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Friday, February 26, 2021

Wintry weather creates headaches on area roads

REGION - A wintry week in mid-February delivered plenty of headaches on the roads, bookended by an ice storm and a snow event.

Last week began with an ice storm on Feb. 15, causing several accidents and sporadic power outages. Local highway departments were kept busy throughout the night, going through multiple rounds of salting on roadways.

'The Highway Department has salted every road in town twice, and still there is significant ice buildup," informed the Leicester Police Department at the height of the storm. "Untreated surfaces such as walkways and driveways are more like skating rinks."

In Spencer, first responders provided assistance after a vehicle crashed into a utility pole on Route 31. No serious injuries were reported.

Meanwhile, a driver in Brimfield escaped serious injuries after striking a tree.

The week wrapped up with a snowstorm on Feb. 18-19, dumping several inches across the area.

(Left) A car struck a tree in Brimfield during a wintry mid-February week. No injuries were reported.

Random acts of kindness

Hearts of Bay Path PN students on display

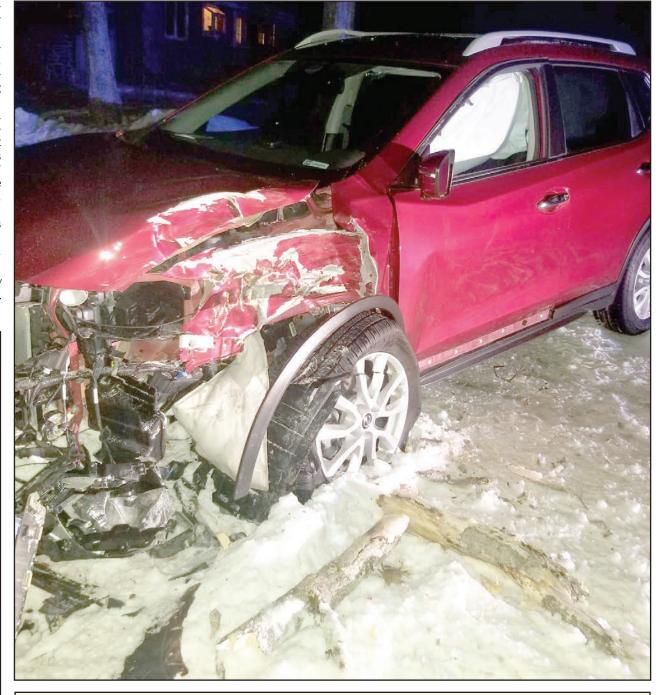
CHARLTON — According to research, 'spreading kindness not only helps others feel better about themselves -- it can also boost the giver's health and happiness." Feb. 17, the National Random Act of Kindness Day was celebrated by the Practical Nursing Class of 2021 at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy by displaying their "RAKtivism" or being a "Random Acts of Kindness Activist."

Gretheline Bolandrina, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN Academy Director, is grateful for the PN Class of 2021 and their kind gestures. She strongly believes in kindness' many health benefits such as lower blood pressure, pain reduction, happiness, and the ultimate "help-

"Our student nurses are making the world a better place," she said. "Any act of kindness, no matter how small changes the world, and any kindness given to others is also a gift to

"A random act of kindness I've done a couple of times when I have extra money: at the Dunkin' Donuts drive-thru, I paid for the orders behind me! Hopefully made someone's day better!" — Brianna Pincince-Mcleish, SPN of Brookfield

Turn To KINDNESS, page A11



Mass vaccination center opens at Worcester State

BY KEVIN FLANDERS STAFF WRITER

REGION - With last week's opening of a mass vaccination center at Worcester State University, area residents now have a resource much closer to home.

Opened on Feb. 16, the site will operate on Tuesdays through Saturdays (9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.). Residents who are currently eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine can make appointments using the statewide reservation portal.

For university and city officials, it means a lot to help local residents reduce drive times. Previously, hundreds of area seniors had to drive out to Springfield and wait in long lines at the Eastfield Mall vaccination site.

"As the city of Worcester's public university, Worcester State takes service to our community to heart," read a statement released by the university. "We are pleased to host a large-scale vaccination center in the Competition Gym in the Wellness Center to help speed the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine to Massachusetts residents.

Officials remind residents that you must schedule a vaccination appointment ahead of time. As of press time, the state was only vac-

Turn To VACCINATION CENTER, page A11

Rotary donates masks to local organizations

SOUTHBRIDGE

Southbridge Rotary recently distributed 5,000 surgical face masks within the local Southbridge community. The masks were donated to Rotary's District 7910 by Ted Rossi of the East Hampton, Conn. Rotary club. Mr. Rossi graciously made 90,000 masks available to all of the District's local clubs for distribution within the local community. Southbridge Rotary jumped on the opportunity to access as many masks as possible to

The community partners that Southbridge Rotary provided masks included: Southbridge Police, Southbridge Fire, the United Way of South Central Massachusetts, Southbridge elementary schools, St. John Paul II Food Pantry, and the YMCA's Sarah and Richard Hardy Child Development Center. In addition to this most recent gift of 5,000 masks



Tobe Gerard presents masks to the YMCA Child Development Center.

and additional 5,000 masks were distributed to Harrington Hospital and Center of Hope earlier in during the sum-

"The Rotary's mission is service above self. It's been wonderful to be able to do something in terms of service in these difficult times of



Left to right: Chief Paul Normandin, Southbridge Fire Department; Past President Jim Waddick; President Tobe Gerard and Chief Shane Woodson, Southbridge Police Department.

coronavirus by supplying these needed face masks to services that have direct contact with the public. Being able to make 10,000 masks available to the within the town of Southbridge

will help stop the spread of Covid-19," said Club President Tobe Gerard.

Rotary Club of Southbridge is community service, non-profit organization that focuses on club,

vocational, community, international and new generations service. For more information visit the Rotary Club of Southbridge Facebook page (@ SouthbridgeRotaryClub).



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Visit one of these Professionals to improve your family's oral health.

Good dental hygiene is *very important* to overall good health.



Simple ways to maintain braces

Many adults recall having braces as children. While braces have evolved dramatically over the last few decades, modern braces benefit teeth in much the same ways as those adults recall from their youth.

Braces are often recommended to help straighten crooked teeth, correct misaligned bites and/ or address overcrowded teeth. Maintenance is essential to ensure braces are effective and provide long-last-ing benefits, and the American Association of Orthodontists offers these tips to protect braces and prevent patients from developing tooth

 Avoid certain foods. Hard, sticky, crunchy, or chewy foods should be avoided. Many candies and snacks fit that day, but be careful. The description, so parents of children with braces and adults with braces of their own should make sure these foods are not readily available around the house. The AAO specifically mentions foods such as caramel, gummies, licorice, jelly beans, and even soft drinks among the foods to avoid when wearing orthodontic braces.

• Be extra cautious around Halloween. The days surrounding Halloween can be an especially difficult time to maintain braces. Candy is everywhere come the end of October, but people with braces must be diligent in avoiding hard-shelled peanut candies and nut-filled candies.

Brush twice per

experts at Oral-B® note that careful cleaning is required when wearing braces. Plaque bacteria can be easily trapped inside and around braces, so it's especially important that people with braces carefully brush each day. Removable parts, including elastics, should be removed prior to brushing. Clean each tooth individually in a circular motion, tilting the brush as necessary to reach small front teeth.

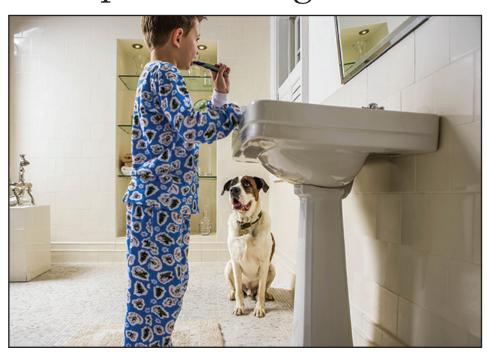
 Continue regular visits to your orthodontist as well as your dentist. Regular visits to the orthodontist are required when wearing braces. These visits are necessary so braces can be adjusted and orthodontists can make sure there are no signs of gum



disease. But Oral-B® notes that it's just as important to continue visiting the dentist while wearing braces. Dentists can perform routine services designed to protect tooth surfaces from decay while wearing braces, making dental visits a vital component of orthodontic maintenance.

Orthodontic braces help people have healthy, beautiful smiles. Maintenance wearing braces is vital to avoid disease and produce a mouthful of pearly

How parents can get kids excited about brushing their teeth



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

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

Dental hygiene is an import- another fun activity, like reading a child his or her favorite story, into daily brushing sessions. The ADA advises adults and children to brush their teeth for two minutes twice a day, so activities need not be too advanced. But a fun activity that allows kids to do something other than brush their teeth can be a great way to help them meet the "two minutes, two times" guideline.

• Reward good behavior. Parents can reward youngsters who brush their teeth without incident by offering praise or allowing them to pick a bedtime book when brushing at night.

· Put kids' favorite characters to work. The ADA notes that many popular children's television shows and books have stories about brushing teeth. Watch these stories with your children, then reference the stories and characters if kids are reluctant to brush their teeth. Parents also can find toothbrushes and/or toothpaste that feature kids' favorite characters to get voungsters more excit-

ed to brush. Become a storyteller. Parents also can make up their own stories, explaining to kids how they can be superheroes who brush away the

bad guys that cause cavities. · Brush alongside your children. Kids love to mimic their parents, so moms and dads can brush alongside their youngsters in the hopes they'll follow suit.

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

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Open Sky to participate in UMass Medical School study

WORCESTER — Open Sky Community Services is pleased to be participating in an art therapy study for serious mental illness that's being sponsored by UMass Medical School's MIND Clinical & Research Program. The study will investigate whether the Zentangle ® Method, which encourages participants to relax and to create their own individual drawings, can improve symptoms and daily functioning. Study participants will include interested individuals served by Open Sky. The study will occur over the course of 14 weeks via video chat.

UMass's Dr. Alair Newman, who is one of those charged with leading the study, is enthusiastic about this venture.

"It is so exciting to see UMass promote mindfulness-based techniques, such as Zentangle, as a part of mental health treatment," explains Newman.

The Zentangle Method is described as an easy-to-learn, relaxing, and fun way to create beautiful images by drawing structured patterns (called tangles). We're particularly excited to be part of the UMass study as Zentangle founders Maria Thomas and Rick Roberts are long-time supporters of Alternatives, which joined with The Bridge of Central Massachusetts in 2018 to form Open Sky and have continued to support the organization.

Last year, Zentangle volunteers offered a series of classes free of charge to youth attending our Safe Homes Drop-in program for LGBTQIA+ youth.

When asked about Zentangle's involvement with the UMass study,

VILLAGER

ALMANAC

- OPEN TO CLOSE —



Maria Thomas said "We are thrilled and honored to be working along with the UMass Mind Clinical and Research Program. Our goal is to bring to the study participants the relaxation and a sense of creativity that we have found to result when drawing with the Zentangle

If you or someone you know lives with serious mental illness (Schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder or major depressive disorder) and are interested in the arts, you may want to learn more about a new study involving a creative art project. The date and time for the sessions are to

Anyone interested in participating in the study should call 508-856-MIND(6463) or email mind@umassmed.edu.

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Worcester Arts Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

About Open Sky Community Services

Open Sky Community Services is dba for Alternatives Unlimited, Inc. and The Bridge of Central MA. Open Sky offers a wide range of services for adults, adolescents, and children with mental health challenges, developmental and intellectual disabilities, substance use disorders, brain injury, homelessness and other challenges throughout Central Massachusetts. Open Sky Community Services has over 1,300 dedicated employees and an annual budget of \$83M with more than 100 programs throughout the region. For more information, please visit www.openskycs.org.

Zoom boating safety courses offered

REGION — Our local United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Tri-State Flotilla, Massachusetts will be instructing four upcoming boating safety classes through the Zoom video conference platform, due to COVID-19 restrictions. Registration is managed through the Milford Community School Use Program, Adult-Boating, at http://mcs. milford.ma.us or (508) 478-1119 at least 6 days prior; keeping in mind that availability is limited and you will receive course materials prior, covered by the registration fee. Participants under the age of 16 must be accompanied online by a registered parent/guardian. For additional USCGAux. information: phil.uscgaux@verizon.net or (508)

About Boating Safely Saturdays: March 27 & April 24 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. (\$45)

ne-day course developed t vide the skills and confidence needed to explore the coast and inland waters by boat. Basic knowledge and skills are needed to have safe and enjoyable boating experiences. This course is perfect for families that have just purchased any type of boat or are planning to in the future, and also for the boater keeping up with changes to boating regulations and laws. Successful completion of the course will also temporally certify (until a proctored exam is completed) any minor, from 12 to 16 years of age, to operate a powerboat, including a Personal Water Craft / Jet Ski for 16 & 17-year-old operators, on all Massachusetts waters; in conjunction with the Mass. Environmental Police. Rhode Island residents born in/or after 1986 can also take the "Challenge Exam" for the RI Boater Education Card to operate motor vessels over 10 horse power, along with anyone, any age, from any state, wanting to operate a PWC on RI waters. It will also cover the requirements to operate a vessel in most other states & many countries where boating safety education is mandatory. Several of the boating

insurance companies offer a discount on premiums for successful completion of this course. The Zoom ABS class is limited to 20 students.

Suddenly in Command Wednesdays: March 17 & April 14 7-10:30 p.m. (\$5)

Imagine you are out on the water when the boat's captain somehow is incapacitated or falls overboard and can't swim back to the boat. Are you prepared to take basic actions to get help, stop or start the engine and take the helm? A little knowledge could save lives and make you feel more comfortable boating when you're not generally at the helm.

Misfortunes can and do happen while on that fishing, diving, adventure, or party charter. Being out on your own boat with that significant other at the helm, or going out on a friends' pontoon boat can also turn to horror if the skipper is suddenly out of commission. This is a boating safety primer for those not generally at the helm but would like to know what to do, to be better prepared.



ACCURACY WATCH

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

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

If you find a mistake, 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.

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REAL ESTATE

BRIMFIELD

\$25,000, 36 7th St, Barrett Catherine T Est, and Barrett, Christopher, to Smith, James R, and Smith, Teresa M.

HOLLAND

\$179,900, 33 Leno Rd, Nardone, Jennifer, to Leaming, James W

STURBRIDGE \$640,000, 227 Podunk Rd, AH& DB

Custom Homes Inc, to Montville, Brian J, and Montville, Emily A. \$372,000, 48 Wells Park Rd, Byrnes, Michael J, to Spencer, Jill A. \$347,500, 18 Hall Rd, Kemp, Douglas E, and Kemp, Dorothy M, to Herr, John F, and Herr, Carylann. \$183,500, 7 Crescent Way #203, Hayden, Laura B, to Nader Realty Series LLC.

** Triday's Child ** **



Tatiana Age 12

Hi! My name is Tatiana and I want to try gymnastics!

Tatiana is a funny and lovable girl of Hispanic descent. She loves playing with dolls, coloring and riding her bike outside. One day she hopes to join a gymnastics team.

Tatiana receives extra supports in school to help address her academic, intellectual and social/emotional needs. Tatiana particularly struggles with relating to her peers and often presents as a much younger child. She is on the Autism Spectrum.

Not yet legally freed for adoption, Tatiana will benefit from joining a loving family of any constellation who can provide her with stability, structure and a dependable routine. She will do best as an only child or with older siblings. An ideal family will be comfortable navigating the mental health and educational systems, and be able

to act as a strong advocate for Tatiana. A family should also be open to helping Tatiana maintain a relationship with her four siblings and birth parents, who she currently visits with monthly.

Who Can Adopt?

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

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

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



DPW Senior Heavy Equipment Operator Department of Public Works

The Town of Sturbridge has an immediate full-time opening for a Senior Heavy Equipment Operator in the Department of Public Works, Highway Division. This position is a union position and the successful candidate will be responsible for operating heavy equipment and driving trucks equipped with dump bodies to transport and dump loose materials, among other responsibilities. A CDL Driver's License and Hydraulic License are required. For a copy of the complete job description and an application please go to

https://www.sturbridge.gov/your-government/pages/job-opportunities.

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Nichols College adds degree programs in entrepreneurship, nonprofit management, criminal psychology

DUDLEY — Nichols College is continuing to examine and expand its academic offerings to broaden career opportunities that better align with student passions in business, social change, and criminal justice.

Last week, the college announced approval of two new business concentrations for its Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree - entrepreneurship and nonprofit management – and a new Bachelor of Arts degree in criminal psychology, each to begin in

"The Nichols mission to provide a

dynamic career-focused education dictates that we remain agile and attuned to opportunities for students to advance their skills and training in new areas of specialization," said Nichols College President Susan West Engelkemeyer, Ph.D. "The world is changing - constantly and quickly – and we are committed to preparing graduates to respond to those changes as they impact business practices, society at large, and their own communities.'

Mauri Pelto, Ph.D., vice president for academic affairs, says that Nichols is refining its curriculum to ensure relevancy, adding "We are identifying targeted careers that intersect student interest and channeling that passion into the job market."

In January, the college announced it was adding three new business con-

announced it is phasing out two of its existing majors - English and history and has transitioned mathematics into business analytics.

The new programs are outlined below. For more information, contact the Nichols College Admissions Office at 800-470-3379.

According to Inc. Magazine, Generation Z – those born between 1995 and 2012 - are positioned to be the most entrepreneurial generation yet. With more young people yearning to be their own bosses, Nichols will help students cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset and learn how to launch a new business or develop their existing one. Through the entrepreneurship concentration, students will partner with alumni entrepreneurs and other businesses to offer consulting services or lead case compe-

The new programs are outlined below. For more information, contact the Nichols College Admissions Office

'Opportunities for entrepreneurs are exploding," says Tim Liptrap, chair of the program. "The combination of expanding e-commerce and the gig economy has launched many new small businesses by fostering lower start-up costs and has expanded market access for products and services and providing effective e-commerce platforms." This

tration will focus on the business of social responsibility, preparing students

collaboration and development, corporate social advocacy, and charitable

professional growth, all while serving as a catalyst to change the world" for the First Generation Program at to push towards success."

Program chair, looks to connect the program with one of Nichols' key learning outcomes – civic and social engagement. "I'm excited to incorporate business solutions to impact big social problems," he says. "Our new concentration allows students to engage with the interconnectedness of global society and one's social and civic responsibility to community, nation and world. It's a

According to Inc. Magazine, Generation Z — those born between 1995 and 2012 — are positioned to be the most entrepreneurial generation yet. With more young people yearning to be their own bosses, Nichols will help students cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset and learn how to launch a new business or develop their existing one. Through the entrepreneurship concentration, students will partner with alumni entrepreneurs and other businesses to offer consulting services or lead case competitions.

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centrations in sport sales and strategy, sport marketing and content creation, and real estate management. "The new programs offer increased avenues for experiential learning opportunities, whether we are helping students launch a business, providing consulting services to a local nonprofit, or promoting research to help solve crimes," Pelto adds. With the addition of the new programs, the college has also

Concentration in Entrepreneurship

includes Etsy Inc., which

Nonprofit Concentration

The nonprofit management concenfor rewarding careers in community

"Working at a nonprofit provides so many opportunities for personal and says Taylor Pons, a 2015 graduate of Nichols College who is a staff associate MIT. "Nonprofit work inspires leaders

Len Samborowski, Management focus on the 'we' not the 'me."

Bachelor of Arts in Criminal

"Opportunities for entrepreneurs are

16 19 23 22 28 39 43 49 53 55 56 60 63

38. Astronomy unit

40. Hebrew leader

44. Supreme goddess

45. Gelatinous substance

50. Famed ballplayer Ruth

63. Large quantity of something

32. Certificate of insurance

34. Type of saying

36. Phil ___, former CIA

37. Local area network

40. Philippine Island

41. Not great or bad

44. Gov't lawyers

45. Constructions

47. Unkeyed

48. Rechristen

51. Southeast

55. Regretted

57. Thus

42. Eastern part of NY state

46. Former British gold coin

50. Threaten persistently

54. Removes the leaves

61. Relief organization (abbr.)

62. Exclamation of surprise

35. For cigars

38. Gym class

49. Engage in a contest

53. -__, denotes past

56. Spanish surname

59. Elsa's sister

60. Workplace

64. Engraved

33. Taxi

51. Pledge

54. Revival

58. Gold

39. Series of ridges in anatomy

43. A portent of good or evil

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Ancient Persian city
- 5. Spindles
- 11. Stake
- 12. Retrain
- 16. Close by
- 17. Commercial
- 18. One who publicly announces
- 19. American ballplayer 24. Junior's father
- 25. Go up or climb
- 26. Concern
- 27. When you hope to get there 28. Iacocca and Oswald are two
- 29. Plant of the lily family
- 30. Male college organization
- 31. National capital
- 33. Raccoonlike animal
- 34. Symbols of fertility

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Shoe
- 2. Disquiet
- 3. Posture
- 4. Large nests
- 5. Soviet "Second Symphony" composer
- 6. Joins two pipes of different diameter
- 7. Exist
- 8. Overdose
- 9. Pleat of fabric
- 10. Predict the future
- 13. Burgeoning technology
- 14. Having made a valid will
- 15. Having no fixed course
- 20. __ route
- 21. Lethal dose
- 22. Indian musical pattern of notes 52. Cools your home
- 23. Athlete 27. Geological times
- 29. Atomic #21
- 30. In support of 31. Brew

SOLUTION

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This includes Etsy, Inc., which fosters creative product development and sales by connecting a community of entrepreneurs to millions of buyers.

"This is a fantastic opportunity to develop and prepare an entirely different type of leader," says Taylor Pelletier, a 2014 graduate of Nichols College and owner of Taylored Digital Solutions. "Today, there is a real emphasis on buying from small, local and family-owned businesses, which is both a feel-good thing and is fantastic for the economy.'

Nonprofit Concentration in

Management

In Massachusetts, more than 38,000 nonprofits educate, maintain health, protect the most vulnerable populations, and preserve cultural, historical, and environmental treasures. These services create an economic engine that generates more than 548,000 jobs and employs more than 17 percent of the state's workforce. The nonprofit management concentration will focus on the business of social responsibility, preparing students for rewarding careers in community collaboration and development, corporate social advocacy, and charitable outreach.

"Working a nonprofit provides so many opportunities for personal and professional growth, all while serving as a catalyst to change the world, says Taylor Pons, a 2015 graduate of Nichols College who is a staff associate for the First Generation Program at MIT. "Nonprofit work inspires leaders to push towards success."

Sambrowski, Management Program chair, looks to connect the program with one of Nichols' key learning outcomes — civic and social engagement.

"I'm excited to incorporate business solutions to impact big social problems,' he says. "Our new concentration allows students to engage with the interconnectedness of global society and one's social and civic responsibility to community, nation and world. It's a focus on the 'we, not the 'me."

Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Psychology

Nichols College has seen a significant increase in students pursuing dual degrees and minors combining criminal justice and psychology. The new Bachelor of Arts degree provides a streamlined approach for students to explore the interconnectedness between the two. Drawing on the theories and practical applications of both fields, the program will reveal the psychology that drives criminal behaviors and improve the lives of those affected by crime.

"Students who embark in this degree program will have their knowledge from the reality TV crime shows challenged as they explore the complex field of criminal psychology," says Allison McDowell-Smith, chair of the Criminal Justice Management Program. Focus will be placed on having students sharpen their critical thinking skills specifically in forensic psychology principles related to personal, social, and organizational issues

"Having the opportunity to earn a degree in criminal psychology will not only teach students the ins and outs of the court system and law enforcement agencies but the psychology behind the human brain," says Emily Wood, an investigator with the Suffolk County District Attornev's Office who earned both a Bachelor's degree and Master's degree in counterterrorism at Nichols College. "As an investigator, I am regularly speaking with victims and families of violent crimes. A background in psychology helps me be able to interact and advocate for these families. It also gives me the understanding of the mindset behind the person committing these vio-

The program will amplify coursework in criminal justice and psychology with experiential learning opportunities, such as interactive research and internships, to prepare students for careers ranging from victim witness advocates to crime analysis as well as graduate-level work.

Local students earn distinction at Wichita State University

WICHITA, Kan. — Wichita State University has announced the names of more than 3,500 students who were on the WSU dean's honor roll for fall 2020, including Timothy L. Portwood of Fiskdale.

To be included on the dean's honor roll, a student must be enrolled full time (at least 12 credit hours) and earn at least a 3.5 grade point average on a 4.0

WSU enrolls about 15,500 students and offers more than 50 undergraduate degree programs in more than 150 areas of study in six undergraduate colleges.

The Graduate School offers an extensive program including more than 40 master's degrees that offer study in more than 100 areas; a specialist in education degree; and doctoral degrees in applied mathematics; audiology; chemistry; communication sciences and disorders; human factors and community/ clinical psychology; educational leadership; nursing practice; physical therapy; and aerospace, electrical, industrial and mechanical engineering.

Country Bank announces promotions

REGION - Country Bank, a full-service financial institution serving central and western Massachusetts, announced three executive promotions within the Bank's senior management team.

Dawn Fleury, CPA, has been promoted to First Senior Vice President of Corporate Risk. Fleury joined Country Bank in 2012; before joining the bank, she held a 21-year career with the FDIC as a Commissioned Senior Bank Examiner. In her current role, she oversees the Bank's comprehensive risk management programs, including Compliance, Corporate Risk, Internal Audit, BSA Fraud, Commercial Credit, Commercial Loan Workout, Residential Collections Departments.

Miriam Siegel, CCP, CBP, has been promoted to First Senior Vice President of Human Resources and Chief Diversity Officer. Joining Country Bank in 2018, she brought 26-years of professional experience as the Senior Vice President of Human Resources for United Bank. In her current role, Miriam oversees all aspects of the Bank's human resource initiatives, as well as driving talent management strategies to lead the Bank's Learning and Development team. Siegel proudly serves on the Board of Behavioral Health Network in Springfield and serves on the Wilbraham Personnel Advisory Board.

Tom Wolcott has been promoted to First Senior Vice President of the Commercial Lending and Business Banking Divisions. He joined Country Bank in 2019 after a previous career in the financial services industry that spanned



Courtesy

Dawn Fleury

over three decades; this included Senior Vice President roles at Peoples United Bank, United Bank, Citizens Bank and FleetBank primarily in the Connecticut, Springfield and Worcester markets. His background offers extensive expertise in managing diverse and complex commercial clients as well as assisting small businesses with creative solutions to help them achieve their financials goals.

"Promoting these talented members within our existing leadership team strengthens our foundation for the future," said Paul Scully, President and CEO of Country Bank. "Dawn, Miriam, and Tom have proven to be immensely skilled leaders and have been strategic partners in major decisions we have made at Country Bank. I am excited they will be taking on



Miriam Siegel

additional responsibilities in their expanded roles to help further drive our strategic direction and growth. They each exemplify Country Bank's iSTEP Corporate Values of Integrity, Service, Teamwork, Excellence, and Prosperity."

About Country Bank Country Bank is a full-service or online at countrybank.com.



Courtesy

Tom Wolcott

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

Local students named to Western New England University President's List

SPRINGFIELD — More than 500 students have been named to the Fall 2020 President's List at Western New England University. To qualify for the President's List, students must achieve

a GPA of 3.80 or higher. "Making the President's List is a notable achievement under any circumstances, but particularly so during the unique challenges of our fall semester. It is an honor to salute our students who have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to academic excellence," commented Dr. Robert E.

Johnson, President. "Of the roughly 3,000 colleges and universities tracked by the College Crisis Initiative, Western New England University was among just 27% nationwide that resumed primarily 'in-person' teaching last fall. Our President's List students stayed focused and engaged; they should be very proud of their accomplishments.

Well done, Golden Bears!" The following students have earned their place on Western New England University's distinguished President's

Joshua Bolte, of Brimfield, work-

ing toward a BSE in Electrical Engineering.

Carly Phaneuf, of Brimfield, working toward a BA in English.

Kevin Riel, of Brimfield, working toward a BS in Health Sciences.

Alison Fortier, of Wales, working toward a BSE in Biomedical

Engineering.

Matthew Dumas, of Holland, working toward a BSE in Mechanical Engineering/Mechatronics Concentration.

Joseph Gonzalez, of Holland, working toward a BSE in Electrical

Having just celebrated its Centennial, Western New England University is a private, independent, coeducational institution. Located on an attractive 215-acre suburban campus in Springfield, Massachusetts, dents, including 2,486 full-time undergraduate students. Undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs are offered through Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Engineering, Pharmacy and Health Sciences, and the School of Law.

Renaissance Medical Group working to eliminate barriers to vaccination in Latino community

SOUTHBRIDGE — On Monday, Feb. 22, Renaissance Medical Group (RMG) will begin offering one-on-one vaccine registration assistance to RMG patients and adult day health care members at the RMG Center for Health and Wellness

Southbridge. Latino community and Spanish speakers will work directly with patients and members to explain the benefits of vaccination, identify vaccination appointment availability and complete appointment registrations. As the only Latino owned and operated medical group in Central Massachusetts, RMG is uniquely poised to help a community that has seen one of the highest infection rates, yet lowest vaccinations rates.

Recent data from the Kaiser Family Foundation highlights the largely disproportionate share of eligible Latinos registering and receiving COVID-19 vaccines, with non-Hispanic whites accounting for 81 percent of vaccines administered in Massachusetts, compared to only 5 percent of Hispanics. The Centers for Disease Control attributes this gap to language and technology barriers, as well as accessibility to medical facilities and vaccination sites.

Over the weekend, Massachusetts state legislators including Sen. Elizabeth Warren, Congresswoman Ayanna

Pressley, State Rep. Nika Elugardo joined a roundtable hosted by Sen. Ed Markey to discuss the importance of improving access and distribution of the vaccine to underserved and communities of color.

In response to that dialogue, Jesus Suarez, CEO of RMG, says, "We appreciate Sen. Markey's leadership and the attention that he is bringing to the burden our communities have carried throughout this pandemic. We have seen that burden firsthand and RMG is ready and able to make a significant impact.'

For more information about RMG's vaccination registration program, or to schedule a visit to the

RMG Center for Health and Wellness, please contact RMG Vice President, Beatriz Contes at

bcontes@renaissancemedgroup.com or 774-420-2311, ext. 102.

Renaissance Medical Group is a 360° health care company providing a widerange of wellness programs and services including primary care, behavioral health, pharmacy, adult day health care, dental and in-home services. Our bi-lingual caregivers care for English and Spanish-speaking communities at locations in Lawrence, Springfield, Southbridge and Worcester.

Local students named to Western New England University Dean's List

SPRINGFIELD — Close to 750 students have been named to the Fall 2020 Dean's List at Western New England University. To qualify for the Dean's List, students must achieve a GPA of 3.30 or higher.

"We are so proud of our Dean's List students who demonstrated an unwavering commitment to excellence in their studies despite the unique challenges of our fall semester," commented Dr. Robert E. Johnson, President.

"Of the roughly 3,000 colleges and universities tracked by the College Crisis Initiative, Western New England University was among just 27% nationwide that resumed primarily 'in-person' teaching last fall. Our Dean's List students stayed focused and engaged; they should be very proud of their achievements. Well done, Golden Bears!"

The following students have earned their place on Western New England University's distinguished Dean's List:

Adam Jensen, of Brimfield, working toward a BS in Information Technology.

John Reilly, of Brimfield, working toward a BS in Information Technology.

Payton Barry, of Fiskdale, working toward a BA in Elementary Education/English.

Spencer Cook, of Fiskdale, working toward a BSBA in Accounting. Shauna Rowley, of Fiskdale, working toward a BS in Forensic Biology.

Dylan Willitts, of Fiskdale, working toward a BS in Criminal Justice. Jacob Jolin, of Sturbridge, working toward a BSBA in Pharmaceutical Business.

just celebrated its Having Centennial, Western New England University is a private, independent, coeducational institution. Located on an attractive 215-acre suburban campus in Springfield. Western Massachusetts, England serves 3,690 students, including 2,486 full-time undergraduate students. Undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs are offered through Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Engineering, Pharmacy and Health Sciences, and the School of Law.

Hours: Mon-Thurs 9-6 • Fri 9-5 • Sat 10-3

Students named to Dean's List at RIT

ROCHESTER, N.Y. — The following local residents made the Dean's List at Rochester Institute of Technology for the 2020 Fall Semester. Undergraduate students are eligible for Dean's List if their GPA is greater than or equal to 3.40 for nine credit hours of traditionally graded coursework; they do not have any grades of "Incomplete," NE, D, or F; and they have registered for, and completed, at least 12 credit

Logan Melican of Fiskdale, who is in the chemical engineering pro-

Gino Placella of Fiskdale, who is in the computing security program. Griffin Hurt of Brimfield, who is in the applied mathematics program. Rochester Institute of Technology

is home to leading creators, entrepreneurs, innovators and researchers. Founded in 1829, RIT enrolls about 18,600 students in more than 200 career-oriented and professional programs, making it among the largest private universities in the U.S.

The university is internationally recognized and ranked for academic leadership in business, computing, engineering, imaging science, liberal arts, sustainability, and fine and applied arts. RIT also offers unparalleled support services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The cooperative education program is one of the oldest and largest in the nation. Global partnerships include campuses in China, Croatia, Dubai and Kosovo.









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Local annual auction event goes virtual

SOUTHBRIDGE — Trinity Catholic Academy/Saint John Paul II Annual Auction Dinner & Raffle is going VIRTUAL! In the best interest of all involved, Pastor, Fr. Ken Cardinale, TCA Principal Josie Citta, and the Committee have planned a fun pandemic-friendly alternative for the 2021 event!

A Night of Faith, Trust & Pixie Dust is going virtual!

Our auction will be online and held March 1-13, with all items available for viewing and bidding from the comfort & safety of your homes through online sites of "Bidding Owl" and "PayPal". There are over 100 wonderful donations including gift cards from local businesses: Treehouse Brewery, a lottery tree, a basket of alcohol, art pieces from the TCA students & so much more.

An Online Sneak Peek of available auction items is currently in process daily through Facebook (www.facebook. com/faithtrustdust) and will continue through March 1 when the auction goes LIVE for bidding March 1-13!

Items range in value from \$20 to our Signature Item "Magical Memories"a \$1200 value donate by United Lens/ Transportation/Melissa Cournoyer. There is something for



Auction open house opportunities are scheduled for Feb. 27 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. and March 13 from 3-8 p.m. at La Salle Reception Center, Main Street, Southbridge to view all available auction items in person. Social distancing will be practiced, and masks are required.

Arrangements will be made for a drivethrough pick up in the Notre Dame parking lot on March 20 & 21, times to be ners who donated so that we could make determined.

Trinity Catholic Academy and St. John Paul II say a "Huge Thank You" to all our parents, businesses, and parishio-

this event a reality in these challenging

Please email FaithTrustDust21@

QCC earns 2021-2022 Military Friendly® School designation

Community College has earned the 2021-2022 Military Friendly ® School designation. Institutions earning the Military Friendly® School designation were evaluated using both public data sources and responses from a proprietary survey. More than 1,200 schools participated in the 2021-2022 survey with 747 earning the designation.

"This award is an honor for QCC and all the veterans who attend here. We pride ourselves on our commitment to our vets. We are extremely proud of every service person who walks through our doors," said QCC's Veteran Affairs Director, Paula Ogden.

The 2021-2022 Military Friendly® Schools list will be published in the May issue of G.I. Jobs magazine and can

be found at www.militaryfriendly.com. Methodology, criteria, and weightings were determined by Viqtory with input from the Military Friendly® Advisory Council of independent leaders in the higher education and military recruitment community. Final ratings were determined by combining the institution's survey response set and government/agency public data sources, within a logic based scoring assessment.

"Schools that achieve designation show true commitment and dedication in their efforts. Our standards assist schools by providing a benchmark that promotes positive educational outcomes, resources, and support services that better the educational landscape and provide opportunity for the military community," said National Director of Military Partnerships, Military Friendly®, Kayla Lopez.

For more information on QCC's Veteran Affairs, visit https://www.gcc. edu/veteran-affairs.

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

Students named

to University of

Hartford Dean's List

WEST HARTFORD, Conn. — The University of Hartford is pleased to announce the following students have been named to the Dean's List for Fall

Grace Ahlstrand of Sturbridge Andrew Briere of Holland **Emily Kievra of Holland**

Spread across seven dynamic schools and colleges, the University of Hartford has been guiding the purpose and passion of students for over six decades. On our 350-acre campus alongside Connecticut's capital city, approximately 4,600 undergraduate and 2,000 graduate students representing 49 states and 47 countries come together for a common purpose: to collaborate across different disciplines, diversify perspectives, and broaden worldviews. We're a four-year private university focused on advancing the public good through meaningful connections within our communities. Our unique approach to comprehensive education gives us the critical perspectives that lead to impactful change, regionally and beyond. With degree programs spanning the arts, humanities, business, engineering and technology, education, and health professions, we focus on doing the work that matters. For more information, visit hartford, edu.

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Bravehearts sign nine returners for 2021 Team's core group includes six locals

WORCESTER — Coming off of the team's seventh consecutive Futures League championship appearance in 2020, the Worcester Bravehearts will return to Hanover Insurance Park at Fitton Field this summer with a core group of nine returning players on the roster. Five pitchers and four position players have rejoined the team for the upcoming season, a majority of whom have local ties.

Fan-favorite Nick Martin (Shrewsbury High School / Shrewsbury) will be returning for his third summer with the Worcester Bravehearts. The Shrewsbury native is a current Junior at Westfield State and was a standout on the Shrewsbury Legion Post 397 team for many years. Over the past two summers he has played in 64 games for the Bravehearts at a variety of positions, hitting .271. In 2021 he has a chance to become just the third player in franchise history to appear in 100 career games, a feat that has only been accomplished by West Boylston's Mariano (133) and Dante (114) Ricciardi.

Another former Post 397 player, Carson Hauben (St. John's H.S. / Grafton), will be returning for his second season with Worcester. The Grafton resident was primarily used as a reliever last season, but Bravehearts Manager Alex Dion has high hopes for the right-hander, saying "he has experience in the league and pitched in big spots for us last year, including in the championship. He will probably be one of our top two starters this year." He is teammates with former Bravehearts player Nick Santucci at Rollins College.

Holden's Brendan Case (Wachusett Regional H.S.) will return to the Bravehearts after a year off following arm surgery. The right-handed pitcher was a key bullpen arm for the Bravehearts during their championship season in 2019. He appeared in 13 games that season, only allowing three runs. The graduate student at Salem University in West Virginia was a member of the 2015 Wachusett Regional H.S. team that made a Super 8 appearance.

Alex Amalfi (Ashland H.S. / Ashland) returns to the Bravehearts' pitching staff after his first season with the team in 2020. Amalfi was a two-sport athlete at Ashland High School, also playing hockey. In 2019, he was the ace of the Ashland Legion Post 77 team and threw a complete game against a Shrewsbury Post 397 team that featured his 2020 Bravehearts teammates John West and Carson Hauben. Although he was unable to make an appearance for UMass-Boston as a freshman in the shortened collegiate season last year, he did go 2-0 for the Bravehearts and had 19 strikeouts over 12 innings.

A pair of players who play their college ball in Worcester will also be returning to the team this summer, with Holy Cross' Andrew Selima (St. John's Prep / Andover) and Clark University's Chris Radovic (Fairfield Warde H.S. / Fairfield, Conn.) each coming back for a second season. Selima led Holy Cross with 13 RBIs in the shortened 2020 season. The senior first-baseman made a great first impression with the Bravehearts last year, hitting a two-out. game-winning homerun in the top of

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the ninth inning in his very first game with the team. Radovic — who is both a pitcher and an outfielder at Clark posted a 2.31 ERA in eight appearances for the Bravehearts last summer.

The last returning player from the 2020 Bravehearts is catcher Zachary DeMattio (North Attleboro H.S. / North Attleboro). After joining the team late in the season, he appeared in five games, recording a hit in four of them, including a booming three run homerun. He was recently named a captain of the Wheaton College baseball team for the upcoming season.

Rounding out the list of returning players are two members of the 2019 championship team: left-handed pitcher Brian Robertson (Cherry Hill West H.S. / Cherry Hill, N.J.) of the University of Dayton and outfielder Jakob Sessa (East Lake H.S. / Palm Harbor, Fla.) of Valdosta State University. Robertson made his collegiate debut for Dayton last year, where he is teammates with former Bravehearts players Mariano Ricciardi and Bryce Hellgeth. While with the Bravehearts, he struck out 10 hitters in nine appearances. Sessa, a senior at Valdosta State University, was a key bat in the middle of the Bravehearts lineup in 2019 when he hit .333 in 30 games.

The Futures League expects to announce its 2021 schedule in mid-March, with opening weekend slated for Memorial Day. Bravehearts Season Tickets, Flex Plans, and Group Outings at Hanover Insurance Park at Fitton Field are now available by calling the Bravehearts box office at 508-438-3773.

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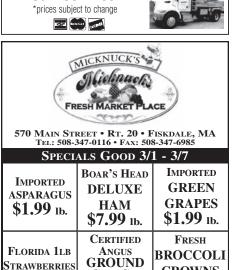
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> Frank G. Chilinski PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

> > Brendan Berube **EDITOR**

EDITORIAL

How about this weather?

"How about this weather?"

If ever there was an easy, non-challenging conversation opener, this is it. You can be in line at the grocery store, serving jury duty or pushing papers around at work - it doesn't matter where you are - this line never

Everyone seems willing to talk about the weather. It's a built-in, slam-dunk, easy topic that allows complete strangers to either commiserate or celebrate, depending on the daily meteorological situ-

So, what is it with the weather? Why do we love to discuss, comment and re-hash it?

Weather is complicated, frustrating and ultimately uncertain. Weather breaks our hearts and lifts our moods and forces daily choices for everyone. Weather drives our decisions, affects our attitudes and makes fellow survivors out of strangers.

Weather is our most true common denominator. No matter what our life circumstances - student, professional, retiree – when you live in the same geographic area, you and your fellow community members have the weather in common.

Weather doesn't care about politics or sports teams or vacations or the date on the calendar. It is an equal opportunity annoyer and a great equalizer – everyone has to drive in snow, or dash to the car in the rain, or stand in long lines at the fair in the hot sun. Almost everyone has had a picnic cancelled, a vacation spoiled or a ball game rained out.

weather is also the unexpectedly warm, sunny sweet-smelling spring morning that causes smiles and banter with co-workers. It's the light snow flurries that add sparkle to early December and prompts holiday greetings between shoppers. It's the crisp, snappy feel of fall football games and the slow, sultry, humidity of summer evenings spent on backyard patios. It's the backdrop of every day of

So, what is it with the weather? Maybe we love the topic because it's universal. Maybe we love the excitement of something that will change - either for the good or the bad. Maybe it's that it is temporary and fleeting and some-thing to either be withstood or enjoyed, knowing that it will not last. Maybe it's simply because weather is always with us...whether we like it or not.

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Views and commentary from Sturbridge, Brimfield, Holland and Wales

An Array of Handy Tips

This week's column will feature a potpourri of assorted tricks and tips to make everyday life a little easier. From

fix-it hints to painting pointers, read on for an array of tried and true strategies:

During the long, cold winter creativity often results in a room redo! Here's a tip from pro painters: If you are painting a baseboard or old fashioned radiator with enamel paint (made for this purpose) the finish will last longer if the surface is warm. The enamel will "bake" on the metal for a chip-proof finish.

One more another painting tip: Here's the best way to quickly and easily remove latex paint from your brush. Immediately after use, swish brush vigorously in a pail filled with a quarter cup liquid fabric softener to a half gallon of water and watch paint disappear! As a bonus, the fabric softener makes bristles silky again!

Salt has many virtues way beyond seasoning! New toothbrushes soaked in salt water don't need to be replaced as often. Did you know if you marinate fish in salt water the scales will come off easier?

And, to extend the life of flower blooms, simply add a little salt to your fresh flower vase.

Attention Do it Yourselfers: Did you know nonstick vegetable spray such as Pam can be used to lubricate sticky locks, metal gears, and even bicycle chains? And never use oil for squeaky door hinges, use a dab of Vaseline - for a dripless job well done!

And don't toss out those rusty tools. Soak them in hot vinegar for a quick fix.

Go for Garlic: Garlic is praised as an antibacterial, anti-viral and anti-fungal remedy but before you gorge on garlic, take note: Garlic must be fresh for optimal benefits. Garlic's active ingredient is destroyed within an hour of smashing the clove. So eat fresh garlic, or run it through a juicer in a vegetable drink for best results.



TAKE THE HINT KAREN

Is that squeaky floor board are driving you crazy? You can tighten loose boards by using 50 mm screws instead of nails. Just Pre-drill the boards to stop the wood splitting.

Frosting a cake can be "a piece of cake" with this top tip from bakers! If you're frosting and the tiers of your layer cake lean like the Tower of Pisa, prop them back up by inserting strands of uncooked spaghetti through the cake for support. Just be sure to pull them out after the frosting has set.

Cut cleaning time in half with these tips: After washing grout and tile, rub liquid turtle wax car wax on, and polish when dry. It makes the tiles twice as easy to clean next time.

When you clean your refrigerator or freezer, wipe the inside down with straight white vinegar and allow it to air dry. It will discourage future growth of mold and mildew and instantly deodorize your refrigerator.

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 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

The positive power of influencing others

A few weeks ago, we spoke of the power of influence and that we become the average of the five people we spend the most time around. People often brush aside

we all influence others.

the idea that they are influenced by others. To do so is foolish. We are all influenced, and

Today, I want to speak with you about the power of influence we have over others. Let me first break down the difference between casual influence and purposeful influence. Casual influence is the impact you have on others by just who you are. Purposeful influence is in mentoring others. Let's focus on the power of influence you can have on others and we will call it mentoring.

Mentoring is about helping another person learn through a one-to-one relationship. It's a common practice for transferring knowledge and promoting best practices and procedures in the workplace, as well as being an effective way to develop new leaders. Serving as a mentor can play a powerfully influential role in younger generations and can benefit you as well as the mentee.

We spend a lifetime learning, gathering information and experiences. My oldest son once told me, "When a person dies, it's as if a library full of one-of-a-kind books burns to the ground. Unless shared, all your knowledge, information and experience are lost." If we allow that to happen it's as if a lifetime of learning is wasted.

What experience and information do you have that can benefit others if shared?

I don't care who you are, what your education level is or what you do or have done for a living, you have something inside your head and heart that would benefit others to know.

A few years ago, our community was desperate for substitute teachers. I have a degree in education, so I began. I continued doing so two days a week until I was diagnosed with

stomach cancer. Positively

SPEAKING GARY W.

I also started a drum line and color guard in association with Youth for Christ and found weekly opportunities to set an example and share

life experiences with eighth grade through high school age students. Many of those students came from broken homes and did not have a father figure in their lives. I found it to be an incredibly rewarding experience for me as well

What experience do you have to share? Are you a musician, athlete, business professional or tradesperson? If so, you have experience to share. Do you know how to cook or work in a kitchen? Do you know how to repair cars? Are you a computer coder or hardware tech? We all know something that will benefit

What I've learned most of all about mentoring, is what young people want and appreciate most is your time. They may not express it in words, but when you connect with a young person, they benefit from the experience and are grateful whether they express it in words or not.

Where can you go for mentoring opportunities?

Your church, service club or fraternal organizations often have opportunities. I know most, if not all school districts, need substitute teachers. Organized sporting activities or community dance, theater, or musical organizations... the list is endless. All that is required of you is to take the step to let them know you are available... and be available to spend time. I know of no studies to verify this, but I believe those who volunteer find happiness and joy in the experience.

Once I'm a little further along in my healing process, I'd enjoy starting a young writer's group to provide mentoring and encouragement to those interested in the craft as a hobby and/or career. I don't want my library to burn to the ground

Turn To **MOORE**, page **A11**

What can investors learn from 2020?



FINANCIAL Focus

JEFF BURDICK

Now that we're a few weeks removed from 2020, it's a good time to reflect on such a momentous year. We can think about developments in the social and political spheres, but we also learned – or perhaps re-learned - some valuable lessons about investing.

Here are four of them:

A long-term perspective is essential. Volatility in the financial markets is nothing new, but, even so, 2020 was one for the books. Of course, the COVID-19 outbreak was the driving force behind most of the wild price swings. Soon after the pandemic's effects were first felt, the S&P 500, a common index of U.S. large-cap stocks, fell 34% but gained 67% by the end of the year. Consequently, investors who stuck with their investment portfolios and kept their eyes on their longterm goals, rather than on shocking headlines, ended up doing well. And while 2020 was obviously an unusual year, the long-term approach will always be valuable to investors.

Investment opportunities are always available. The pandemic drove down the prices of many stocks - but it didn't necessarily harm the long-term fundamentals of these companies. In other words, they may still have had strong management, still produced desirable products and services, and still had good prospects for growth. In short, they may still have been good investment opportunities – and when their prices were depressed, they may also have been "bargains" for smart investors. And this is the case with virtually any market downturn - some high-quality stocks will be available at favorable prices.

Diversification pays off. Bond prices often move in a different direction from stocks. So, during a period of volatility when stock prices are falling, such as we saw in the weeks after the pandemic hit in March, the presence of bonds in your portfolio can lessen the impact of the downturn and stabilize your overall returns. And this, in essence, is the value of maintaining a balanced and diversified portfolio. (Keep in mind, though, that diversification can't guarantee profits or prevent all losses.)

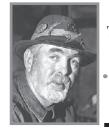
The market looks ahead. The pandemic-driven market plunge may have been stunning, but it made a kind of intrinsic sense - after all, the sudden arrival of a pandemic that threatened lives, closed businesses and cost millions of jobs doesn't sound like a positive event for the financial markets. But the strong rally that followed the initial drop and continued into 2021 has surprised many people. After all, the pandemic's effects were felt throughout the rest of 2020, and are still being felt now, so why did stock prices rise? The answer is pretty straightforward: The financial markets always look ahead, not behind. And for a variety of reasons - including widespread vaccinations, anticipated economic stimulus measures from Congress and the Biden administration, and the Federal Reserve's continued steps to keep interest rates low – the markets are anticipating much stronger economic growth, possibly starting in the second half of 2021.

All of us are probably glad to have 2020 behind us. Yet, the year taught us some investment lessons that we can put to work in 2021 - and beyond.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Jeff Burdick, your local Edward Jones Advisor in Sturbridge at 508-347-1420 or jeff.burdick@edwardjones.com.

Discussing duck boxes





THE GREAT OUTDOORS **RALPH** TRUE

The recent cold weather has made a lot of ponds safe to fish on, and it also made the ice safe enough for Mass. Fish & Wildlife personnel to visit the hundreds of Wood Duck boxes that are erected throughout the state. Each year, repairing and cleaning out boxes in numerous bodies of water needs to be addressed. The state is not the only entity that has taken on the interest in helping the Wood Ducks by erecting boxes. Numerous Fish & Game Clubs have taken on the task of placing Wood Duck boxes on their property, and in local rivers and swamps. When checking and cleaning boxes, it is like opening a gift, revealing weather the box was successful in a duck hatching her eggs. The sign of empty shells in the box is very satisfying.

Paul Soars has maintained a number of Wood Duck boxes on the Uxbridge property for years. Efforts by both Fish & Wildlife and local clubs and private citizens have kept the Wood Duck population in good shape. At one time, the Wood Duck population was in bad shape, but with the erection of Wood duck boxes over the years, the population is high enough to allow a threebird daily bag limit during the hunting season. At one time, only a single Wood Duck was allowed in the daily bag limit

of ducks.

Over the years, Boy Scout troops and other outdoor groups have built numerous duck boxes, and actively monitored and repaired them every year. Any group that is interested in finding out more about building and monitoring them should call the Mass. Fish & Wildlife in Westborough. They can get vou started, and also have plans, as to building the boxes and all other information that you will need to get started. This writer contacted the Boys Trade school back a number of years ago, and was successful in getting the carpenters section of the school to build more than 100 boxes in one year. All we did was to supply the wood from a local sawmill and passed them out to sportsmen that erected them in suitable habitat. The Wood Duck is a migratory bird that will return to New England every spring. This year's migration is due to arrive in a few weeks.

This past week, ice fishermen were out in force again trying to enjoy the outdoors and to catch the big one. Reports were coming in from all over the state about lunker bass, pike, pickerel, perch and some large trout. One local angler caught a two pound rainbow trout at the Whitinsville Fish and Game Club's fishing derby this past Saturday, that netted him a \$500 purse. More than 80 anglers entered the derby which was a record turnout. This week's picture shows Patrick Soullier with his derby winning trout.

There were a lot of youngsters also fishing, which was nice to see. The second picture shows young Sophie, waiting patiently for a bite on her jig stick! She was social distancing and wearing



her mask. The bite was a bit slow, but everyone had a great time. A report of more than five or six anglers that fished Wallum Lake this past Saturday caught nothing, while another group caught a couple of bass, but no trout. That is the way Wallum Lake is. Do not forget that Wallum Lake closes to all fishing on Feb. 28!

Mass. Fish & Wildlife released their proposals for an increase in 2022 hunting and fishing licenses, permits and stamps and a new stamp for pheasant hunting for 2022. They are only proposals! The partial list is as follows: Resident fishing license \$40, Resident hunting license \$40, Resident sporting license \$75, all stamps and permits \$20 each. A new Pheasant and Quail license will cost \$20. Most Non-Resident permits

Turn To TRUE, page A11

Celluloid collectibles



ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES & ESTATES WAYNE TUISKULA

Celluloid was considered the first semi-synthetic plastic. According Britannica. "some historians



trace the invenjewelry, knitting tion of celluloid needles, straight to English chemrazor handles. imitation Alexander and Parkes, who in linen collars and cuffs." "In 1882, 1856 was granted John H. Stevens, the first of several patents on a chemist at a plastic materithe Celluloid al that he called Manufacturing Parkesine." The Company, dis-Atlantic magacovered that zine attributes amyl acetate development was a suitable solvent for dilutto the United States inventor ing celluloid, Wesley John according Britannica. The Hvatt who is said to have crenew clear celluated celluloid in loid was used to 1869. Celluloid create flexible was created to films. Celluloid replace ivory was used in motion picture billiard balls but proved to films into the unsuitable 1930s. Because celluthat purpose. According loid was so wideto the Atlantic, ly used, we often "because find it in local celluloid could be estates. Dresser/ made to imitate vanity sets are some of the more expensive rare materials common cellu--- such as ivory, loid items we tortoiseshell, encounter. Years and mother-ofof heat exposure pearl -- it was often affected soon employed the sets and they can become very in the manufacture of fancy brittle. A typical goods affordable set in good con-

be

for the growing

middle class." It

increased in use

during the 1880s

and it was used

to make post-

cards, game piec-

es, toys, adver-

tising novelties

and souvenirs,

cellu-Most loid is affordable to collect, but there are

dition sells for

around \$20. A

vanity set in a

color other than

ivory can bring

a little more.

collectibles that command strong auction prices. For example. cels (Merriam Webster: transparent sheet of celluloid on which objects are drawn or painted in the making of animated cartoons") from older cartoons can quite valuable. În 2017 a cel from 1937 of the Evil Queen from Snow White sold for \$25,000 and a Charlie Brown Christmas cel sold for \$50,000. Because celluloid deteriorates over time there aren't a large amount of advertising signs in pristine condition. Three nice examples sold very well at auction. A Chancellor Cigar sign depicting a 1910 woman went for \$12,000. An Ingram's Witch Hazel Salve sign sold for \$13,000 in 2012 and a 1902 hanging celluloid Coca Cola sign reached \$19,000 in 2011.

some celluloid

Turn To ANTIQUES,

Rare celluloid

Tips for seed starting success



GARDEN MOMENTS MELINDA **MYERS**

You created pass wish list, ordered some or all of the seeds you will need, and they are beginning to arrive. Make the most of your investment with a bit of planning.

Starting seeds at the proper time, indoors or directly in the garden, ensures a good start to the growing season. Check the back of the seed packet for planting times and directions. Consult your local Extension Service's website for more details on the best time to plant in your area. Organize your

seeds by when they need to be started. You can create your own system or invest in one like Gardener's Supply's seed envelopes and dividers. This system allows you to organize seeds by type, planting season, color, garden location and more. Use your storage system to keep leftover seeds organized for future plantings. It will also save you money on future seed orders. Just be sure to place the seeds in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Enter plantdates ing on calendar as well. Months

quickly and it is easy to miss important planting times. Creating a planting calendar will help you plant seeds at the proper time for the maximum benefit. Gather seed

equip-

starting

ment and supplies if starting seeds indoors. You will need a quality seed starting or potting mix and clean containers. Use yogurt and other small food containers starting seeds. Drill holes in the bottom and clean them before planting. Avoid disease problems by sanitizing old plant containers. Soak them in a one-part bleach and nineparts water solution for ten minutes. Then rinse in clear water before filling with planting mix.

Or try one of the new plastic-free, environmentally friendly seed starting options. Use a paper pot maker (gardeners.com) to convert newspaper into biodegradable plant pots. Consider cow pots made of composted manure that provide nutrients in a biodegradable pot. You can leave your seedlings in these containers when moving them into the gar-



Courtesy — Gardener's Supply Company

Paper pot makers make it easy to transform newspaper into biodegradable plant pots that are perfect for starting seeds.

Create your own pot-free seed starter with Gardener's Supply soil blocker. It presses moist potting mix into blocks that hold their shape. The blocks can be moved directly

into the garden,

reducing trans-

den.

plant shock. Follow the directions on the seed packets for depth and care. Most seeds prefer warm conditions but do not need light to sprout. Keep the planting mix moist. Cover the containers with a sheet of plastic to conserve moisture and extend the time between

watering. Once you see any green, it is time to move the seedlings into bright light or

under artificial lights. Keep the lights on for no more than 14 to 16 hours and afour to six inches above the top of the plants for best results.

Once your plants are actively growing, you can begin fertilizing if needed. Check the planting mix to see if a fertilizer has been added and how long it will be effective before adding more. Follow the label directions on the fertilizer you

select. Share the fun and workload with friends and family. Perhaps you will start tomatoes for everyone, another person handles the peppers and yet another person the eggplants. Or just share extra

seeds since each packet usually contains more than most gardeners have space to grow. Most important-

ly, have fun.

Melinda Myers is the author of more than 20 gardening books, including Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series and Melinda's the Garden Moment TV & radio program. Myers is a columnist and con $tributing\ editor\ for$ Birds & Blooms magazine andwas commissioned by Gardeners Supply for her expertise to write this article. Her Web site is www. MelindaMyers. com.

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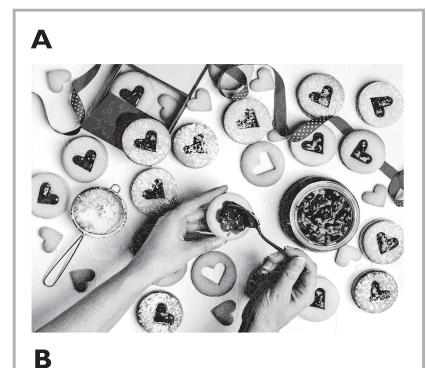


ATTENTION TO DETAIL AND CAREFUL MEASUREMENTS ARE REQUIRED DURING THIS CULINARY ACTIVITY.

YUSWER: BAKING

What's the Difference?

There are four differences between Picture A and Picture B. Can you find them all?





inside of cookie in middle 4. Cream instead of Jam cookie heart middle at bottom 3. Cookie middle Answers: I. Fortune cookie next to wrist 2. Missing



- 1815: NAPOLEON **BONAPARTE ESCAPES** FROM EXILE IN ELBA.
- **1919**: THE *G*RAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK IS ESTABLISHED.
- 1935: RADIO DETECT-ION AND RANGING IS FIRST DEMONSTRATED BY ROBERT WATSON-WATT. THIS LEADS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF RADAR.



FOLD

to mix an ingredient gently



SPANISH: Harina

ITALIAN: Farina

FRENCH: Farine

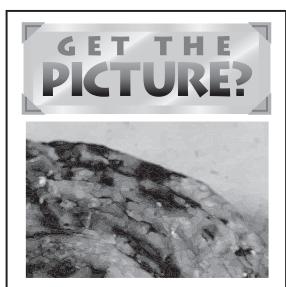
GERMAN: Mehl



THE FIRST CUPCAKE RECIPE WAS INVENTED IN 1776. IT WAS A LIGHT CAKE BAKED IN SMALL CUPS. THE SECOND CUPCAKE RECIPE WAS INVENTED IN 1871.

Answers: A. orderly

B. closet C. clutter D. storage



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

YNƏMEK: CINNYWON KOLL

⊙** △ ® * ~ • A « + ≈ * A « + ≈ * A « + ≈ 6 & π ↑ Ω δ A B C D E F G H i J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to getting organized. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 4 = R)

A. 17 4 8 2 4 21

Clue: Neat and tidy

12 21 17 23 2 22 B.

Clue: Place for clothing

12 21 24 22 22 2 4 C.

Clue: Excess stuff

D. 23 22 17 4 18 1 2

Clue: Space for housing items

SUDOKU

		8			4	2		
						7		
					3		5	9
9						жени	3	
agossoos					2			7
		4		9				
	эдровон	2	4	6	9	3		
	8		3					
4			7	2				

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Advanced

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

vandu	6	9	8	S	L	3	G	†
2	L	V	yeen	S	3	6	8	9
G	8	ε	6	9	Þ	5	seedh	L
9	2	9	L	6	moh	ħ	3	8
Z	†	6	2	ε	8	ç	9	sock.
8	S	genera	9	Þ	9	L	2	6
6	S	8	ε	2	9	samedi.	Þ	S
V	mah	L	S	8	2	9	6	ε
3	9	2	ţ	- march	6	8	L	ç

ANSWER:

KINDNESS

continued from page **A1**

"Sometime back, on a Thursday morning while driving on Route 31 in Spencer. The two cars in front of me got into a collision. I pulled over and made sure the police were called. The accident involved a middle-aged man and an older woman. I had the woman stay in her car and not move in case she had any injuries as she was affected more than the male was. The male was anxious and really worked up. I did what I could to reassure him that he needed to be calm. I waited until the police arrived. Fortunately, both collision survivors left with only minor bumps and bruises." -Brianna Cloutier, SPN of Charlton

When a neighbor's dog, 'Juda' (a German Shepard) passed away (of old age), my eight-year-old daughter who had a small stuffed animal that looked like Juda gave the neighbor her stuffed animal in remembrance. It made Juda's mom (who is in her 50's) so happy, she gave my daughter daisies with thanks. She makes me

"On Christmas Eve I gave a homeless man in downtown Worcester (under a bridge) a variety box of homemade cookies. There were chocolate chips, snowballs, thumbprints, peanut butter balls, peanut butter cookies, and sugar cookies with frosting. Small acts of kindness warm the heart." -– Tianna

Welcome, SPN of Oxford On term 1, an alumna provided me with textbooks which I was missing for the program. It filled my heart with extreme gratitude to know that someone could do such an amazing gesture for someone who they do not know personally. I am forever grateful! It also served as a life lesson to show kindness towards others, it is a very rewarding feeling!" — Digmary Sanchez, SPN of Worcester

Brought in pastries (Quesitos and Pastelitos de Guayaba) specially ordered from 'Whisk Me Away

Treats' to share with the class. Whisk Me Away Treats is a "family-based business striving to bake the world a better place one goodie at a time." Supporting a small business is great for the environment because they have a smaller carbon footprint than larger companies! Bringing so much joy by sharing sweets made daily, from scratch. A win-win!" - Monique Bull, SPN of Worcester

Stopped at a traffic collision that involved a nursing student on their way to clinicals. She waited with the student until police officers arrived and until the totaled vehicle was towed. She then gave her classmate a ride to clinicals, all along giving emotional support to allay anxiety.

Grace Mwangi, SPN of Worcester Picked up (and delivered) prescription medications (and overthe-counter pain meds) multiple times for an ill neighbor. Cleared the driveway after a snowfall for the same ill neighbor and brought to ER! Makes it a point to walk with faculty at the end of the night making sure faculty is not alone and feel unsafe at the end of long lectures at night. Khamphan Houatchanthara, SPN of Southbridge

Brought flowers to cheer up and celebrate milestones for staff and faculty! "Floriography, the language of flowers, was developed as a form of communication at a time where it was not appropriate, polite or proper etiquette for an individual to fully express their emotions with another." — Brianna Laforest, SPN of Webster

ARC blood donor! She's definitely someone's type! "Blood donors report feeling a sense of great satisfaction after making their blood donation.'

- Elizabeth Larson, SPN of Webster The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation lists kindness ideas organized by work, community, environment, animals, strangers, kids, seniors and more. For more information visit https://www.randomactsofkindness.org.

..... **VACCINATION CENTER**

continued from page A1

cinating residents in the 65-plus age group, as well as those with two or more health conditions.

Appointments, though significantly limited at this time, can be scheduled online by visiting www.mass. gov/COVIDVaccineMap. Residents will be asked to enter their zip code or select a location from the map on the website, then follow prompts to schedule an appointment online.

Residents 65 and older who are unable to use the online model can call the Massachusetts Vaccine Scheduling Resource Line (877-211-

"Individuals ages 65 and older will be able to speak to a representative live on the phone to assist them with an appointment through the state's online system," read a statement released by Governor Charlie Baker's office. "If no appointments are available, callers will have the option to be placed on a call-back list for the mass vaccination sites. The caller will receive a call when an appointment becomes available for them at a mass vaccination site."

Vaccine The Massachusetts Scheduling Resource Line is only meant for individuals seeking to schedule an appointment. Representatives are not able to answer general questions about COVID-19 or provide individual healthcare advice.

If you are attending the Worcester State University location, park in the north parking lot and enter through the designated door no more than five minutes before your appointment time.

If the Worcester State campus is closed or has a delayed opening due to weather, the clinic will be shut down and appointments will be rescheduled. Any changes to the campus status will be posted on the school's homepage.

The university Commonwealth Medicine, which is

providing logistics support, project management, and volunteer staffing support at the mass vaccination site. Meanwhile, Saint Vincent Hospital will serve as the clinical partner, providing daily clinical and operational leadership at the site.

'Numerous members of the Saint Vincent team will assist Commonwealth Medicine's volunteer corps in staffing the site in both clinical and non-clinical roles," read the university's statement.

Volunteer opportunities are available for both clinical and non-clinical personnel. Medically trained and certified volunteers will administer vaccinations and monitor recipients for any adverse reactions. Nonclinical volunteers will help with check-in services, directional assistance, and cleaning of high-touch areas.

State officials urge eligible residents to schedule their appointments as soon as possible. As more priority groups are added in the coming weeks and months, vaccine centers will likely be booked throughout the

"Due to extremely high demand for appointments and limited vaccine supply, appointments are getting booked quickly," read a statement issued by the Mass. Department of Public Health. "New appointments will be added to the website regularly, and the mass vaccination sites have the most availability for appointments."

No one will be denied the vaccine due to lack of insurance. You will not need to provide a Social Security card or government issued identification to receive the COVID-19 vac-

You will never be asked for a credit card number to make an appointment.

Additional mass vaccination sites include Gillette Stadium, Fenway Park, the Eastfield Mall in Springfield, and the DoubleTree Hotel in Danvers.

MOORE

continued from page **A8**

without sharing the information and experience in my head and heart. When we do so, we live on through the lives of others.

What about you? Are you a "Hey you kids! Get off my lawn!" kind of person or would you like to make a positive difference in the lives of the next generation? That's a serious question and I'd like you to answer. If you are willing to share your experience and time with others,

There's never been a time when optimists are needed more to provide positive mentoring to the next generation. Will you answer the call? Will you share what you know?

Will you join me?

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.garywmoore.com.

TRUE

continued from page A9

could be \$40 each! For a complete list of all license changes and permit changes, go to the Mass. Fish & Wildlife Web site. Saltwater licenses are also up for an increase for 2022.

Mother Nature had been kind to all wildlife this winter, until this past couple of weeks. With very little snow this year, finding food was relatively easy after the heavy acorn crop of last year. Female deer are now carrying their young, but should have no problem finding food and navigating the recent snow

..... left by the last two storms. The snow should be gone in the next two weeks.

> The Whitinsville Fish & Game Club will hold their annual Game dinner on March 27. The event will be a takeout only dinner with all of the usual great food. Tickets are \$20 each. Go to their Web site at wwwwhitinsvillefishgame. com to purchase your tickets. A raffle will also be held. At this time of Covid-19, numerous Rod & Gun Clubs are doing everything they can to keep the lights on, and they need your continued support.

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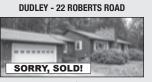


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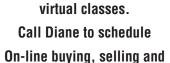
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ANTIQUES

continued from page A9

toys can also bring high auction prices. A 1930s waddling Donald Duck toy went for \$13,000 in 2014 and a celluloid Mickey Mouse on a metal scooter with the original box brought \$37,000 in 2008.

Older pinback buttons were also made of celluloid with metal backing. Some have brought astronomical prices. A rare "Buck Rogers 25th Century" celluloid pinback

D. Roosevelt for Senate pinback brought \$3,750 in 2016. As you might expect, sports pinbacks are very popular. Few examples of a one and a half inch Mickey Mantle Fan club button are known to exist. One sold for over \$23,000 last year. A pinback advertising a Detroit beer company is even more rare. The pinback is the only one known to exist depicting Babe Ruth and the 1916 World Champion Boston Red Sox. It sold for nearly \$63,000 last year. I'm sure

went for \$2.700 in 2019. A Franklin celluloid manufacturers weren't also currently running an online expecting the objects they made inexpensively for the middle class to sell for five figure sums over a century later.

We will have some celluloid objects from the estate of a long-time collector in our May multi-estate auction. We are still accepting quality items such as antique paintings, gold jewelry, sterling silver and older collectibles such as coins, sports memorabilia, advertising signs, and comic books for the May auction. We are

auction of model railroad trains, die-cast cars, pressed steel trucks, and models that ends on March 10th. See our Web site for details: https:// centralmassauctions.com.

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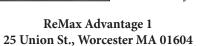
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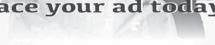
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Understanding low vision

Prescription eyeglasses help billions of people across the world improve their vision. In fact, when a person's vision starts to weaken, a new eyeglass prescription is often the solution. However, prescription eyeglasses cannot correct every issue, including low vision.

The National Eye Institute defines low vision as a vision problem that makes it hard for people to perform everyday activities. People with low vision may not see well enough to read, drive, recognize people's faces, distinguish between colors, or see their television or computer screens clearly. Though low vision is a serious condition, the Cleveland Clinic notes it does not include complete blindness and can sometimes be improved with the use of visual aids. Understanding low vision and how it can affect a person's daily life can help patients and their families confront the condition more successfully.

Are all types of low vision the same?

The NEI notes that there are different types of low vision. The four most common types of low vision are:

• Central vision loss: This is marked by an inability to see things in the center of your vision.

• Peripheral vision loss: This affects peripheral vision and compromises a person's ability to see things out of the corners of the eyes.

· Night blindness: A person diagnosed with night blindness will be unable to see

· Blurry or hazy vision: The Cleveland Clinic notes that objects both near and far will appear out of focus person when a person is dealing blurry vision. Someone with hazy vision will feel as though his or her entire field of vision is covered with a film or glare.

What causes low vision?

The NEI notes that low vision is not caused by aging alone. However, there is a link between aging and low vision. Many of the diseases that can cause low vision are most common in older adults. In fact, the Cleveland Clinic notes low vision affects one in four adults over age 75 and one in six adults over age 45. The type of low vision a person has will



depend on the disease or condition that caused it.

Many different eye conditions can cause low vision, but the NEI says the four most common are:

 Age-related macular degeneration (AMD): AMD is a disease of the eye that can blur the vision people need to read and drive. AMD is slow to develop and as it progresses the blurry area near the center of vision may get bigger and things may also seem less bright than before.

 Cataracts: Cataracts affect more than half of all Americans age 80 or older. The NEI notes that many people do not notice

they have a cataract initially. But over time, people with a cataract may notice their vision becoming blurry, hazy or less colorful.

· Diabetic retinopathy: Diabetic retinopathy affects blood vessels in the retina and can cause low vision in people with diabetes. The NEI urges anyone with diabetes to schedule comprehensive dilated eye exams at least once per year, as finding diabetic retinopathy early, even when no symptoms are present, can help people protect their vision.

• Glaucoma: Glaucoma is an umbrella term used to describe a group of eye diseases that damage the optic nerve. The NEI notes that half of all people with glaucoma don't even know they have it, which only underscores the importance of scheduling comprehensive dilated eye

exams.

Low vision is a serious condition that can affect people's ability to perform daily tasks like reading and driving. More information about low vision can be found at www.nei.nih.gov.

How to treat minor burns

Protecting skin pays both short- and long-term dividends. In the short-term, concerted efforts to protect the skin, which can be as simple as applying sunscreen before spending time in the sun, can prevent the pain associated with first-degree burns like sunburns. And over the long haul, such measures can dramatically reduce a person's risk for skin cancer, a potentially deadly disease that the World Health Organization reports affects as many as 3.1 million people each year.

Though it's in everyone's best interest to prioritize skin protection at all times, burnsa still happen. Second- and third-degree burns can be severe, and such burns often need to be addressed by medical professionals. But the American Academy of Dermatology notes that most first-degree burns, which can include sunburns, can be treated at home. Proper treatment of such burns is essential, and the AAD offers these tips to help people treat first-degree burns at home.

• Cool the burn. First-degree burns should be cooled for about 10 minutes, or however long it takes for the pain to subside. Burns can be immersed in cool tap water, or victims can apply cold, wet compresses to cool the affected area(s).

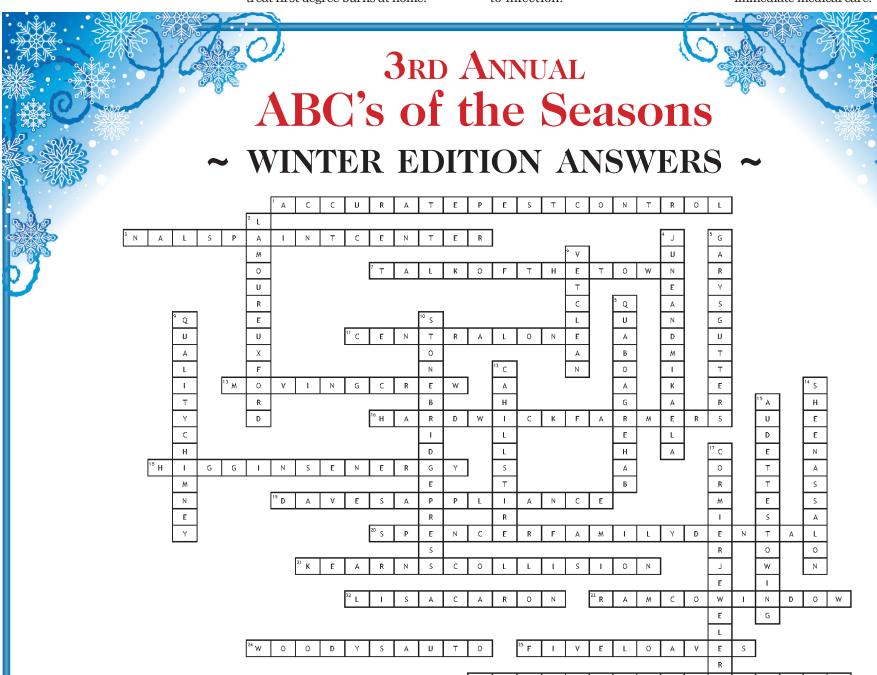
· Apply petroleum jelly each day. The AAD notes that it's important to apply only petroleum jelly to affected areas. Old wives' tales may suggest that ointments, toothpaste or butter can be applied to burns, but such substances can cause infection. The AAD advises against applying topical antibiotics as well.

 Do not pop blisters and cover burns with nonstick, sterile bandages. Areas that have blistered should be allowed to heal on their own but can still be covered. Popping blisters can increase the risk of infection, so avoid the temptation to do so. Use nonstick, sterile bandages that can be easily removed and won't contribute to infection.

· Take steps to mitigate pain. Firstdegree burns are generally considered minor, but they can still be painful. If the pain is significant, over-the-counter medications like acetaminophen or ibuprofen can alleviate pain and reduce inflammation.

· Protect skin from the sun. Make a concerted effort to protect areas that have healed from first-degree burns from the sun. Seeking shade, applying a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with a minimum sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 and wearing protective clothing can minimize scarring in areas of the skin that have healed from first-de-

The AAD notes that most first-degree burns can be treated at home without the need to consult a medical professional. However, the AAD advises the elderly and parents of infants who have suffered first-degree burns, as well as anyone who thinks their burn is severe, to seek immediate medical care.



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