



Firefighters plan their next attack to control a blaze at 209 Center Depot Road in Charlton.

Fire levels Charlton home

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON – Multiple departments responded to a fire incident in Charlton in the early morning hours of Wednesday, Jan. 5, where a massive blaze leveled a two-story home.

Charlton Fire Chief Ed Knopf said calls came in at around 3:06 a.m. reporting a fully involved fire at 209 Center Depot Rd. in Charlton. Responders arrived on scene to find the home fully engulfed. Engine 3, with a crew of four personnel, was the first on the scene, and by 3:11 a.m., a second alarm was struck, and work began to manage the blaze.

“We had nine fire towns and Webster EMS came in to help. As we continue to learn in our area, we rely very heavily on our mutual aid companies to come in and assist us when we need it,” Chief Knopf said. “Our first due engine was out the door in three minutes, and they were on arrival within, I think, seven. They made good time. The rest of us were coming from home. It’s just waiting for the out-of-town units to get there so we can establish the water supply because we’re using their water and manpower as well, but everyone responded well.”

The fire was deemed under control by 4:40 a.m., and the scene cleared before 9:30 a.m. with Auburn, Brookfield, Dudley, East Brookfield, Leicester, Oxford, Spencer, Southbridge and Sturbridge assisting in fire suppression while Webster EMS provided an ambulance. The Charlton Department of Public Works was also called in the assist with the icy road conditions and demolish a standing chimney that was deemed a potential hazard. Chief Knopf confirmed there were no injuries at the scene and that local police helped evacuate the residents.

“Two residents were able to get out with the assistance of Charlton police. They did a very nice job. Weather was a factor. Once the water got flowing roads got slick and surfaces got a bit tough. We had to cut through some ice at a pond down the road in order to get into a water supply so that caused some minor delays, but once we got water flowing everything went as planned,” said the chief.

Some witnesses had reported sounds of



Courtesy — Dudley Police Department

A fire on Center Depot Road lights up the street in Charlton. Nine different departments and other agencies were called in to help fight the blaze.

explosions or loud “booms” at the scene on social media. Chief Knopf said this was likely due to pressurized gas containers in the garage or underneath the home releasing pressure due to the fire. As of this report the exact cause of the blaze was under investigation by the District 7 Fire Investigation Unit. Chief Knopf did confirm that the fire was believed to have originated from the basement of the home.

The building was deemed a total loss with an estimated value of \$165,000. The American Red Cross is working with the residents to provide assistance and a GoFundMe page was set up for the residents as well.

State officials hold firm against school closure requests

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION – Despite pleas from the Massachusetts Teachers Association, state officials have remained firm in their decision to keep schools open full-time coming out of the holiday break.

Prior to schools reopening on the first Monday of the new year, Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA) President Merrie Najimy issued an urgent request to state leaders.

“After consulting with our Environmental Health and Safety Committee and public health experts, the Massachusetts Teachers Association is calling on state Education Commissioner Jeffrey Riley to keep all schools closed on Monday [Jan. 3], except for staff COVID-19 testing,” Najimy said. “To protect the public health and the safety of our communities, it is urgent to allow districts to use Jan. 3 for administering COVID-19 tests to school staff and analyzing the resulting data.”

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Jeffrey Riley and Gov. Charlie Baker were in agreement to hold classes statewide on Jan. 3, with no days off for testing. Even with the surge of Omicron cases

resulting from the holidays, state officials said they are not considering a return to remote learning. Both Riley and Baker emphasized the importance in-person learning plays in students’ educational and emotional wellbeing.

“Kids need to be in school—school is safe,” Baker said. “There’s an overwhelming amount of evidence out there that keeping kids out of school, keeping them away from one another, keeping them away from trained and caring adults, did terrible damage to kids all over the country. It’s not going to happen in Massachusetts.”

State officials said the combination of vaccine availability, mask mandates in schools, and other safety protocols should be enough to ensure that students are safe in class without needing to return to remote learning.

But the MTA and thousands of educators and school staff members across the state contend that schools are not currently safe with COVID-19 cases surging.

The MTA has long demanded greater access to COVID-19 tests, officials said. Earlier this month, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education announced the arrival of 200,000 tests for school staff, but MTA leaders

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Warrior Yoga to Calligraphy: Hitchcock Academy hosts it all

BRIMFIELD — Find out if the pen is mightier than the sword, or if the yogi is as mighty a warrior as a fencer as you try out Calligraphy, Warrior Yoga, or Fencing this winter, and celebrate your victories with a slice of gorgeously decorated chocolate cake. Hitchcock Academy, a community center in Brimfield, is rolling out a cavalcade of classes for all ages and interests, including several new and unique offerings.

The center’s longtime Pilates instructor Karen Larsen is teaming up with Fencing instructor Andrew Bloch to offer a new Warrior Yoga class in February. Warrior Yoga is an adventurous style of yoga for the advanced-beginner that incorporates a blend of slightly more intense Yoga poses mixed with some Martial Arts forms. This more athletic style of Yoga will take participants through poses of power and strength with the transitions of flow. It will be offered on Thursdays

from 5:15 to 6:15 p.m. starting Feb. 3.

Fencing will also continue with its next session beginning on Jan. 13, and Pilates’ next session starts on Feb. 2.

On Jan. 20, armed with felt tipped pens and paper, participants will be guided by Christine Ohristo in an introduction to the age-old craft of Calligraphy. The two-hour evening workshop will present the opportunity for each student, after demonstration and instruction, to create a card or poem of their own calligraphy artwork, and perhaps for a new hobby to carry forth.

For those looking to master a new instrument, Guitar is offered monthly in four weekly Wednesday sessions by Reese Crosby.

The center’s longtime Martial Arts Club run by Israel Lopez is offering a steal in January for those interested in trying

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Quinsigamond Community College to host Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Breakfast

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College will host the 37th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Community Breakfast virtually, on Monday, Jan. 17. This year’s event theme will once again focus on the day of recognition for Dr. King as, “More than a Day Off.”

“Each year, QCC is host to this important and impactful com-

munity event that honors Dr. King. I cannot help but think of him as we just recently recognized the year anniversary of the insurrection on the U.S. Capitol, yet our democracy stood strong and once again, a peaceful transition of power took place. Dr. King fought for equity, equality and a democracy where all can prosper,” said QCC President Luis G. Pedraja, Ph.D. “We must work with renewed vigor to ensure we continue his legacy that inspires us all to achieve a nation in which people will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character, as Dr. King dreamed.”

All Worcester and surrounding community members are welcome to view the virtual event at no cost, beginning at 7:45 a.m. on Jan. 17 by visiting www.QCC.edu/mlkbreakfast. Following the live presentation, a recording of the event will be available on the same webpage. The Master of Ceremony for the breakfast will be Phil Niddrie, former Special Projects Coordinator for the City Manager’s Office.

This year, the MLK Jr. Community Breakfast Committee is excited to welcome guest speaker Educator and Author Dr. Kellie Carter

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Cornerstone Bank donates \$50,000 to Worcester County charitable organizations

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank, a community bank with 12 locations throughout Central Massachusetts, has donated \$50,000 to two Worcester County nonprofit organizations: \$40,000 to the Worcester Community Action Council and \$10,000 to the Worcester County Food Bank. The two groups are dedicated to improving quality of life by ending poverty and food insecurity throughout the region, respectively.

“Both of these organizations share our deep commitment to the wellbeing of residents throughout Central Massachusetts, which is why we are supporting them with these significant donations,” said Cornerstone Bank CEO Todd Tallman. “They are each providing the underserved residents of Worcester County with the essentials they need to survive and succeed during a difficult time.”

The Worcester Community Action Council is one of 23 community action agencies in Massachusetts with the mission of helping people toward economic self-sufficiency through programs, partnerships and advocacy. To break the cycle of poverty for tens of thousands of people annually, WCAC helps to provide opportunities for energy assistance, early education and care, financial empowerment, positive youth development, and career pathways.

The Worcester County Foodbank is dedicated to engaging and educating the region in creating a hunger-free community through partnerships with donors and volunteers, as well as business and community leaders. Last year, their network of 115 local pantries and programs helped to distribute nearly 6.1 million pounds of donated food to 75,000 people across 60 Worcester County com-

munities.

“As a community bank, we live and work in Central Massachusetts, which is why we are committed to supporting these causes that improve the quality of life for those around us,” continued Tallman. “We are honored to work alongside both these charitable organizations and look forward to the good that will come from these donations.”

To learn more about Cornerstone Bank and their charitable work, please visit cornerstonebank.com.

About Cornerstone Bank

Cornerstone Bank was formed in 2017, born of a long history of supporting the community, and providing a strong foundation to help people and businesses thrive. Serving Worcester County, Massachusetts, Cornerstone Bank’s local presence and community based banking model

enables a unique ability to deliver outstanding service, with a personal touch. Cornerstone provides the highest level of service and expertise for individuals, businesses, and community organizations with branch locations throughout Central Massachusetts. Cornerstone works to connect customers with opportunities, through a broad range of deposit and loan products, and services. Built on Trust is not just a tagline, but also one of our guiding corporate values. Whether a business or personal partnership, Cornerstone stands on the foundation that relationships are built on trust. To learn about Cornerstone Bank’s personal and business banking offerings, please visit cornerstonebank.com or call 800-939-9103.

Charlton to host multi-town CERT Team training in March

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON – The town of Charlton will host a series of Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) trainings beginning in March where participants will learn how to help in the case of an emergency situation.

Glen LePage, Team Leader of the Charlton CERT Team, said the event is being sponsored by the Tri-EPIC Regional Emergency Planning Committee, a group composed of several local com-

munities that each have their own CERT Teams. The training includes eight towns: Brimfield, Charlton, Douglas, Dudley, Oxford, Southbridge, Sturbridge, and Webster. Those who participate will commit to a 12-week course that will teach them everything they need to know to perform the duties of a CERT Team member.

“They will learn some light search and rescue, first aid and CPR, shelter work and all kinds of different functions that would potentially be needed in a natural disaster to support the community,” said LePage.

While CERT Team members do help in the case of major weather events like tornadoes and flooding, they also play a part in other local emergencies. LePage said each town handles their CERT Teams differently and each is affiliated with different local agencies. He further explained that CERT Teams are more than just extra helping hands in the case of a natural disaster. Charlton, for example, works with the local fire department often helping check vitals and keep firefighters hydrated on scene. Sturbridge assists their local

police department through roles like traffic control.

“If we don’t have any major catastrophes so to speak, we do also get involved in a lot of community support activities,” said LePage. “An example is the Charlton and Sturbridge CERT Teams were heavily involved with the Harrington COVID clinic that they had out at the Southbridge Armory for most of last year. The CERT Team in Charlton did over 2,000 hours of volunteer time with them. We do a lot of other community events like road races where we provide first aid and traffic

control and race path monitoring. We get into a bunch of different things above and beyond an actual emergency.”

Applications for the free CERT training will be accepted until Jan. 30. Participants will leave with hands on experience and a gear bag full of equipment for them to use when duty calls. Interested parties should contact their respective CERT representatives. A list of CERT representatives and their contact information can be found on the Charlton Fire Department Facebook page.

Greater Worcester Community Foundation accepting scholarship applications

WORCESTER — The Greater Worcester Community Foundation is now accepting scholarship applications for high school seniors who live in Worcester County and are seeking college scholarships for the 2022 - 2023 academic year. One application opens the door to more than 130 unique scholarship opportunities.

Since the program’s founding in 1978, more than 9,000 students have been awarded scholarships and over

\$13 million has been distributed. Last year, GWCF awarded over \$680,000 to more than 375 local students. Now in its 44th year of awarding college scholarships, awards ranging from \$300 to \$5,000 will be made to students based on a wide variety of criteria including need, merit, career goals and activity involvement.

New to 2022 is the Harold R. Jensen Scholarship fund. This new scholarship fund will provide more than \$75,000 for

renewable and nonrenewable awards to college-bound graduates of Worcester public and parochial schools. Mr. Jensen (1896-1980), a Worcester resident and worked for US Steel as an accountant. His desire to help children in the city that had been his home, led him to craft a trust that would provide scholarships to Worcester students. The Scholarship is for “high school graduates from the City of Worcester who have proven themselves by scholarship and charac-

ter to be worthy of assistance for higher education.”

Students may apply online by visiting www.greaterworcester.org. Scholarship applications must be submitted by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 1. Recipients will be announced July 2022. For more information, please contact Jacob Vazquez, Philanthropy Officer, Scholarship jvazquez@greaterworcester.org.

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Charlton adds IT improvements to ARPA list

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON – Charlton’s Board of Selectmen has added a few more priorities to its Phase 1 use of American Rescue Plan Act funds after a brief discussion with the town’s Information Technology Director Jeff Sorel on Dec. 14.

As the town moves ahead with the first phase of the spending, which will use about half of the \$4.1 million allocated to the town, an amendment was approved last month authorizing \$90,000 for public safety core network improvements.

“We had been looking at appropriating some money toward IT infrastructure,” Town Administrator Andrew Golas told selectmen. “We think that this is the best initial use of some of it.”

IT Director Jeff Sorel laid out details of the planned investment noting a good deal of the improvements will be focused on enhancing communication between first responders and the town.

“The core updates to the police and fire will facilitate a few things and solve a few problems. One is to upgrade the connection between buildings. It will be ten times increase of speed. Also, with the new radio system that’s going to be implemented it’s going to help with that. It includes cyber security and a second backup fiber connection between the police department and fire together rather than a hub from town hall to each building,” said Sorel.

Selectmen agreed to add the projects as part of phase one.

Upgrades to police and fire radio systems was included in the initial proposal for the American Rescue Plan Act phase one spending in November. Other projects included in phase one are an engineering study for a three-phase water and sewer upgrade, COVID mitigation, a feasibility study for a potential relocation of the Department of Aging, finishing the town’s water line connection to the police department, and a business and nonprofit grant program to be overseen by the Economic Development Commission. Digital archiving was also included in that list. Town Administrator Golas also announced that Charlton was earmarked for \$50,000 in the Massachusetts Legislature American Rescue Plan Act bill to implement a paperless document management system.



ACCURACY WATCH

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

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

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

Country Bank promotes Jessica McGarry to First Vice President, Commercial Lending Lead



Jessica McGarry

WORCESTER — Country Bank, a full-service financial institution serving central and western Massachusetts, is pleased to announce that Jessica McGarry has been promoted to First Vice President, Team Lead for its Commercial Lending Division in the East. McGarry, who joined Country Bank in 2017, resides in Sutton and has over 20 years of experience in the financial services focused on commercial lending.

McGarry earned her Bachelor’s degree in Business from Nichols College, was a recipient of the Forty Under 40 designation in 2014 from

Worcester Business Journal, and was a member of Leadership Worcester, Class of 2015-2016.

“I look forward to leading the Commercial Lending Division in Worcester as Country Bank continues to provide high quality business financing in Central Massachusetts. Our team is knowledgeable and dedicated, with deep connections that will continue to drive growth in the region. Strategic and hard-working individuals, coupled with dynamic lending solutions and a responsive approval process will position our team to capitalize on large and small opportunities as we move into 2022 and beyond,” she said.

“We are excited to promote Jessica to the First Vice President in the Commercial Lending Division for the East. Jessica’s extensive background working with commercial customers, financing strategies, and, in the process, building long-term partnerships in the east has been a part of Country’s success in the Worcester market. These partnerships define Country Bank, and Jessica’s leadership exemplifies our iSTEP Corporate Values of Integrity, Service, Teamwork, Excellence, and Prosperity,” stated Tom Wolcott, First Senior Vice President and Commercial Lending.

Jessica is based in the Worcester Business Banking Center at 315 Main St., and may be reached at jmccgarry@countrybank.com or at 508-762-0272.

About Country Bank

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

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PET of the WEEK

Meet Shark! This handsome gentleman traveled from warm waters in FL, all the way to New England. But don't be intimidated by his name, he is a 5 to 8-year-old sweetie who is ready to retire. He has possible hip dysplasia, otherwise he's in great shape.

- Shark would like to live with teenagers or adults -- he is very friendly!
- He has a great energy level! Happy to go for walks and play and loves car rides, but also happy to lounge around and spend time with people!
- He loves to play ball. It's his favorite game!
- Smart boy! He knows sit and walks great on leash!
- Great with dogs! Shark likes to walk and play with other dogs!
- We don't think he wants to share his home with a cat.

If you think Shark could be for you, please email adopt@baypathhumane.org today! He is just the sweetest guy and we cannot wait to find him his new family!

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QVCC announces Fall 2021 Dean's List

DANIELSON, Conn. — Quinebaug Valley Community College has announced the names of 178 students named to the Fall 2021 semester dean's list.

Charlton
Caitlin Baer, Johnathan Tucker

Dudley
Molly Castano,
Brett Spiewakowski

Southbridge
Jourhana Colon

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Christopher
Age: 13

I love to build things!

Christopher "Chris" is a twelve year-old boy of bi-racial descent who loves to be active and is described as playful. Christopher has many positive relationships with the peers and adults in his life. He is very active and enjoys climbing, building, playing outdoors, and going on outings in the community. Christopher also loves playing video games and building Legos and can entertain himself with them for hours.

Chris is in the 6th grade and continues to make good progress at school. He loves his school and has many positive relationships with his school staff. Chris continues to receive educational support and would do well with a family who can continue to advocate for his needs at school.

Legally freed for adoption, Christopher has a great relationship with his younger brother who he sees at least monthly. A family will need to be open to continued visits with his sibling. He also has an uncle that participates in these visits and is a support to him and would like to remain involved in his life. Christopher has reported that he'd like to live in a house with a mom, a dad, and some pets. He would do best in a flexible, playful home. A family could have no children or significantly older children than Christopher. While Chris' social worker is ultimately seeking a permanent family for him, Chris would also benefit from forming relationships with other caring adults and would benefit from a Visiting Resource. Anyone interested in this opportunity should inquire about Chris.

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; LG-BTQ singles and couples.

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

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

Cornerstone Bank recognizes 24 employees for dedicated service

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank, a community bank with 12 locations throughout Central Massachusetts, has presented Years of Service Awards to 24 employees who have hit landmarks in their tenure. Employees are honored for every five years of service with the Bank.

“The dedication of these 24 employees is inspiring,” said CEO of Cornerstone Bank Todd Tallman. “We work to foster a culture of growth and development within our institution, and it is a true testament when we see the longevity of some of our team members. I congratulate them for their years— and some for their decades—of loyalty and commitment to our customers.”

The following employees received the Years of Service Award:

About Cornerstone Bank
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providing a strong foundation to help people and businesses thrive. Serving Worcester County, Massachusetts, Cornerstone Bank’s local presence and community-based banking model enables a unique ability to deliver outstanding service, with a personal touch. Cornerstone provides the highest level of service and expertise for individuals, businesses, and community organizations with branch locations throughout Central Massachusetts. Cornerstone works to connect customers with opportunities, through a broad range of deposit and loan products, and services. Built on Trust is not just a tagline, but also one of our guiding corporate values. Whether a business or personal partnership, Cornerstone stands on the foundation that relationships are built on trust. To learn about Cornerstone Bank’s personal and business banking offerings, please visit cornerstonebank.com or call 800-939-9103.

Name	Years of Service	Hometown
Brenda Alano	35	Charlton
Michael J. Checkosky	25	Southbridge
Wendy Coran	20	Charlton
Lisa A. Swift	20	Holden
Donna E. Reynolds	20	Charlton
Colleen K. Lord	20	Holland
Sabrina Webb	15	Charlton
Chelsea M. Prizio	15	Warren
Cynthia Roberts	15	Charlton
Stacie Moulton	20	Spencer
Gina M. Petruzzi	10	Auburn
Robert Mangan	10	Sturbridge
Claire Cable	10	Holland
Leanne Normandin	10	Southbridge
Patrick Genatossio	5	Auburn
Phyllis Warner	5	East Brookfield
Corinna A. Tiberii	5	Sturbridge
Allison Doyle	5	Brimfield
Catherine Benoit	5	Lunenburg
Katherine A. Bolte	5	Southbridge
Jessica Wisniewski	5	North Brookfield
Shelby Pollard	5	New Braintree
Megan E. W. Young	5	Brooklyn, Conn.
Vilaylack Inthirath	5	Sturbridge

Open Sky appoints new Vice President of Integrated Care

WORCESTER — Ryan Johnston has been appointed Vice President of Integrated Care for Open Sky Community Services, according to an announcement from President and CEO Ken Bates. Open Sky’s Integrated Care Division, which Johnston will oversee, includes Outpatient Services, Community Supports, the Central Community Health Partnership, and a new federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant-funded Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic.

Johnston is a familiar face to many at Open Sky, having worked for Alternatives, one of the agency’s predecessor organizations and later for Open Sky. Joining Alternatives in 2009, he served in several different roles, most recently as Assistant Director of Mental Health Services. He left Open Sky in 2018 to accept a position with the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health.

Johnston said he was pleased to return to Open Sky, adding “It’s a unique time to come back to the organization, as we work on the frontlines of the ever-changing healthcare and human



Ryan Johnston

services landscape I am especially excited about the opportunities offered by the new SAMHSA grant, both to provide new services and to enhance existing behavioral health services.”

classes on Jan. 19, and those interested in K9 NoseWork can look forward to another session coming soon.

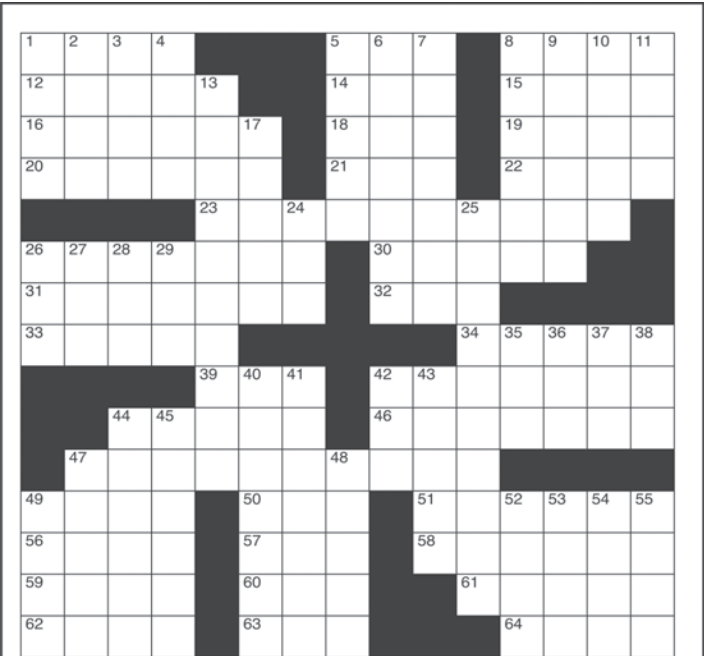
Let’s Cake Decorate continues its series of playful decorating workshops with a For The Love of Chocolate & Roses cake on Sunday, Feb. 13, the eve of Valentine’s Day, for anyone looking to treat themselves or someone special to a sweet confection for the holiday.

Yoga will be offered online for the session that is underway, but a new session anticipated to resume as an in-person class will begin on March 7.

“That’s ten invitations to enrich

your winter,” says Executive Director Cindy Skowrya. “We look forward to welcoming friends new and old, young and young at heart, human or canine. All are welcome, and we’ve got something for everyone.”

For more information or to register, visit www.hitchcockacademy.org. Hitchcock Academy is a community center enriching lives through educational, recreational and cultural programs for all ages and serving Brimfield, Sturbridge, Holland, Wales, The Brookfields, and beyond. Hitchcock is located at 2 Brookfield Rd. in Brimfield.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Requests

5. Calendar month

8. Invests in little enterprises

12. Bird sound

14. S. American plant cultivated for tubers

15. Car

16. Bullfighter

18. Hill (Celtic)

19. Strong criticism

20. Detector

21. When you hope to get there

22. Having the skill to do something

23. Legendary MLB broadcaster

26. Vulcanite

30. C. Asian mountain range

31. In a way, healed

32. Midway between east and southeast
33. Small appendages of insects

34. __ Greene, “Bonanza” actor

39. A place to bathe

42. Postal worker accessory

44. Classical music

46. A way of wrecking

47. Terminator

49. You eat three a day

50. Pointed end of a pen

51. NATO official (abbr.)

56. Genus of clams

57. Boxing’s “G.O.A.T.”

58. A colorless, odorless gas used as fuel

59. Covered thinly with gold paint

60. Bachelor of Laws

61. Red fluorescent dye

62. Engineering group

63. Female sibling

64. Adjacent

CLUES DOWN

1. What a thespian does

2. Footwear

3. Adjust spacing between

4. Witnesses

5. Who shows excessive fondness

6. Distinct form of a plant

7. National capital

8. Hunting expedition

9. Related to medulla oblongata

10. European country

11. Cola

13. Excluded from use or mention

17. Speak

24. Bloodshot

25. Make better

26. Keyboard key

27. Type of degree

28. Paddle
29. Peacock network

35. Not young

36. Baseball stat

37. One’s grandmother

38. Breakfast food

40. Bathroom features

41. Disease-causing bacterium

42. NY ballplayer

43. Got up

44. Prophet

45. Part of the mouth

47. Unnatural

48. Acronym for brain science study

49. Three are famous

52. Languages spoken in Patagonia

53. Freedom from difficulty

54. Widely used OS

55. Many people pay it

PUZZLE SOLUTION

1	X	E	N		S	I	S		E	E	E	I			
	N	I	S	O	E		B	T	T		L	T	I	G	
	E	N	V	H	L	E		I	T	V		V	O	H	V
	H	O	E	O	V	S		B	I	N		T	V	E	W
				H	O	L	V	O	I	D	V	H	E		
	G	N	I	D	O	R	E		V	H	E	D	O		
	G	V	B	T	I	V	W		B	O	L				
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\$385,000, 5 Chestnut Ave, Girouard, Jenelle, to Santana, Jennifer I, and Krumsiek, Thomas.

\$385,000, 68 Burnett St #1, Dowd, John F, to Albino, Rafael, and Albino, Stephanie.

\$360,000, 3 Bylund Dr, Schiltz, Harvey M, and Laboda, Lane, to Macgillivray, Ian.

\$325,000, 169 Auburn St, Dumas, Philip E, to Willard, Jason M.

NEWS BRIEFS

Brianna Leon named to UVM Dean's List

BURLINGTON, Vt. — Brianna Leon, Psychological Science major, has been named to the dean's list for the fall 2021 semester at the University of Vermont. Leon, from Auburn, is in the College of Arts and Sciences.

To be named to the dean's list, students must have a grade-point average of 3.0 or better and rank in the top 20 percent of their class in their respective college or school.

About UVM

Since 1791, the University of Vermont has worked to move humankind forward. Committed to both research and teaching, UVM professors -- world-class researchers, scholars, and artists -- bring their discoveries into the classroom and their students into the field. Located in Burlington, Vermont, one of the nation's most vibrant small cities and top college towns, UVM is a Public Ivy and top 100 national research university educating 10,700 undergraduate students, 1,627 graduate students, 776 certificate and non-degree students, and 478 M.D. students in the Larner College of Medicine.

Rachel Lubin named to President's List at Plymouth State University

PLYMOUTH, New Hampshire — Rachel Lubin of Auburn has been named to the Plymouth State University President's List for the Fall 2021 semester. To be named to the President's List, a student must achieve a grade point average of 3.7 or better for the Fall 2021 semester and must have attempted at least 12 credit hours during the semester. Lubin is a Criminal Justice major at Plymouth State.

About Plymouth State University
Established in 1871, Plymouth State University serves the state of New Hampshire and the world beyond by transforming our students through advanced practices where engaged learning produces well-educated undergraduates and by providing graduate education that deepens and advances knowledge and enhances professional development. With distinction, we connect with community and business partners for economic development, technological advances, healthier living, and cultural enrichment with a special commitment of service to the

North Country and Lakes Region of New Hampshire.

Lasell University students named to Fall 2021 Dean's List

NEWTON — Students at Lasell University were recognized for their academic performance in the fall 2021 semester, including:

Sara Le of Auburn
Rachel McGrillen of Auburn
Renee Orday of Auburn
Kaitlyn Johnson of Auburn
Sophia Mazzone of Auburn
Students who receive this honor have completed at least 12 credits as a full-time student and have achieved a semester GPA of 3.5 or higher.

For more information contact: Samantha Mocle, assistant director of communications at smocle@lasell.edu or at 617-243-2386.

UConn announces Fall Dean's List

STORRS, Conn. — The University of

Connecticut congratulates the following students on being named to its Fall 2021 Dean's List.

Auburn
Grace Foulkrod, Lexis Johnson

Blackstone
Aaron Bolduc

Douglas
Mary Foley, Matthew Lathe

Dudley
Grace Gavin

Grafton
Olivia Rice, Lindsey Sawtelle

Sturbridge
Cameron Dungey

Sutton
Julianna Cushner, Annika Haerle

Upton
Ryan Conrad, Jonathan Romine, Tessa Stewart

Uxbridge
Kieler Langemo

QCC

continued from page A1

Jackson, along with several musical selections from local church choral groups. Dr. Jackson is an associate professor in the department of Africana Studies at Wellesley College and author of the award-winning book, "Force & Freedom: Black Abolitionists and the Politics of Violence," listed by the Washington Post as one of 13 books to read on African American History.

As has been the tradition, the Committee will also be recognizing the winners of an area Essay and Art contest held at area schools, in addition to this year's MLK Scholarship winners. Scholarships are funded through the Committee's yearly golf tournament, with one funded through Quinsigamond Community College.

In addition, the annual Eleanor Hawley Community Service Award will be awarded to former YWCA Executive Director, Ms. Linda Cavaoli. This distinguished award is not only in recognition of her commitment and leadership to the MLK Jr. Breakfast for many years, but

also to for her tireless efforts to ensure the improvement in life opportunities to people throughout the City of Worcester and beyond, as well as her never-ending efforts in the arena of civil rights, women's rights and a host of other issues.

As part of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Breakfast, United Way of Central Massachusetts, the Worcester Area Mission Society (WAMS), and United Congregational Church are collecting new books for second and third grade students in Worcester Public Schools. With sponsorship from Unum Group, the books will be added to literacy kits and distributed through school principals. Age-appropriate books are needed on Dr. King, other civil rights leaders, or justice and equity topics. A list of suggested books can be found on the WAMS website, <https://wamsworks.org/dr-martin-luther-king-jr-community-breakfast-book-drive-list-of-books/>. Books can be dropped off at the Worcester Area Mission Society, 6 Institute Rd., Worcester, Monday-Thursday, 9:00 a.m. – noon, from now through January 19, or tax deductible cash donations can

be made to WAMS at <https://wamsworks.org/>. WAMS staff will use all money donated to this drive to buy needed books. Anyone with questions should call Karen Ludington at 508-755-2329, ext. 4.

Event sponsors include Quinsigamond Community College, National Grid, UMass Chan Medical School, UMass Memorial Health and Hanover Insurance Group.

"On behalf of the Breakfast Committee I want to thank everyone who has participated in the Breakfast over the past 37 years, and those who have made additional donations to the scholarships awarded all these years," said Nellie Toney, who has been on the Committee for the lifetime of the Breakfast and has served as Co-chair and Chair during those years. "It is our hope to be back in-person in 2023."

To learn more about the event or to make a donation to the Scholarship Fund, visit www.QCC.edu/mlkbreakfast.

For more information on QCC, contact Karen Hutner, Interim Director of Institutional Communications, at 508-854-2842 or khutner@qcc.mass.edu.

CLOSURES

continued from page A1

said that number isn't nearly enough for continued testing.

As of last week, the nation was averaging over 500,000 new COVID-19 cases per day. Reports have widely suggested the Omicron variant may be less severe than previous variants, but daily COVID deaths in the U.S. have frequently exceeded 2,000 since the start of January.

On multiple days last week, new daily cases surpassed 700,000 nationwide. In Massachusetts, the surge has

caused thousands of teachers and other school staff members to be out of work due to positive tests.

MTA officials said they agree with state leaders that in-person education is vital, but they said more needs to be done to ensure it happens safely for students, staff, and visitors.

"The MTA is committed to making sure that in-person learning continues as long as it is safe—and that students, school staff, families, and communities are protected as the new year begins to unfold," Najimy said.



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BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

Baby, it’s cold outside

Newsflash: it's cold. Our little neck of the woods here has finally hit frigid sub-zero temperatures. Folks may be running low on fuel, or even running empty, causing frozen pipes to burst. Fuel companies are scheduled two weeks out in some cases, and several customers are feeling stressed due to the financial burden this cold weather brings. Our only advice is to hold on tight and think about how toasty things will be when temperatures soar into the teens and low 20s again.

The winter solstice on Dec. 21 has passed, and the days are getting longer... and, we hope, sunnier. One perk to this post-New Year's time is that, well, the holidays are over. The hustle and bustle starts in late November and doesn't calm down until the week following New Year's. Is it overrated? Maybe. We hope you are all able to relax in the days ahead.

When weather hits sub-zero, it's hard to remember why we live here. We live in New England because winter, for the most part, is fun and manageable. We love our snow sports, the smell of wood stoves cranking and the beauty of the snow-capped mountains.

Some of you may think of our ancestors who had to cut chords of wood by hand all year long just to prepare for the harsh New England winters. Houses way back when had no insulation or the walls were stuffed with straw and mud. Common houses were much smaller, therefore easier to keep heated with one wood stove. The fireplace was the focal point of a colonial home and was the place where family members would talk and work on small projects during the evening. The average size of a house according to today's standards is about 2,600 square feet. A home of that size hundreds of years ago was often occupied by the wealthy, who were able to afford to put a wood stove in each room of the house. Children often slept in lofts where the heat would rise and often shared a bed with siblings, using body heat to keep warm.

In days of old, people used thick curtains and down comforters to keep the heat in. Before bedtime, many would use a bed warmer, which was a brass pan with a long handle that was filled with hot rocks. Foot warmers were popular as well. These fancy contraptions were made of a wood framed tin box also with heated rocks that would be placed by the feet under the comforter. This heating method was used for trips in the horse and buggy as well. Church goers would bring their own boxes of heat and blankets to keep warm during a Sunday service.

Important to note is the fact that over the years humans have increasingly adapted to warmer weather as a result of modern technology. Our ancestors were able to withstand much colder temperatures and remain more comfortable in colder temperatures than we do today. All of that aside, we are pretty lucky to have the conveniences we do during these cold blasts.

Since winter is not nearly over, here are a few tips with regard to winter survival. Avoid frost bite and frost nip at all costs. When the water molecules in your skin cells freeze, they die. Once this happens, they can cause damage to your muscular and nervous systems. Exposed skin can develop frostbite within 30 minutes with winds of 10 mph and a temperature of -5 degrees. If you are outside and find your hands freezing, the warmest place for them to go is under your armpits, the warmest part of your body.

Another culprit is hypothermia. When your body hits 95 degrees you're entering the danger zone. When your organs start to drop in temperature they begin to shut down. If you notice yourself shivering or lacking coordination, it's time to get warm fast. Other more severe symptoms include low energy, difficulty speaking, a weak pulse and the cessation of the shivers. It's important to stay well nourished during any time spent outside, as your body needs that energy to stay warm. Always have a Snickers bar or something similar handy just in case. Staying hydrated is a must as you need water to keep your nervous system running properly. One rule of thumb is to never eat snow while trying to survive in frigid temperatures. Your body will be forced to warm it from the inside which wastes energy and can cause hypoglycemia. Try to keep your heart rate up as cold temperatures cause your heart rate to decrease. A higher heart rate will generate heat within your body however be sure not to do so much that you start to sweat, cold and sweat are never a good combination.

We hope none of you ever find yourselves in a situation where you need to implement any of the information above, however knowledge is power. Stay warm, summertime is just about six months away, where we will of course crank the air conditioning and complain about the heat and humidity.

OPINION/COMMENTARY



Latest antique news

I hope everyone had a happy holiday season and a great start to the new year. It's been several weeks since my last antique news update and there is much to report on.

There was big news out of England at the end of 2021, when research found that a United Kingdom-based antiques dealer's 2019 auction purchase was actually a very valuable historic relic. Dealer Paul Fitzsimmons spotted a gilded oak bird at an English auction. Although it was covered in soot, he "instantly realized that it was a valuable object," according to Smithsonian Magazine. Although he didn't then know that the bird was the badge of Anne Boleyn, he "knew that it had some sort of royal connection because it had the crown and scepter, and it was a royal bird." Anne Boleyn was Henry VIII's second wife, whom he beheaded in 1536. Boleyn had begun to use the falcon and roses badge around the time she married Henry VIII. It's believed that the falcon and roses were part of the palace's decorative scheme at the time. After her death, Henry VIII tried to remove all traces of Boleyn, including the falcon and rose badges. It's believed that the wooden falcon was in Boleyn's private quarters and had been stashed away by one of her supporters. Fitzsimmons paid \$101 for it at that 2019 auction. It's estimated to be worth \$270,000. He plans to offer it on long-term loan to Hampton Court Palace.

Elsewhere, a Massachusetts estate sale find is also making news in England. "The Art Newspaper" reported that an Albrecht Dürer sketch was purchased from a Concord, MA estate in 2016. They write that "The Virgin and Child with a



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

Flower on a Grassy Bank" was in the collection of architect Jean-Paul Carlhian. A man who wishes to remain anonymous purchased the sketch for \$30 from Carlhian's daughters at an estate sale of his belongings. The buyer and seller didn't believe that it was an original work, and the buyer stored it in his home. Clifford Schorer of Agnews Gallery in London heard of the sketch when visiting Boston in 2019 and arranged to see it. Schorer told "The Art Newspaper" that when he first saw the piece he thought, "it was either the greatest forgery I have ever seen—or a masterpiece." Experts have examined the piece more carefully and found that there are two attributes that seem to prove it is in fact authentic. His signature (initials) and the ink used match those that appear in more than 200 of his other sketches. It is believed that the sketch may be worth \$50 million. Now that's a stroke of good luck.

Our fifth online auction session of model railroad, die-cast cars, and models will begin next week. We are still accepting consignments for our next online multi-estate auction. It will feature coin collections from multiple estates, gold estate jewelry, a large sports card collection and a wide range of other items. Contact us by email or phone if you have items you'd like to include. Please see our Web site <https://centralmassauctions.com> to join our email list and keep up to date on auctions and other events.

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The kindness of strangers

I spent the New Year celebrating with my girlfriend in a beautiful, small, old town in northwestern Illinois named Galena. We had a wonderful time.

Our dinner reservations were at the very historic Desoto Hotel, and to our surprise, nobody was there! People celebrated in the hotel outside of the restaurant, but the restaurant itself was empty. I asked the waitress, "where is everybody?", she responded, "A big winter storm is coming!"

After dinner, we walked down Main Street and commented on how calm the weather was. There wasn't a storm.

New Year's Day was sunny and cold. The weather was nice, so we decided to stay longer and visit some shops we hadn't seen. By mid-afternoon, the clouds rolled in, accompanied by heavy snowfall.

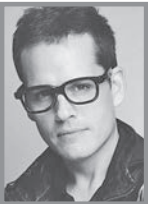
One of the locals cautioned us from driving home; we thanked her and explained how we had to get back home and go through the blizzard.

I felt confident; I'd driven through many snowstorms all over the nation. I figured we could make it home in seven hours, moving slow.

From the start, many times, I almost went off the road. Carefully, I pressed forward; every mile seemed to be more dangerous. I said to myself, "they will put salt on the roads; there will be snowplows..." But I saw no sign of a snowplow.

Suddenly I felt the car being pulled to the right. I turned to the left to steer the vehicle back on course, but I drove into a ditch four to six feet deep. The snow piled so high in the ditch, it appeared even with the road, and looked as if there was no ditch at all. Within a couple of seconds, my car was deep in a pile of snow.

My girlfriend was understandably upset. "It's no big deal!" I reassured her as I called AAA roadside assistance. To our surprise, the weather was so bad they



POSITIVELY SPEAKING
TOBY MOORE

shut down service for this part of the country; nobody was coming to save us.

The roads were empty. We were in the middle of nowhere with nothing but the heavy snow on a dark winter's night.

It's been such a mild winter this year; I didn't bring the proper clothes with me. I didn't have a pair of gloves, a winter jacket, a stocking cap let alone a shovel. It was about 17 degrees, and there wasn't much I could do. I tried to calm my panicked girlfriend.

About 30 minutes later, we noticed a light in the distance. The light became brighter and brighter, and it turned out to be a big white pickup truck. The driver slowly pulled up and shouted, "Do you need help?" My girlfriend noticed I was playing it cool, so before I could answer, she was yelling, "Yes! Help us, please!"

After about 15 minutes of shoveling and clearing snow out from under my car, he found where he could hook a chain and try to pull us out. Within 30 seconds, my car was pulled right out of the snow and back on the road.

My girlfriend jumped out of the car, and we both thanked him profusely. I didn't have any cash on me; all I had was a bottle of wine leftover from the New Year celebration. I insisted he take it; we also offered to send him cash through an online app, but he refused. He helped us simply because we needed help.

As we drove home, my girlfriend cried tears of joy. We were blown away by his kind nature and how willing he was to help. We talked about it the whole way home.

Last week, I wrote about how one of my new year resolutions was to help people more. This man who helped us left a significant impact on me. People need help sometimes. It meant so much to us that he took the time to help while his family waited patiently in the car. I want to say thank you again, kind stranger.

Snow Facts and Trivia



TAKE THE HINT
KAREN TRAINOR

The Old Farmer's Almanac predicts frigid temperatures and overall average snow for the region this winter. However, the tried-and-true guide warns of more storms and snowfalls this month, and perhaps a big post Valentine's Day storm in February.

But this should come as no surprise to hardy New Englanders who have had plenty of practice battling Old Man Winter through the years. Hot on the heels of last week's snowstorm, this column will feature a roundup of informative and interesting snow facts and trivia:

Timeless "Snowisms"

Snow has always been a common topic of conversation for New Englanders, and in 1896 Hadley, MA native Clifton Johnson of nearby Hadley, MA, put together a volume of collected proverbs titled, "What They Say in New England - A Book of Signs, Sayings and Superstitions." Read on for his entertaining musings on snow:

*If the breast-bones of the Thanksgiving chickens are light in color, there will be a good deal of snow in the winter following. If the color is dark, there will be little snow.

*If the snow on the roof melts off, the next storm will be rain. If it blows off, you can calculate on snow.

*The day of the month on which the first snowstorm comes gives the number of storms you can expect in the following winter.

*If the ice on the trees melts and runs off, the next storm will be rain. If it is cracked off by the wind, the storm that comes next will be snow.

*Snow that comes in the old of the moon is apt to last. Snow that comes in the new of the moon is apt to melt quickly.

*When it begins to snow, notice the size of the flakes. If they are very fine, the storm will be a long one; if large, the storm will soon be over.

**

Snow or No?

Old New Englanders often used nature to predict whether or not a winter will be particularly snowy. Here are some examples that are signs snow will be abundant:

* Squirrels begin gathering food in September

*Black bugs crawl about in the fall.

*Hogs gather sticks, straw, to make a bed.

*Birds eat up all the berries early

*Birds huddle on the ground

*Muskrat houses are built big.

*Beaver lodges have more logs and the north side of a beaver dam is more covered with sticks.

*Squirrels' tails grow bushier

*Fur or hair on animals such as horses, sheep, mules, cows, and dogs is thicker than usual

*Squirrels build nest low in trees.

*An ant builds its hill high

*Hornets and yellow jacket nests heavier

*More than usual amount of caterpillars

*Caterpillars have heavy coats

*You see a caterpillar crawling before the first frost

*Crows gather together

**

Know Your Snow: Are we having a storm? Maybe a squall? Perhaps a flurry? Here's help on ID-ing the white stuff:

Snowstorm: When large amounts of snow falls.

Flurry: Snow that falls for short durations and with varying intensity; flurries usually produce little accumulation.

Squall: A brief, but intense snowfall that greatly reduces visibility and which is often accompanied by strong winds.

Snowburst: Very intense shower of snow, often of short duration, that greatly restricts visibility and produces periods of rapid snow accumulation.

Blowing Snow: Airborne snow particles raised by the wind to moderate or great heights above the ground; the horizontal visibility at eye level is generally very poor.

Drifting Snow: Snow on the ground that is blown by the wind to a height of less than 1.5 to 2 meters (5 to 6.5 feet) above the surface.

Resources

*The Weather Channel

*National Snow & Data Center

**

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THE GREAT
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Old Man Winter arrived this past week, and made a lot of anglers very happy with the first safe ice of the season. Extreme caution needs to be practiced on the first ice of the season, as not all areas on a pond or lake are safe, or have the same thickness as others. It is best to check first ice with a chisel cutting a small hole in the ice as you navigate the pond or lake you are fishing to ensure it is safe .

Jig fishing is the most productive way to catch fish especially yellow perch. Cutting a few holes with an ice auger is a

lot easier way to fish than chopping holes with an ice chisel.

Back in my younger days, very few anglers had a power auger to cut holes, and we had to chop holes in the ice before fishing. There were more anglers jigging through the ice than people using ice fishing tilts. There were many Swedish people from Worcester that only used homemade jig sticks and lures to catch fish.

The homemade fishing rods were called dead sticks, as no reel was attached to the stick. When a large fish was encountered, they would ask their fellow fishing buddy to cut the hole larger in order to land the fish. The fish was held with a small gaff under the ice until the hole was cut larger,

enabling the fish to be brought threw the hole.

Because the fishermen would sometimes cut more than 100 holes a day, they would cut the holes very small, just large enough to bring a perch through. The Swedish fishermen also made their own fishing lures which were often made out of brass and lead. They were extremely well made and lasted for years if they were not lost to a big fish. The Meadow Pond in Whitinsville was a favorite pond to fish for perch, and anglers could catch as many as eight or ten perch from one hole. When the action stopped another hole was cut in an effort to stay with the school of perch. Cutting holes every few minutes kept the

fishing hot. The Meadow pond is still a great pond to ice fish today providing an abundance of four- and five-pound bass annually, but fishermen need to keep the ice free of junk. If you bring it in, be sure to bring it out. More on ice fishing next week!

This past week, the Uxbridge Rod & Gun Club lost a long-time member & friend Wilhelm Huber. “Willie,” as most of us knew him by, was kitchen chairman for many years, but also worked daily to keep the club clean. The late Joan St. Andre, former board of health chairman, stated that the kitchen was the cleanest and most up to date that she had inspected annually, during Willie’s tenure. The coffee pot

was always full with fresh hot coffee for members that attended the daily conversations at the club, as Willie often was the first to open the club at 4 a.m.! He loved the club and the members, and often made soup or some other form of food for members to eat. Because of failing health, his annual chicken soup was not available this year for deer hunter to enjoy after daily hunts . He will be sadly missed by all that knew him. Our deepest sympathy goes out to his family and friends. Funeral services will be private!

Take A Kid Fishing & Keep Them Rods Bending!

Make gardening your New Year’s resolution



GARDEN
MOMENTS

MELINDA
MYERS

The New Year is filled with resolutions that usually involve dieting and exercise. Gardening is a great way to help accomplish these two resolutions, while also improving your mood, reducing blood pressure, maintaining flexibility, burning calories and much more.

Resolve to grow your own vegetables and eat healthier in the New Year. Get your family and friends involved in planning ways to include gardening into your lives.

Explore ways to incorporate vegetables and herbs into your landscape. Vegetable gardens are not the only option. Tucking vegetables into flowerbeds, mixed borders and container gardens can expand your planting space. Look for new compact and colorful vegetable varieties that fit nicely into small spaces, planters, and ornamental gardens.

Take an inventory of any leftover seeds and make a list of those seeds and any plants you need to purchase. The earlier you order, the more likely you are to obtain the items on your list.

Don’t wait to start your year of healthful gardening and eating habits. Start by growing microgreens in January. They are quick, easy and require no special equipment. Plus, recent research found that many contain as much as 25 times

more nutrients than the leaves of the full-grown plant.

Organize a seed swap with family and friends in winter. It is a great way to extend your plant budget and experiment with new seeds. Turn old seeds that are no longer viable into artwork with sheets of paper or small pieces of wood, glue, and some creativity.

Start vegetable, herb, and flower seeds indoors in late winter through mid spring. Check the seed packet for timing and planting directions. Create a seed starting chart or mark planting dates on your calendar to ensure seeds get planted at the recommended time.

Monitor the weather and follow the recommended planting dates for sowing seeds directly in the garden and moving seedlings outdoors. Use homemade or DIY cloches, floating row covers and cold frames to jump start the season. These capture warmth near the plants for an earlier start in the garden. They can also be used to extend the end of the growing season.

Start removing weeds as soon they appear throughout the season. These unwanted plants compete with desirable plants for water and nutrients, and many are host to disease and insect pests. Pulling weeds is also a great way to reduce stress while improving the health and beauty of your garden beds.

Harvest flowers to enjoy in summer bouquets and arrangements. Pick a few extras to share with friends. Research has found immediate and long-lasting benefits generated from the gift of fresh flowers.

Pick vegetables regularly when they are at their peak for maximum productivity, flavor, and nutritional value. Share extra produce with family,



Photo Melinda Myers

Compact vegetable varieties can be tucked into ornamental container gardens if space is an issue.

friends, and the food insecure – many of which are children – in your community. Contact your local food bank, food pantry or Feeding America to donate garden fresh produce.

Cap off your efforts with a garden party. Invite fellow gardeners to bring a dish to share that incorporates homegrown vegetables. Share recipes, garden success stories, and begin planning for the season ahead.

For the recommended timing to do these and other gardening projects, check

my monthly gardening checklists.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including The Midwest Gardener’s Handbook and 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. Her Web site is www.melindamyers.com.

7 things to know before replacing windows

The decision to replace windows often comes down to aesthetics and necessity. Drafty windows can reduce energy efficiency in a home, requiring HVAC systems to work harder to keep interiors comfortable. The harder the HVAC must work, the more homeowners will pay in energy costs.

Old windows also may be points of entry for water and insects. Despite the importance of windows, Money magazine advises that new windows make up only a fraction of the home’s total exterior “envelope,” resulting in only about 5 to 15 percent of total energy savings.

But there are still plenty of reasons to invest in new windows.

1. Vinyl or aluminum may be best. Lumber is farmed rather quickly today and solid wood products may not stand up to elements as well as wood used a half-century ago. To avoid rot, vinyl windows often are an affordable and durable choice.

Homeowners also have the option of wood windows with aluminum cladding, which are long-lasting.

2. Moisture problems indicate windows need to be replaced. Condensation that shows up as fogging between double-pane windows or on the inside of windows indicates that the windows are starting to fail. If installing a vapor barrier in the basement or crawl space, ventilating properly when showering or cooking, or using a dehumidifier indoors does not remedy the situation, it might be time to replace windows.

3. Windows add curb appeal. Beyond functionality, replacement windows immediately update the look of the home and can improve curb appeal since they are one of the most prominent features on the exterior of a home. If a house needs an update, replacing windows and can be a quick and affordable update.

4. Consider other energy-ef-

ficient upgrades. Sometimes older windows can be salvaged, especially if they are not damaged and only moderately drafty. Replacing panes, sash cords, weather stripping, and even glazing may be less expensive than replacing a window. Plus, older homes with attractive windows complement one another. To keep energy bills down, think about adding insulation to the attic and basement — which is a good idea even if you are replacing windows.

5. The wrong windows can adversely affect home value. The National Association of Realtors says homeowners get about 73 percent of their replacement window investment back when they resell a home. But choosing the wrong windows might lower the value of the home. It’s important to match the look of the original windows, including window material and the divided light pattern (the number of panes in each window) with the original



windows.

6. Think about soundproofing, too. When upgrading windows, also think about how certain windows can cancel out noises and make homes more soundproof. Some windows can help reduce outdoor distractions like leaf blowers or lawn mowers.

7. Proper installation is key

to longevity. Replacement windows are only as good as their installation in many cases. Poor installation and orders of standard rather than custom sized windows could result in poor fitting and seals. Homeowners should carefully vet and review window replacement contractors to find the best professionals for the job.

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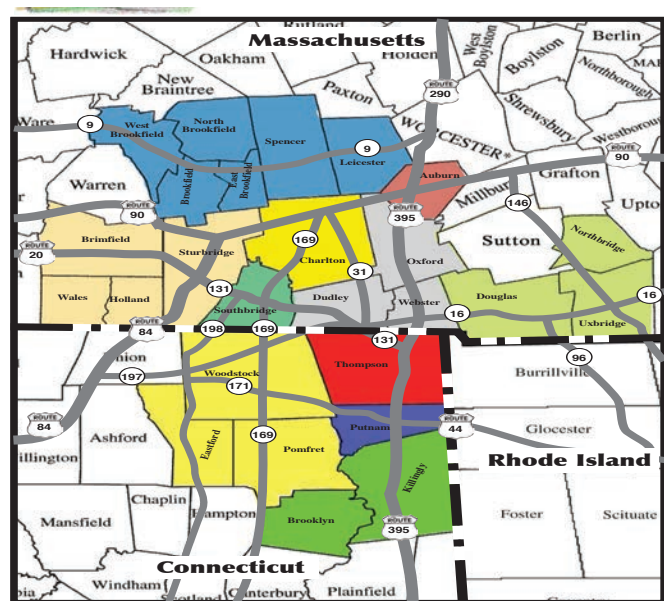
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SPORTS

Entire roster contributes for Warriors, who upend Auburn

BY NICK ETHIER
SPORTS EDITOR

STURBRIDGE — Just by looking at the game day rosters, one could tell that the Tantasqua Regional girls' varsity basketball team had more depth than Auburn High when the two met on Monday, Jan. 3. The Warriors were equipped with 15

players, while the Rockets dressed 10. And that depth showed from the opening tip until the final buzzer, as 12 Tantasqua players scored at least one basket, whereas Auburn was limited to five players scoring. The Warriors continued to wear the Rockets down and won a 57-29 decision.

"That's one of our weapons, is that we have 10 kids that can play," said Tantasqua head coach Tony Giuggio. "So, we just keep running numbers at people. That's why we press and run." The Warriors' full-court press was particularly effective in the second quarter. After winning the first frame by a 16-12 count, Tantasqua pulled away by taking the second quarter 18-4 to lead by 18 points

(34-16) at the half. A certain sequence saw Auburn inbound the ball, the Warriors create a turnover on the press, and Gabby Scanlon can a 3-pointer. Another press and turnover immediately followed, and Dayna Lorenz finished off a floater. In fact, Tantasqua went on a 13-0 run until 2:38 remained in the quarter when Hanorah Murphy of the Rockets made a free throw. "In the second quarter we switched our press. We had a little bit more energy, we turned them over and we got easier baskets," Giuggio explained. Auburn head coach Nicole Pingitore was pleased with her team's first quarter performance before things went downhill.

"I was happy with how we played in the first quarter. I told them to be excited for themselves," she said. "I feel like we were handling [the Tantasqua press] in the first quarter and then all of a sudden I'm not really sure what changed. In the second quarter we got more nervous with the ball in our hands."

"What was hardest to take was they were getting layups," Pingitore continued. "They were getting easy buckets underneath. And that's something defensively we've got to work on."

Giuggio liked how his team's offensive possessions usually saw all five players on the court touching the ball until a teammate became open.

"We have eight or nine kids that can score, so we don't want one person handling the ball. We want to move the ball and get open shots," he said.

The Warriors then limited Auburn to 13 points in the second half. They also limited the scoring of Murphy, who finished with a game-high 19 but saw 10 of those points drop in the opening eight minutes. "Our whole thing was don't let her



Auburn's Lizmarie Joseph handles the ball in an attempt to beat Tantasqua's press.



Hanorah Murphy of Auburn fights through Tantasqua's defense and hoists up a shot.

score. If she gives up the ball, don't let her get it back," said Giuggio, whose team improved to 4-0.

With Murphy scoring 66 percent of the Rockets' points, Pingitore is hoping for more optimism from the remaining players when clutching the basketball.

"It comes from a place of confidence. [Murphy's] such an unselfish player even though she's our leading scorer. Her teammates constantly look to her to score. And I want them to have confidence that [Murphy] believes in them that they can score if she passes the ball to them," said Pingitore.

Auburn, now 2-3, saw Isabella Doyle score 4 points and add a game-high 12 rebounds.

Sophie Law (11), Lorenz (9) and Nicole Vejack (7) were Tantasqua's leading point producers.



Auburn's Brianna Cote releases a free throw in second quarter action.

TRAINOR
continued from page A6

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

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

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