available at www.shaw-majercik.com where you may post a message of comfort, share a fond memory, or light a candle in remembrance of Kristin.

Peter J. Lougie, 39



OXFORD – Peter J. Lougie, 39, of Larned Road, died peacefully on Friday, April 10, 2020, at UMass Memorial Medical Center – University Campus in Worcester, surrounded by his family. He is survived by his parents, Paul J. and Jean E. (Carlson) Lougie of Oxford; a brother, Jeffrey P. Lougie and his wife Stephanie of Dudley; two sisters, Jennifer A. Pfeffer and her husband Christopher of Riverside, RI, and Christine J. Lougie and her significant other Miguel of Webster; six nephews and nieces, Nathan, Ashley, Emma, John, Claire, and Benjamin; aunts, uncles, and cousins. He was born in Worcester and was a lifelong resident of Oxford.

Peter loved riding his dirt bike and

racing his R/C trucks. He was skilled in fixing almost anything and enjoyed gardening, fishing, going for rides, and swimming. He liked hanging out with his friends at the sandpits when he was younger and was very adventurous. He was a great role model for his nephews and nieces, and taught them how to ride bicycles and dirt bikes. He loved his family more than anything and will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Due to gathering restrictions in Massachusetts, a celebration of Peter's life will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the UMass Memorial Foundation, c/o Transplant Dept., 333 South St., Suite 400, Shrewsbury, MA 01545. Paradis-Givner Funeral Home in Oxford is directing the arrangements.

paradisfuneralhome.com

Ronald Miner, 84

BROOKFIELD - Ronald Miner, 84 of Brookfield, MA died peacefully on April 8, 2020.

He leaves behind his three sons Keith, Darryl, and Troy, five grandchildren and seven great grandchildren and his very special friend of eight years Karin Rhault. He was predeceased by the love of his life and soulmate of 56 years, Sandra (St. Martin) Miner whom he grew up with as a child two houses away in "Little Canada" of his hometown North Brookfield. He was also predeceased by his brother Gerald Miner and sister Valerie Paquette. He is the son of the late Lionel and Evelyn Miner.

Ronald worked in the maintenance department of Quaboag Corporation in North Brookfield and is a veteran

of the United States Army.

Ron was most at home puttering around his house and was skilled in fixing things and creating gadgets. His home-made Halloween displays drew crowds every year. Ron and his wife Sandy were talented dancers in the area that are frequently mentioned to this day. A private burial will take place at a future date. The Shaw-Majercik Funeral Home, 48 School St., Webster, MA has been entrusted with his arrangements. A guest book is available at www.shaw-majercik.com where you can post a condolence or light a candle.



Sally A. Antos, 85



DUDLEY- Sally A. (Twardzik) Antos, 85, passed away peacefully at the Blair House of Worcester on Wednesday, April 8, 2020 after a long battle with Alzheimer's.

She is survived by her loving partner of 40 years, Alan "Eppy" Epstein of Dudley, her children; John Antos of Webster and Susan Patterson of Tucson, AZ., five grandchildren; Josh Antos and Joseph Antos both of Webster, Jeremy Nadolny, Tanya Nadolny, and John Antos all of Tucson, AZ, and two great grandchildren. Sally also leaves many relatives and friends.

Sally was born on March 19, 1935, daughter of the late Joseph and Bernadette (Gouin) Twardzik. She was a lifelong resident of Dudley and enjoyed all the years spent in the neighborhood known as "Jericho". She worked at the former B&W Footwear as the Executive Assistant to the

President and then as the Personnel Manager at Anglo Fabrics until the company closed.

Sally enjoyed cooking, travelling, visiting many dog tracks with her companion "Eppy", her yearly family trip to Hampton Beach, and especially time spent with her family.

The family would like to thank the caregivers at Blaire House for their exceptional care and support as well as Bob Miller for his compassion and assistance during this difficult time.

Funeral Services will be Private.

Sally will be laid to rest with her beloved parents in Sacred Heart Cemetery in Webster.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to: the Alzheimer's Association, 225 N. Michigan Ave., Fl. 17, Chicago, IL., 60601 or at alz.org

The ROBERT J. MILLER FUNERAL HOME and LAKE CHAPEL, 366 School St., Webster is honored to be assisting Sally's family with arrangements.

To leave an on-line message of condolence, please visit: RJMillerfunerals.net

Curtis S. Johnson, 85

AUBURN- Curtis S. Johnson age 85 passed away at Worcester Rehabilitation and Health Care Center, Worcester, MA. Curtis leaves his long time friend Karl W. Silun of Auburn.

He was born in Auburn son of the late Rudolph M. Johnson and Elsie (Benson) Johnson living in Auburn most of his life.

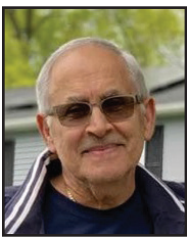
There are no calling hours, services are private. The Shaw-Majercik Funeral Home, 48 School St., Webster, MA has been entrusted with his arrangements. A guest book is available at www.shaw-majercik.com where you may post a condolence or light a candle.

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



OBITUARIES

Carlos Cesar Mangual, 71



Carlos Cesar Mangual, 71, of Dudley passed away Saturday, April 11, 2020 at UMass Memorial HealthCare. He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Maria (Cruz) Mangual. His children: Gilda Mangual and fiancé Marvin Crespin of Dudley; Jenny (Mangual) Trahan and husband Josh of Dudley; Carlos C. Mangual Jr. of Dudley; Vanessa LaFleche and husband Brian of Charlton. His 6 granddaughters: Kylee, Abigail, McKenzie, Bella, Gloria, and Cecilia. His extended family and many friends in New York, Florida, and Puerto Rico.

Carlos was born August 8, 1948 in Juncos, Puerto Rico. A son of the late Esteban and the late Carmen (Burgos) Mangual. Carlos graduated from the University of Puerto Rico. A proud Vietnam veteran, he served three years in the US Army. Carlos was a dedicated and beloved member of the Goya Foods family in Webster for 45 years where he retired as the General Manager in

2019.

Carlos was an avid golfer, music lover, and passionate NY Yankee fan. He will be remembered as great friend to many and for his generosity in the local community. Most of all, he treasured time spent with his family, especially his granddaughters.

Due to the health concerns calling hours and services were private in Bartel Funeral Home and Chapel 33 Schofield Avenue, Dudley, MA. Burial was in St. Anthony Of Padua Cemetery, Webster. A Memorial Mass will be celebrated at a later date in St. Anthony of Padua Church

24 Dudley Hill Rd. Dudley.

Carlos's family would like to thank the nursing staff at UMass that assisted in his care.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you consider making a donation to the Cure Alzheimer's Fund. Carlos guestbook and tribute is available at www.bartelfuneralhome.com



David A. MacGibbon Sr., 80,



SAUGUS – David A. MacGibbon Sr., 80, died on Friday, April 10, 2020, at UMass Memorial Medical Center – University Campus in Worcester, after a short battle with COVID-19. He is survived by four children, Kimberly A. Hutchins and her husband Matthew of Oxford, Margaret M. Larose and her husband Timothy of Saugus, Dawn L. Sudano and her husband John of Middleton, and David A. MacGibbon Jr. of Salisbury; a brother, Robert MacGibbon and his wife Kathleen of Wakefield; two sisters, Ruth Crivello of Wakefield and Margaret Hardy of North Reading; eight grandchildren, David MacGibbon III, Carisa Sudano, Miranda MacGibbon, Samantha Sudano, Matthew Hutchins Jr., Mackenzie MacGibbon, Nathan Hutchins, & Jacob Hutchins; his wife Patricia A. MacGibbon; and many nephews and nieces. He was predeceased by a daughter, Ruth A. MacGibbon, a brother Donald MacGibbon and sisters Patricia Meuse and Dorothy O'Keefe. He was born in Malden, son of the late Robert and Margaret (MacClellan) MacGibbon, and lived most of his life in Saugus. He was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force.

Mr. MacGibbon was a truck driver for McLean Trucking for many years. Later, he was a bus driver for Hertz Rental Cars in Boston for many years before retiring in 2001. He was a member of Trinity Evangelical Church in North Reading, the VFW in Saugus, a trap shooter at Danvers Fish and Game, and enjoyed collecting and trading watches.

The family would like to thank nurse Lori Wortman, who cared for him in his later years, the staff at Beaumont Nursing Home in Northbridge for their exceptional care over the last year, and friend Paul Gillette, for always being there for David over the past several years.

Due to gathering restrictions in Massachusetts, a service will be held at a later date at Trinity Evangelical Church in North Reading. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, 309 Waverly Oaks Rd., Waltham, MA 02452. Paradis-Givner Funeral Home in Oxford is directing the arrangements.

paradisfuneralhome.com



Daryl A. Tinnerholm, 64



LEICESTER- Daryl A. (Davenport) Tinnerholm, 64, died suddenly, Friday, April 10 at her home. She leaves her husband of 21 years, John "Jack" Tinnerholm, her son Joshua Venditti of Oxford, her daughter Kristy Venditti of Pittsfield, her mother, Lillian (Johnson) Davenport of Auburn, a brother Francis Davenport and his wife Tracy of Leicester, her sisters Anna Smith of Shrewsbury, Margaret Klosek and her husband William of Leicester and Kathleen Garrity and her husband

Robert of Barre, three grandchildren; Anthony, Sophia and Collin, nieces and nephews. She is predeceased by her brother Albert Davenport, Jr.

Born in Leicester she was the daughter of the late Albert Davenport, Sr. and later graduated from Leicester High School. Private graveside services were held by the family with burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Leicester. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Leicester Food Pantry, c/o St. Joseph's Church, 759 Main St., Leicester, MA 01524. the MORIN FUNERAL HOME, 1131 Main St., Leicester is assisting the family with funeral arrangements.

www.morinfuneralhomes.com

Donald E. Robbins, 66



DUDLEY – Donald E. Robbins, 66, of Schofield Avenue, died Friday, April 10, 2020, at Harrington Memorial Hospital in Southbridge. He is survived by two brothers, Loren G. Robbins of North Chelmsford and Kenneth N. Robbins of Raleigh, North Carolina. He was born in Worcester, son of the late

Ewart A. and Aline M. (Lamoureux) Robbins, and lived in Worcester, Oxford, Southbridge, and most recently Dudley.

A private graveside service will be held at St. Roch's Cemetery in Oxford, where he will be laid to rest beside his parents who cared for him for many years. Paradis-Givner Funeral Home in Oxford is directing the arrangements

paradisfuneralhome.com

Ernest F. 'Ernie' Falke, Sr., 91



WEBSTER - Ernest F. 'Ernie' Falke, Sr., 91, passed away April 8, 2020 at Harrington Healthcare at Hubbard in Webster. He leaves behind a son, Ernest F. 'Skip' Falke, Jr. of Webster, a daughter; Jessica Gajewski of Fort Pierce, Florida, 3 grandchildren; Jarrid Falke and Jessica Groccia of Webster, and Corey Gajewski and his wife Meghan of New Oxford, PA., 3 great grandchildren; Juliana Castaneda Groccia, Colin and Michelle Gajewski and several nieces and nephews.

Ernie was born in Webster, September 9, 1928 son of the late Henry and Julia (Houghton) Falke and lived here all his life.

He was predeceased by brothers;

Howard, Charles, Earl and Raymond Falke, Sr.

Ernie worked as a heavy equipment operator for many years at Leo Construction Co. of Webster.

He was a member and past Grand Knight with the Knights of Columbus.

He enjoyed being with family and friends, chatting with his neighbors and doing projects around his home.

Ernie's Services will be Private due to the circumstances of the COVID-19 guidelines.

Burial will be Private at Mt. Zion Cemetery in Webster.

The ROBERT J. MILLER FUNERAL HOME and LAKE CHAPEL, 366 School St. is assisting the family with arrangements.

To leave an on-line condolence, please visit: RJMillerfunerals.net

Felix F. Condua II, 64

WORCESTER- Felix F. Condua II age 64 passed away Sunday, April 5, 2020 at Webster Manor, Webster, MA. He leaves family members, Nana N. Condua, Myeesha Wyette and Nana Kofi Condua.

He was born in Ghana son of the late Felix F. Condua I and Sophia (Edwards) Condua.

Felix was employed by Cernova Corp in Marlborough where he worked as a

Ceramic Technician.

There are no calling hours, all services are private and at the convenience of the family. The Shaw-Majercik Funeral Home, 48 School St., Webster, MA has been entrusted with his arrangements. A guest book is available at www.shaw-majercik.com where you may post a condolence or light a candle.

Daniel E. 'Danny' Morgan, 48



WEBSTER - Daniel E. 'Danny' Morgan, 48, passed away Sunday, April 5, 2020 at University Hospital in Worcester.

Danny leaves his parents Edmond J. and Frances Charlene (Porcher) Morgan.

He was born in Worcester February 14, 1972 and lived in Webster all his life.

Danny graduated from Bartlett High School with high honors and later graduated from Worcester State University with degrees in French and Spanish where he graduated cum laude in 1999. He worked his way

through college by working for Toys R Us and TJMaxx, but enjoyed being a substitute teacher in the Webster School system.

Danny will be missed by his Mom and Dad and everyone he met.

Funeral Services will be Private.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to: The American Cancer Society, 30 Speen St., Framingham, MA. 01701.

The ROBERT J. MILLER FUNERAL HOME and LAKE CHAPEL, 366 School St., is assisting Danny's family with arrangements.

To leave a message of condolence, or to Share a memory, please visit: RJMillerfunerals.net

Garden your way to better health

Break out the tools and garden your way to a healthier mind, body and spirit. Gardeners know and research proves that getting outdoors, digging in the soil and gardening help strengthen muscles, increase flexibility, reduce stress and elevate our mood.



Include gardening as a major component of your workout schedule. You'll stretch and strengthen muscles while promoting cardiovascular health and maintaining bone mass. A University of Arkansas study found that yard work as well as weight training significantly maintained bone density in women over 50.

And for those trying to lose weight, add 30 minutes of gardening to your daily or weekly routine to help shed some extra pounds. A half hour of raking burns 162 calories, weeding 182, and turning the compost pile a whopping 250. Gardening several times per week will help keep you and your landscape looking top notch.

Don't let a lack of time, space or painful joints stop you from growing nutritious vegetables, beautiful flowers or an attractive landscape. Staying active through gardening not only increases flexibility and strengthens muscles, it helps fight anxiety and depression that arthritis sufferers and others often experience.

Those struggling with limited time, space or mobility may want to try container and elevated gardening. Both can be placed on patios, decks or balconies. Select a size and style you can easily reach and one that matches your garden design. Those on a tight budget can add drainage holes and paint 5-gallon food grade containers or nursery pots to create attractive planters.

Protect and support your hands with gloves that fit and provide support like Foxgloves' Works gloves (foxglovesinc.com). Padding and reinforced fingertips protect your hands and knuckles from scrapes and bruises. Gloves with long cuffs or those that extend to the elbow provide added protection when working in the garden.

Select gloves that are machine washable, so you always have a clean pair ready when you venture out to the garden. Keep a pair of gloves, pruner and your favorite weeding tool in a bucket near the front or back door. You won't waste time looking for your favorite tools plus you can take advantage of those small blocks of time to weed, deadhead or pick a bouquet of flowers

to enjoy. Enlist the help of ergonomic tools that allow you to garden longer with less pain and fatigue. Look for designs that keep your back and wrist straight when digging, pruning and raking. Select tools with soft wide grips to further reduce hand fatigue. Wrap the handles of existing tools with foam pipe insulation for added padding.

Protect your joints and muscles while gardening. Warm up, just as you would for any workout, with a few simple stretches. Protect your knees by using a stool, kneeling pad or one-legged kneel instead of squatting.

Take regular breaks. Gardening in twenty-minute intervals and resting in between to enjoy your handiwork and hydrate will pay off with less muscle strain and fatigue. You'll then be ready for your next workout session in the garden that will invigorate your mind, body and spirit.

Melinda Myers has written numerous books, including *Small Space Gardening*. She hosts *The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series* and the nationally-syndicated *Melinda's Garden Moment TV & radio program*. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine and was commissioned by Foxgloves for her expertise to write this article. Her Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.



Photo Courtesy

Gardening helps fight anxiety and depression while providing plenty of fresh-from-the-garden produce.

FINANCE

continued from page A1

his requests “for years,” and the \$85,000 will come from the cemetery perpetual care fund.

A similar upgrade project is being conceived for parks, with \$35,000 going to rebuild the bathrooms at Greenbriar and \$40,000 for playground equipment at the elementary school. Divoll said the latter “has seen better days” and “does not meet any modern standards.”

Town Manager Jen Callahan said the former is important “to honor the partnership we have with the Army Corps of Engineers.” Last year, a pine tree crushed the building, but it was already in derelict condition, and “now we have to replace it,” she said.

One the other end of the spectrum, Divoll also advocated for demolishing Joslin School annex for \$53,000.

“I think it speaks for itself. It’s in very, very tough shape. There’s no point in repairing it and no plan to use it,” he said.

Fire Chief Laurent McDonald admitted the new breathing gear is “quite pricey,” but said the department is getting a good deal because it’s switching all of its equipemnt to a new supplier. Normally, it’d have to pay extra for extar tanks, but the firm is including a second cylinder with each set free. They have a 15-year lifespan, he said.

Callahan spoke of several of the requests, including putting \$80,000 in reserve toward a facility lease to create more office and record-storage space for the “entire land management” staff now in Town Hall. The goal is utimately to find a new permanent home for those departments, which she described as “crucial to bringing in revenues” for the town, but now face “a very real spatial issue.”

She also handled the math curriculum item, since the schools had no representative present. She described that as “a major item” that “crosses all different student age groupd and is vital” for the district to upgrade its standards and maintain state requirements. One FinCom member asked about its “shelf life,” and she replied that curriculum, testing and other aspects of public education are “moving targets” that change often. She compared it to past practice of occasionally having to buy new textbooks.

She advocated for several smaller items. One, just \$27,900, is the town’s share of the Green Communities grant of \$164,000, which will go toward LED lights at two schools and the fire department sites, replacing an infrared panel at DPW, and installign variable-frequency drivers at the schools, which will collectively save the town about \$30,000 a year, she said. It’s the first year of a five year plan for such grant money – \$200,000 to \$250,000 each year – for various energy-saving methods totaling around \$3 million.

Other items in the capital plan include setting aside \$100,000 for a building improvement fund, \$26,000 to buy a shared inspections vehicle, \$40,000 for a downtown sewer feasibility study, \$60,000 for a community center generator, \$60,000 for “branding” signs and related master-plan needs, \$38,000 for school fiberoptic switches, and new police tasers.

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

Reliant Medical Group to open temporary COVID-19 observation unit

WORCESTER — Reliant Medical Group is opening a temporary observation unit to reduce pressure on overcrowded Emergency Departments and to mitigate risk for patients not suspected of having Covid-19 who require a higher level of care. The unit is located at Reliant’s ReadyMED Plus urgent care facility on Shrewsbury Street in Worcester. Reliant’s medical staff will care for adult patients for 12-36 hour stays at this facility.

Patients appropriate for this level of care will have conditions such as cellulitis, abdominal pain, kidney stones, urinary tract complaints, or need for hydration, antibiotic therapy, or anaphylaxis management.

To start, the unit will have the capacity to provide observation-level care for 9 patients, but is designed to expand to accommodate more patients as needed. Referrals to the unit will be accepted from Reliant providers and other area providers, including those referring from an emergency room. Ambulatory services will continue to be available at ReadyMED Plus.

Reliant briefed officials at the

TRANSFER

continued from page A1

year.

With all of this data in mind, Ruda said in an interview that he feels like it’s time for Dudley to explore new options.

“The market for recycling has pretty much disappeared, it used to cost the town \$45 per ton to get rid of recycling, and \$90 per ton of regular trash. In January, the cost of recycling doubled in Dudley, and hauling charges increased. Now, the costs for recycling are just as high as for regular trash,” Ruda said.

He explained that when he stepped into his role as Town Administrator there was a \$45,000 unpaid balance in the Recycling Center budget creating concerns for the Highway Superintendent that Casella was going to begin removing equipment. Ruda said Dudley’s current model has also been significantly affected by the China National Sword, a term used to describe China’s restrictions on imports of recycled materials.

“Higher processing costs

and lower revenues for waste haulers force a substantial cost shift to the users. In this case, the Town of Dudley is the user, not the permit holder and we’ve done a terrible job in adjusting for the cost increases and looking at more sensible models, staying on top of trends and quites frankly, providing ‘real numbers’ to the public relative to the cost of running the Dudley Transfer and Recycling Station. Rather than to simply ‘go away,’ as problems tend not to do, it has now become a problem that must be faced,” said Ruda.

Ruda said the town needs to lean on “facts and data” produced through the town hall’s administrative staff and financial experts to justify any change. The fact that the nine disposal sites in Massachusetts are near capacity also justifies the need for a shift. Understanding that the town can’t control every situation affecting trash disposal, Ruda wants to see Dudley try to adjust where it can before the problem gets bigger than it’s already projected to be.

“We’re going to protect our taxpayers like waste haulers

protect their own business interests, and consider the true costs of our expensive model, including the indirect cost of running the transfer station, and we’re going to keep a close eye on industry trends,” Ruda said. “I have no plan to remove the transfer station or recommend closing it to the Board of Selectmen but I can’t in good conscience recommend continuing with the outdated, expensive model that we provide to the handful of residents that use it. We need to consider that we assume all of the risk in the industry with our current model.”

While not the Board of Selectmen or the Town Administrator’s most pertinent issue, especially given current times, the future of trash disposal in Dudley promises to continue to be one of the more prominent talking points when it comes to ordinary town business at future meetings. Ruda confirms that as of right now a 90-day extension for the contract remains in play and has been budgeted for in order to extend the timeline for Dudley to make a decision on any change of approach. The Town Administrator is

also working on laying out options and new models to recommend to selectmen and the town in the future. Ruda made sure to specify that right now nothing is set in stone and, despite rumors circling the town, there are no plans to close the transfer station. The goal is to make the program more economically viable and protect the interests of taxpayers in the long run.

“The rumors and misinformation surrounding the future of the transfer station have been as ridiculous as the assertion that the Town is ‘making money hand over fist’ to ‘The Town Administrator is selling the land.’ I realize that it is based in fear and lack of facts, so I will be providing all of the facts, publicly,” said Ruda. “We are operating using the most expensive and risky model that exists, and we’re continuing to subsidize it, at a high and ever-rising cost instead of saving or spending the money in more critical areas. We can do it better. We can do it smarter and we can do it in a way that is sustainable and lasting.”

QCC students work remotely to continue income tax assistance

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College students and their instructor Eduardo Rivas are offering free remote tax preparation until the end of April. This free income tax preparation service is available to individuals who meet any one of the following requirements: household income is \$56,000 or less, the elderly, those with disabilities, and limited English speakers who need assistance in preparing their tax returns.

Mr. Rivas is the volunteer coordinator for the City of Worcester’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, in addition to being a QCC adjunct faculty member and Admissions Enrollment Counselor. Until the recent state closure of all non-essential businesses, Mr. Rivas and his 50 volunteers (both QCC students and trained volunteers from the community) had prepared over 300 tax returns. The returns were prepared at both the Main South Community Development Corporation and at QCC’s Community Learning Hub, located at Great Brook Valley. The need was so great that there were times when 14 preparers were working at the two sites. Mr. Rivas wanted to continue to help those in the community, who

might still need to get their taxes prepared, which is why he decided to continue preparing tax returns remotely.

A total of 10 QCC students will be working on any tax returns received through the end of April. The students are part of Mr. Riva’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance course, which introduces students to concepts and languages of the IRS and taxation. Students in the course all become certified tax preparers before they are allowed to volunteer to prepare federal and state taxes. The course also requires students to complete 12, three-hour volunteer sessions. This is the second year the course has been offered and nine former students from last year’s class came back to volunteer again this year.

“This class is truly rewarding. I also enjoy doing the necessary work and enjoy working with the clients as well as the volunteers. I see such a diverse group of people who come and have been through so much. I am glad that we can help, and in the same way help ourselves by gaining experience and skills,” said current QCC student Joe Ramos, an accounting certificate major.

According to Mr. Rivas, the students are working on returns for their own family and friends and waiting to pitch in with preparing other returns as needed.

“I have received emails from a lot of my volunteers expressing their willingness to help me in preparing returns remotely, or with any other projects related to the VITA project during this time,” Mr. Rivas said. “I have divided all the work among the QCC students, but I also have other volunteers who are willing to help me if needed. The plan is that if we start getting a lot of clients who contact us by email and the QCC students cannot handle the work, I will ask the other volunteers to support us.”

Anyone who meets the income requirements and is still interested in getting their tax returns prepared can email vita@qcc.mass.edu. For more information, visit Volunteer Income Tax Assistance.

For more information on QCC, contact Josh Martin, Director of Institutional Communications at 508-854-7513 or jmartin@qcc.mass.edu.

Baker announces new regulations on supermarkets

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — Gov. Charlie Baker announced several new measures last week to combat the coronavirus, including the reduction of supermarket capacity.

Established by the Department of Public Health, one of the new regulations requires grocery stores to limit occupancy to 40 percent of their maximum permitted occupancy levels. This does not include stores with a maximum occupancy of less than 25 people.

The regulations also provide guidance that store staff members can use to monitor occupancy levels. Several local stores have already added specific hours for seniors to shop, while others have announced that they will close for one to two days weekly to allow workers to rest.

The new statewide regulations are meant to ensure social distancing while customers shop for groceries.

“The guidance builds on a previous March 23 order for grocery stores, which set out policies for ensuring access to handwashing facilities and protecting employees in higher-risk populations, among other requirements,” read a statement released by the Baker Administration.

Baker also announced an expansion of COVID-19 testing sites for public safety personnel. The sites were opened last week, doubling the number of free, drive-through tests available for first responders and other emergency management workers. A mobile testing site at the Big E fairgrounds in West Springfield also began operations last week, supplementing a site at Foxborough’s Gillette Stadium.

Each site will serve police officers, firefighters, EMS personnel, correction officers, mortuary service providers, and state active duty National Guard personnel who perform critical public safety functions. The mobile testing sites in Foxborough and West Springfield will each perform up to 200 tests per day, seven days per week, with appointments scheduled in advance by agencies and departments through a

call center at the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security.

Testing is performed at no charge. The sites reflect a partnership among the Baker-Polito Administration, the Big E, Brewster Ambulance Service, the Department of Correction, the Department of Fire Services, the New England Patriots, the New England Revolution, Wellpath, and Quest Diagnostics.

The Baker Administration also released updated crisis standards of care guidelines for the state’s healthcare facilities. Upon the request of leaders in the healthcare system, the Department of Public Health convened an advisory committee that includes medical experts and ethicists from across the Commonwealth, representing both large academic medical centers and community hospitals. Their recommendations helped inform ethical, equitable and transparent guidelines for providing acute care during a crisis.

The guidelines, which are not mandatory, are designed to do the following:

Help healthcare institutions and providers make consistent decisions about the use and allocation of scarce medical resources.

Ensure that critical resources are conserved and distributed efficiently across the healthcare system.

Promote transparent decision-making and public trust in the fairness and equity of the system.

Protect those who might otherwise face barriers to accessing care.

Assure patients and their families that they will receive fair access to care, regardless of where they live.

Additional information and updates can be obtained by visiting www.mass.gov. Officials have also created specific pages related to the crisis.





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– Heather S., Renewal by Andersen customer, Holliston, MA



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WEBSTER LAKE – 9 Pebble Beach Rd! Middle Pond – Winter Cove! Private Peninsula Protected from the Storm – Safe Harbor! Custom 3,179' 8 Rm Contemp Ready for Your Immediate Enjoyment! Grand Entry Foyer! Ideal Open Flr Plan w/Sky Lighted Cathedral Ceilings, Tall Windows & Hrdwd Flrs! Beautiful Applianced Custom Granite Kit w/Center Isl! Formal Din, Fireplace Liv Rm w/Water/Estuary Views! 1st Flr Laundry! Second Floor Master Suite, Ideal Full Bath, Huge Walk-in Closet! 3 Bdrms Total! 2 Full & 2 Half Baths! Walk-out Lower Level Fireplace Fam Rm! Buderus Oil Heat! C/Air! Oversized 2 Car Garage! **\$779,900.00**



SOLD



NEW LISTING



SOLD



SOLD



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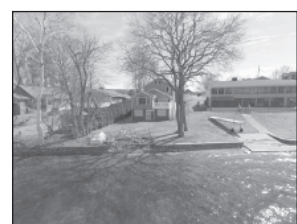
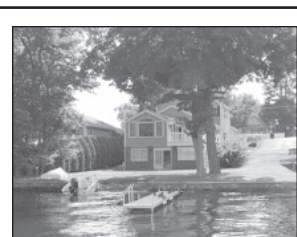
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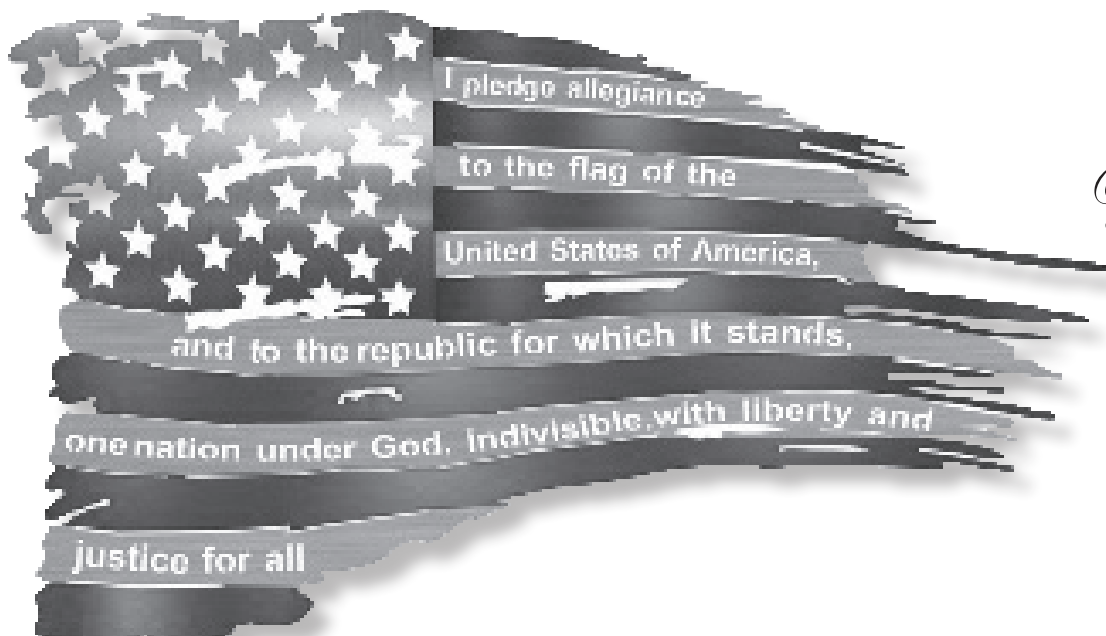
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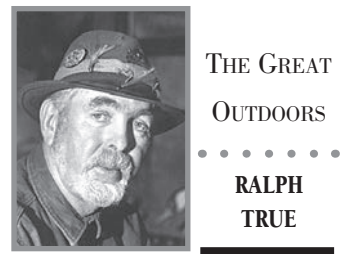
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Spring fishing in some local ponds has been great for numerous trout fishing anglers this year, as pictures in this column have shown. I received a call from Daryl Carter this past week, and he told me about he and his wife catching 5 & 6 lb. trout from Webster lake in March. A six-pound brook trout and brown trout along with a huge tiger trout sure made for a few great days of fishing. It seems as though Massachusetts Fish & Wildlife decided to stock many of their brood stock trout this year, along with the full spring stocking of trout, to ensure the fish were available to licensed fishermen & women.

Daryl fished Wallum lake this past weekend and could not catch a single fish, and he was not alone. Numerous other anglers that fished Wallum Lake this past week came up empty handed, but that is Wallum Lake. Some nice rainbow trout were caught by other anglers using power bait last week, but then they to found fishing slow during the past few days. A couple of anglers fished fly's and lures from a boat last week and also came up empty handed. They claimed that fish were rising all over the lake, but they would not



take a single thing that they used.

Wallum Lake opened on March 5 this year, unknown to many anglers. One minute, it was closed to all fishing, and the next, it was open. Rhode Island decided to use the odd even schedule for fishing because of the virus outbreak, after pressure from the fishing public. Fishing was allowed for anglers' names that began with

A - M on odd days and N-Z on even days.

A number of years ago, a good friend, the late Bob Trombi of Worcester, taught this writer a good method of catching trout when they are surface feeding. Using a couple of ultra light rods loaded with six-pound test monofilament line, with 20 feet of two-pound test leader material were trolled with a number 18 dry fly extremely slow in



back of the boat. It was not long before we were reeling in one trout after another. A small electric motor was used to keep the 16 foot boat speed extremely slow. Early morning fishing with light winds are necessary to fish this method, but it worked.

Beavers continue to destroy many trees throughout the state, as this week's picture shows a fallen tree at a local

club. They chew the tree until there is only a small amount holding the tree up. Eventually, a strong gust of wind comes along and blows it over.

Massachusetts needs a trapping season soon before the beaver cause more destruction to public & private property. The band aid approach the state now has is ridiculous.

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WEBSTER

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also makes obtaining an absentee ballot easier, by stating, “For an election held on or before June 30, 2020 any person taking precaution related to COVID-19 in response to a declared state of emergency or from guidance from a medical professional, local or state health official, or any civil authority shall be deemed to be unable by reason of physical disability to cast their vote in person at a polling location.”

In Webster, all of the other election deadlines passed back in March, so the ballot itself is set.

The state also approved a variety of other changes, including allowing towns to waive interest and penalties for late property tax payments due after March 10. But because formally accepting that section would require notifying all residents by mail (at a cost of about \$3,000), the Board opted not to.

Willardson said the tax collector is already doing it anyway. She doesn’t add interest or fines, has not been sending demand

notices, and overrides the computer’s automatic addition of interest when payments come in, he said.

Willardson said there were 19 positive cases in town at that time (April 6), “so the Board of Health is taking an increased role” in tracking down contacts because the public health nurse “is being overwhelmed.” He noted the state has offered 1000 people to help towns trace such contacts.

Additionally, he said he closed Memorial Beach for sports and picnics, although people can still walk and fish there. Becker said he’d seen a group of youths playing basketball there just before the meeting, as well as people walking the trails and fishing. The latter groups seemed to “be keeping the social distancing,” he added.

Willardson also closed the Recycling/Composting Center. When Webster can reopen it, it’ll stay open for a week, rather than its usual two days, to “allow people to catch up.” He’s also working with the Economic Development Commission to publicize forgivable loans and other programs to help

keep small businesses afloat during this time.

Selectman Lisa Kontois noted the state has been encouraging towns not to report local figures, just county-level data. Willardson said he’d heard about that from a conference call with the lieutenant governor. When he contacted the Department of Public Health for clarification, they told him towns can share such numbers “provided we don’t give any more granular detail than that. Don’t say where people live.”

Those kinds of details are generally protected by HIPAA and other privacy laws.

As of April 11, DPH was reporting 22,860 confirmed cases with 686 deaths statewide, and had begun breaking down statistics by ethnicity (although half of the cases are “unknown”). On Sunday, the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Center noted the US has become number one in cases with 546,874 – almost a third of the worldwide total and nearly 400,000 more confirmed cases than second-rank Spain. By comparison to the total US population, though, that figure rep-

resents approximately one case per 600 people, but it only counts confirmed cases.

Some evidence has shown about half of all infections don’t show symptoms, but may still be able to transmit the virus. When symptoms appear, most people get fever and respiratory effects – especially difficulty breathing and cough – but some cases express gastrointestinal symptoms, including nausea and diarrhea. Around 15 percent of cases are severe enough to need hospitalization, usually in people who have underlying health issues.

On April 7, the state ordered grocery stores to start limiting the number of people (including both customers and staff) who can be inside at any one time to 40 percent of their official capacity based on floor area. That did not seem to be an issue at Big Bunny last Sunday around 5:30 p.m., when the store did not seem

overly crowded, nor were people waiting outside to get in. Inside, around half of the customers and almost all employees were wearing masks.

The order itself calls for store staff to monitor any outdoor lines that do form “to ensure customers are maintaining appropriate distance from each other” and to call police if problems arise. It also encourages use of one-way aisles, identified by signs and/or aisle markings, “to maximize spacing between customers.”

On April 9, Gov. Baker also ordered all insurance providers to cover Covid-19 medical care “at both in-network and out-of-network providers ... without any requirement of cost sharing by the insured, whether by copayments, deductibles, coinsurance or similar charges.” Those are to include all “medically necessary emergency department and inpatient services” and the hospitals cannot “bal-

ance bill the insured for any amount above the reimbursement paid by the Carrier.” That reimbursement rate is set at 135 percent of what Medicare pays for out of network services, and whatever the contracted rate is for in-network, the order states.

The state is recommending all citizens wear masks when in public places, but it has not formally required that.

Unlike some states (most notably Michigan) that have closed seed-supply businesses, the state DPH specifically declared “nurseries, greenhouses, garden supply centers and agriculture supply stores” to be essential services that can stay open provided they meet certain safety requirements and sell “food-producing plants for human consumption.”

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

DILIGENCE

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the comfort level with social distancing, he said everyone is doing the best they can to adjust.

When it comes to businesses, retail shops, especially the local grocery store Park ‘N Shop, are working to adjust to the Governor’s declaration for a 40 percent occupancy limit to help with social distancing in the stores. However, at least in Park ‘N Shop’s case, Purcell said that number still feels too high for some.

“One of the things we did find was the 40 percent formula is much greater than what some of the stores really feel comfortable with,” said Purcell. “It also states in the order that we’re not allowed to downsize the numbers or modify the 40 percent. The stores themselves can try to maintain whatever

they want but the Board of Health or the local boards can’t dictate anything less than the 40 percent.”

Purcell said the town is working with Park ‘N Shop and other venues to help maintain proper social distancing while still allowing customers access to essential goods and services. It’s a balancing act that stores across the country are having to manage right now and just one more temporary adjustment meant to help flatten the curve and keep the health and safety of everyone in Dudley and beyond in check.

With that in mind, Purcell also recommends that citizens remember their neighbors and help where they feel comfortable with food, water, medication and simple wellness checks. He reiterated a motto that many have embraced as a call for unity in these unsure times, “just remember, we’re all in this together.”

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Excludes leases. Available on select 2019/2020/2021 Ford vehicles. Excludes 2020 Super Duty, Raptor, Mustang Shelby* GT 350/GT 350R/GT 500, Mustang BULLITT, Ford GT, and F-650/750. Customer can defer first payment up to 120 days. Maximum Bonus Cash amount is capped and varies by vehicle: \$1,500-\$2,250. Not all buyers will qualify for Ford Credit limited-term financing. Finance charges continue to accrue during deferral period. Payment referrals not available in Pennsylvania, unless 0% APR. Offer to make three (3) payments is claimed as Ford Credit Bonus Customer can apply Bonus Cash to first three (3) monthly payments. Customer is responsible for all payments. Bonus Cash requires Ford Credit financing. For all offers take new retail delivery from an authorized Ford Dealer's stock by 4/30/20. See dealer for qualifications and complete details.



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1961

Soper Construction started doing business as a landscape company out of a garage on High Street in Southbridge, MA on April 1.

1965

Our company moved to its current location on Plimpton Street and began to do more business involving large excavation.

1986

Bud Soper made a name for himself by taking a chance to be the primary excavation contractor building 3 new schools.

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