

WEBSTER TIMES

Free by request to residents of Webster, Dudley and the Oxfords

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Friday, February 7, 2025



Courtesy

PUMPERNICKEL PUPPETS AT CHAFFEE SCHOOL

On Thursday, Jan. 30, Chaffee Elementary PTO welcomed the amazing John McDonough of Pumpernickel Puppets for three unforgettable performances! With his perfect blend of education and entertainment, John captivated our students, filling the room with laughter, wonder, and excitement. His visits are always a hit, and this time was no exception—our kids absolutely loved it!

School Committee discusses budget, technology

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

WEBSTER — As usual at this time of year, the School Committee's Jan. 28 meeting was largely focused on the budget. But it also looked at the fairly new Big Brother/Big Sister effort and a new state "social media toolkit," among other things.

Business Manager Lisa Kontoes updated the board on the newly released governor's budget, the state's normal starting process for annual planning. She said it calls for Webster to receive \$21.4 million in Chapter 70 school aid, \$1.28 million more than it did last year.

Under state rules, Webster's "foundation budget" is based on 13 enrollment categories and 11 functional areas, a complex calculation which includes a wage adjustment, community income, an inflation factor, property values and other things. Those combine to equal \$35.7 million this year, of which the town has to fund at least \$14.3 million, a figure that is \$745,551 above last year. That number includes the \$8.2 million in "shared costs" — various services the town provides the schools, including insurance, payroll, plowing and other things.

Kontoes said the next budget steps will be meeting with the town administrator and finance department and holding district leadership meetings. Chair Kelly Seddiki said her board might be interested in meeting with the various school teams as well.

At the last meeting, she and Superintendent Monique Pierangeli presented the first version of the budget, which calls for an 8 percent hike over last year. But Pierangeli admitted she doesn't expect to get all of it.

Kontoes also summarized this year's capital program, which seeks funding for three projects. She's looking for \$90,000 to do short-term surface repairs to the basketball and tennis courts (last done six years ago) and \$30,000 to replace a broken electrical panel controller that schedules how the lights go on and off. She noted there are other items on their radar screen, but she's not going to ask for funds for them yet.

Regarding Big Brother/Big Sister, Park Ave Principal Amy Puliafico had two teachers summarize the program. Through

Turn To **SCHOOL** page **A13**

AHS Athletic Director arrested for sharing inappropriate material with minor

AUBURN — The now-former Auburn High School athletic director has been arrested and charged with disseminating obscene material to a minor.

On Jan. 22, the Auburn Police Department was asked by the Auburn Public Schools administration to investigate a report of possible concerning online activity involving an AHS staff member.

After an extensive investigation, Auburn Police detectives obtained an arrest warrant for Curtis Field, 29, of Vernon, Conn., for disseminating obscene material to a minor.

Field turned himself in at the Auburn Police station. He was arraigned at Worcester District Court and released on \$500 cash bail, with conditions that include having no contact with any victims, staying away from Auburn and Spencer schools, and having no unsupervised contact with anyone under 16.

The incident is still under investigation, police said. Auburn Public Schools Superintendent Elizabeth Chamberland did not respond to requests for comment by our press deadline.

If you have information relevant to the case, contact Auburn Police detectives at 508-832-7777. You may also send an email to textatip@auburnmasspolice.org. You can remain anonymous.

Residents cite blasting, traffic, other concerns in Ashworth Hills hearing

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

O X F O R D — Although the Planning Board's public hearing on the Ashworth Hills subdivision proposal included some things the Conservation hearing did, it also expanded public knowledge of the project in various ways.

The project calls for building 320 duplex-style units on 151 acres next to the Thayer Pond condo complex, with access from Route 20, Thayer Pond and Ashworth Drive.

That access was a major issue for nearby residents. The project calls for the only public route to be a traffic light at Route 20, with Ashworth being emergency only (although that's not yet on the plan) and Thayer being one-way from Thayer. Several people

from Thayer, however, argued they want that to be emergency-only as well. They cited concerns about people already speeding through the subdivision and argued it'd encourage more traffic on private roads they recently spent about \$600,000 to repave.

Both Ashworth and Thayer are being requested by the fire department to ensure alternate access to the new area. Google Maps shows that the road from Route 20 to Ashworth (the plan's main street and the core of the project's Phase 1 work) already exists in a preliminary form.

Project engineer Travis Brown said the water and sewer lines will run up that road and out Ashworth to the nearby sewer plant via pipelines across the Mass Pike. Arranging those crossings "were

hangups for previous approvals on this project," he noted.

He said the plans call for stormwater treatment that "exceeds state stormwater standards," and it's "at the tail-end of [the] MEPA [process]" reviewing those and related issues.

Eastland Partners spokesman Logan Huffman discussed the municipal impact analysis, noting "all of the roads and infrastructure will be owned and maintained by the [subdivision] community ... in perpetuity," with no town plowing, paving or other needs. Based on fiscal 2024 data and full build-out, his analysis calculated municipal costs for police, fire and related services as being about \$311,168 and \$73,000 for five students per year (the goal is to age-re-

Turn To **HEARING** page **A13**

Dudley officials receive update on Stevens Linen Mill

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY — Dudley officials received important updates regarding the much-discussed Stevens Linen Mill project on Jan. 27 with representatives of project developer Camden Management Partners LLC joining the Board of Selectmen to provide insight into the status of the renovations.

The historic mill has laid unused for several years most recently serving as the Dudley Do-Right Flea Market until it was closed in 2018. Camden Management Partners of Columbia, S.C. purchased the property in 2020 under the name Stevens Mill Owner, LLC and began exploring renovating the historic mill into 159 market rate apartments and other facilities. The plan received Planning Board

approval in 2022 with a groundbreaking set for 2024, however that timeline was significantly impacted by high interest rates that caused the projected price to fluctuate from its original estimate of \$43 million to over \$60 million. While this caused the groundbreaking to be put on hold indefinitely, Camden Management Partners remains committed to the project.

Camden Management Partners representative John Gumpert told selectmen that they have worked with the National Park Service over the past several years to amend their plan to comply with their requirements. The company has also re-examined the parking layout and are working on how they can approach financing the project. In the meantime, they secured a grant to stabi-

lize the building, and a new roof is expected to be completed this year. Efforts to clean out the mill and remove what's left of the flea market have also progressed.

Gumpert said they feel the project will speak for itself as this process continues. In addition to the apartments, which he stressed would not be affordable housing, but remain market rate homes, a tap room, riverwalk, workout center, and event center all remain part of the plan.

"The more we can bring the community in, the more notoriety we get for the development, and it fills the project up. We're looking forward to that. The design of it hasn't changed much. We're sticking with where we were. We have made a number of changes at the request of the park service, but we've incor-



Courtesy

A conceptual photo of the planned renovation at Stevens Linen Mill.

porated those things in and we're still moving forward on that. We're excited. I know it takes a long time, but that's our plan. As I tell everybody,

we don't have a Plan B so we're getting this done," said Gumpert.

The presentation saw several neighboring property owners present

concerns about the who the company was trying to attract for the housing, how it would impact traffic, and how long the proj-

Turn To **STEVENS** page **A13**

Dudley selectmen approve action plan in response to 16 issues identified by the state financial management audit

D U D L E Y — The Board of Selectmen requested the state audit in response to citizens' outcry over budget shortfalls and the need for Proposition 2 ½ override elections during the summer of 2023.

The state Department of Revenue Division of Local Services Financial Management Resource Bureau conducted the audit, which encompassed Dudley's government structure, fiscal planning, financial policies, information technology, and operational practices of its financial offices.

The report on its findings, published on Dec. 26, identified 16 areas of concern and made recommendations for changes to practices.

"This review was initiated at the request of a group of residents

who raised concerns about town audits, override votes, and called for a general forensic audit," Town Administrator Jonathan Ruda said. "It's important to recognize that the recommendations in the state report are a direct result of that public demand for greater transparency and accountability."

At the Board of Selectmen's Jan. 27 meeting, Ruda presented an action plan that sets goals, identifies involved parties, establishes a timeline, and key performance indicators for each of the 16 items identified by the state.

"The Board of Selectmen has voted to move forward with the plan to implement 16 recommendations from the Financial Management Review conducted by the state," Ruda said. "These recommendations provide a clear path forward to strengthen the town's financial practices and governance."

One key recommendation among the 16 is to create an independent Government Study Committee. Selectmen said they will follow the DLS recommendation

by forming a committee of qualified individuals who possess no predetermined agenda, and task them with objectively evaluating the town's government structure by, in part, interviewing officials, surveying residents, and examining practices in other communities.

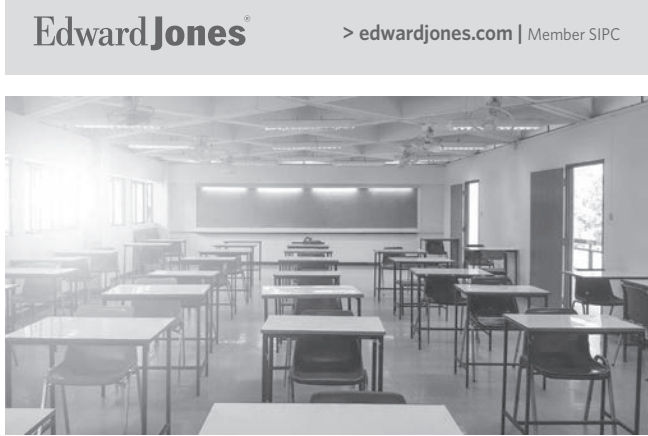
According to the Action Plan adopted by selectmen, this committee is to be established by May 2025 and have its work finished with a report of findings by February 2026.

"The Board of Selectmen is committed to following through with these recommendations and will ensure the Government Study Committee has the support and resources needed to carry out their work," Ruda said, adding, "We believe this process will help improve policies, rebuild trust, and better position the town for the future. Given that the call for this review came from the community itself, it is now important for all residents, including those who pushed for the review, to support the findings and the work ahead to move

the town forward."

Over the course of five months, the state review team interviewed elected and appointed officials, department heads, and municipal office staff. The team examined town documents and financial data, including town bylaws, locally accepted statutes, special acts, annual budgets, warrant articles, tax recapitulations, balance sheets, receivable reports, revenues and expenditures, and independent audit reports.

The DLS recommendations included converting the elected Treasurer/Collector to appointed, forming the government study committee to address the town's decentralized form of governing, creating a budget bylaw, a revolving fund review, an update to the federal Fiscal Recovery Funds Compliance report, discontinued use of reserves and one-time revenue for the operating budget, discontinue Treasurer's use of a manual cashbook, and a clean-up of the Treasurer's cashbook and Tax Title/Foreclosure records.



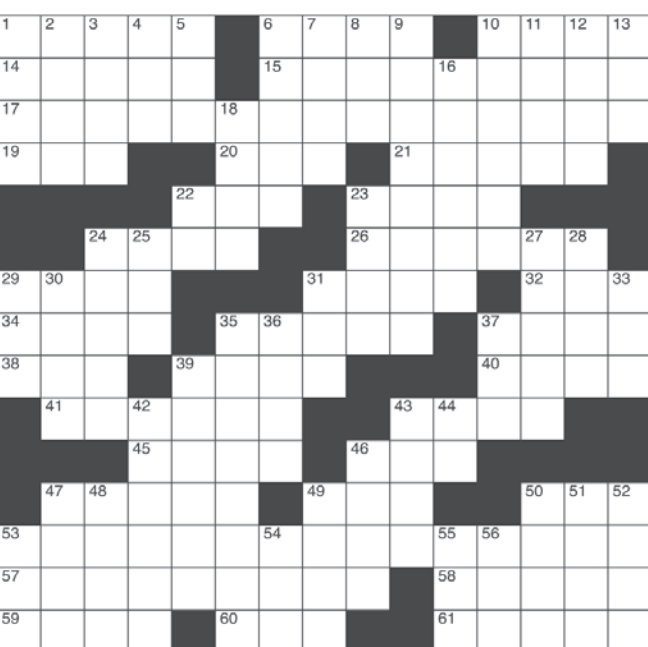
Are you planning your next chapter after working at a public school or other local/state organization?

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Dennis Antonopoulos
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PRT-48731-A AECSPAD 3428443



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. "The Las Vegas of the East"
- 6. Cook
- 10. Manning and Wallach are two
- 14. Chameleon
- 15. A way to fill up
- 17. What MLBers hope to play in
- 19. Unhappy
- 20. Indefinite period of time
- 21. Excites
- 22. Males
- 23. Mongol leader Genghis
- 24. Turfs
- 26. Soda comes in them
- 29. Not nice
- 31. Professional organization
- 32. Part of a play
- 34. Sea eagle
- 35. Emily Blunt's character in "Sicario"
- 37. Beige
- 38. Mental sharpness
- 39. Valley
- 40. Alcyone's husband
- 41. A place to gamble
- 43. Flightless Australian birds
- 45. Call out somebody's name over a P.A. system
- 46. US spy group
- 47. Pancakes from buckwheat flour
- 49. Swiss river
- 50. Disfigure
- 53. Have surgery
- 57. Formal withdrawal
- 58. Early English council
- 59. Square measures
- 60. 2,000 lbs.
- 61. Siskel and __, critics

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Mouths
- 2. Buffalo
- 3. You plug it in
- 4. Each
- 5. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
- 6. King of Thebes
- 7. English name meaning "mythical hunter"
- 8. Indicates near
- 9. More herbaceous
- 10. Gas-powered cars need one
- 11. Dishonest individual
- 12. Systems, doctrines, theories
- 13. The woman
- 16. The whole of one's holdings
- 18. Witnesses
- 22. Doctor
- 23. Paul __, Swiss painter
- 24. Kids look for him on December 24
- 25. Single
- 27. Competitions
- 28. Predict the future
- 29. Cage for trained hawks
- 30. Musician Clapton
- 31. Frozen water
- 33. Semiformal men's evening attire
- 35. Most worn
- 36. Common soap ingredient
- 37. Former EU monetary unit
- 39. Provisions
- 42. Book parts
- 43. Republic of Ireland
- 44. Partner to "Pa"
- 46. Sammy __, songwriter
- 47. Dutch colonist
- 48. Clare Booth __, American writer
- 49. Solar disk in Egyptian mythology
- 50. Minute arachnid
- 51. From a distance
- 52. Monthly apartment cost
- 53. Young women's association
- 54. Tourist destination
- 55. "Woman" in Ojibwe language
- 56. Pointed end of a pen



Attorney General's office requests extension to review citizens' petitions

DUDLEY — The Oct. 21 Special Town Meeting warrant included two citizens' petitions. Article 14, passed by majority vote, sought to amend the Dudley General Bylaws related to the Town Administrator's annual review, powers and duties and other activities.

Article 15, passed by majority vote, sought to amend the Dudley General Bylaws related to Personnel Policies and Procedures, its purpose, personnel board establishment, responsibilities and method, and the role of Human Resources Manager.

A Jan. 23 letter from the Attorney General's office confirmed the deadline for a decision on the two articles is delayed and therefore extended for 90 days. The new deadline for a decision is on or before April 27.

Town Administrator Jonathan Ruda stated, "I expect any guidance, amendments, or disapprovals by the Attorney General's office will align with the verbal opinions publicly provided to the petitioners, which were subsequently reinforced by a written opinion from Town Labor Counsel prior to the October Special Town Meeting."

Dudley residents earn Dean's list honors

AMHERST — Siblings Alyse and Riley Biron of Dudley have been recognized for academic excellence by their respective colleges

Riley was named to the Dean's List for the fall semester of 2024 at the Western New England School of Law, and Alyse earned Dean's List honors at UMass Amherst.

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Attorney General undecided on Personnel Board bylaw changes

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY — The state Attorney General's Office has extended the deadline for a decision on two articles approved at Dudley's fall town meeting in October pertaining to the Town Administrator and the reformation of a Personnel Board.

Titled Articles 14 and 15 in the town meeting warrant and referred to as such in correspondence from the Attorney General, the articles sought to amend the town bylaws by reforming the Personnel Board, which was disbanded in 2018, and, in effect, implement changes to the Town

Administrator bylaw. The most significant addition in the proposals was the inclusion of a Human Resource Manager. Both articles passed during the fall town meeting, but not without extensive debate.

Supporters of the articles argued the Personnel Board would put more power back in the hands of the citizens, be filled with qualified personnel, and that the town worked well under a Personnel Board in the past. However, the articles met resistance from Selectmen who felt the concept of a Personnel Board could potentially conflict with modern state statutes. The town's

legal counsel presented similar concerns during other public meetings leading up to the vote. There were questions of whether the Attorney General would even allow the articles to stand.

Those questions remain unanswered as the Attorney General informed the town that they have extended their deadline to address these bylaw changes for another several months.

"The Attorney General's deadline for a decision on Articles 14 and 15 is extended for 90 days under the authority conferred by G.L. c. 40, § 32. - We will issue our decision on Articles 14 and 15 on or before

April 27, 2025," read a notice from the Attorney General also posted on Dudley's town Web site.

However, the Attorney General did approve three other bylaw changes from the fall town meeting. Articles 11 and 13, which amended the Animal Bylaw and the established a Stormwater Committee respectively, were approved as passed. One part of Article 12, which enacts a Solicitors Bylaw, was approved. The Attorney General supported the amendment to

"Hours of Operation" but took no action on the "Penalties and Violation" section of the change as it lacked clarity on how the

town would charge any expenses or cost to property owners to comply with municipal finance statutes.

Zion Lutheran, Church of Reconciliation take field in 2025 Souper Bowl of Caring

REGION — Zion Lutheran Church, Oxford, and Church of the Reconciliation, Webster, kicked off their campaign to tackle local food insecurity and hunger on Jan. 12. Running through Feb. 9, when the Philadelphia Eagles and the Kansas City Chiefs compete in the Big Game, both churches "huddle up" to participate in the Souper Bowl of Caring. Cans of soup are collected to be given to our neighbors in need through the Oxford Ecumenical Food Shelf and the Webster UCC Food Share. The Souper Bowl of Caring is a national food drive that uses the excitement of the Super Bowl to raise awareness about hunger and provide meals at the local level for people in need. Since its inception in 1990, more than \$172 million has been generated for local feeding charities. Help us reach our goal of making a difference in our communities. Whether you're a sports fan or not, it's an opportunity to be part of something bigger. Help us to make this year's Souper Bowl of Caring the most successful one yet! Call Zion Lutheran Church, 508 987-1248, or Church of the Reconciliation, 508-943-8714, to find a convenient time to drop off your soup or financial gifts and we will shop for you. Together, we can make a difference.

Bartlett High School announces honor roll

WEBSTER — Bartlett Jr.-Sr. High School has released its honor roll for the second quarter of the 2024-2025 school year:

Grade 9
High Honor: Don Ta
Honor: Zuaylianice Benito Torres, Matthew Czernicki, Natalia Dos Santos, Calee Gardner, Xenia

Gauthier, Elijah McKenna, Gisselle Mendoza Pinada, Angela Sarfo, Julia Urato

Grade 10
High Honor: Megan Milligan, Michael Stawiecki
Honor: Jayden Azu, Caden Case, Nathan Casper, Callie Castro, Cheyenne Grundel, Libby Kokoszka, Dhyey Patel, Irelyn Pottle, Tyler Whiting

Grade 11
High Honor: Nathan Cole, Eryk Piwowarczyk, Lawrence Smith
Honor: Niel Duszlak, Omar Medina Perez, Michael Pagan, Aiden Turner

Grade 12
High Honor: Hope Cooper, Avery Gifford, Ariannalys Lopez
Honor: Savannah Bjork, Gracien Boucher, Jayden Casey, Aiden Castillo, Urmiben Dabhi, Ayden Do, Sydney Fuller, Taryn Gerber, Ayden Heenan, Natalee Kelly, Evangeline Mayotte, Janelle Noel, Adam Phillips, Gabriella Troy, Maya Wetherbee

Assumption students named Dean's List

WORCESTER — Assumption University has announced those who have been named to the University's Dean's List for the fall 2024 semester. Students named to the Dean's List must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 for a five-class, 15-credit semester to be included on the prestigious list, which is announced at the completion of the fall and spring semesters.

- Logan Alexander of Auburn, Class of 2026
- Marta Brzoska of Auburn, Class of 2027
- Laura Byrne of Auburn, Class of 2024
- Vincent Denolf of Auburn, Class of 2027
- Owen Fitzgerald of Auburn, Class of 2026
- Lia McDonald of Auburn, Class of 2028
- Georgia Pokropowicz of Auburn, Class of 2025
- Robert Russell of Auburn, Class of 2025
- Isabella Direda of Oxford, Class of 2027
- Benjamin Duquette of Webster, Class of 2027
- Eric Giarnese of Dudley, Class of 2025
- Daniel Gronek of Oxford, Class of 2028
- Brooke Leblanc of Dudley, Class of 2026
- Madison Piehler of Webster, Class of 2025
- Vanessa Piwowarczyk of Webster, Class of 2028
- Sebastian Podgorny of Oxford, Class of 2026
- Jordan Tatro of North Oxford, Class of 2028

Assumption University, founded in 1904 by the Augustinians of the Assumption, is a premier New England University for high-quality education, integrating career preparation and education of the whole person, drawing upon the best in the rich and centuries-long tradition of Catholic higher education. Assumption's graduates are known for their intellectual seriousness, thoughtful citizenship, and dedication to the common good. Located in Worcester, Massachusetts, Assumption has undergone a series of major advancements since transitioning to a university, including new academic buildings, degree programs, and athletic facilities for our NCAA Division II student athlete population. The University offers 37 majors and 50 minors in the liberal arts, sciences, business, nursing, and professional studies, and other areas, as well as graduate degrees and professional credentials. For more information about Assumption University, please visit www.assumption.edu.

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Adult Programming
YOGA - Saturdays at 9:30 AM **No Class on Saturday, February 15th**

Join Julie or Lauren at the Gladys E. Kelly Library for a vinyasa yoga class for all levels. In Sanskrit, Vinyasa yoga translates to the "uniting of movement with breath." A typical class involves centering the mind with the breath, aromatherapy, movement of the body to release energetic blockages, and

finally, rest and relaxation. Classes are free. Funded by the Friends of the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library.

COOKBOOK CLUB - Thursday, February 6th 6:00-7:30PM

February's book is What to Cook When You Don't Feel Like Cooking by Caroline Chambers. Choose any of the recipes in the book to make and bring to our gathering. We will eat together and discuss our notes from the cookbook experience.

MIGHTY APHRODITE CLASS - Tuesday, February 11th 6:00-8:00PM

A playful program celebrating love, friendship and fun romantic duos throughout history, and of course, the love of chocolate! Fun cultural history of foods that inspire love. Aphrodite's mocktail spritzer will be served along with chocolate treats. Fun poetry, a large, colorful display, and interactive trivia

make this a class to love. Registration required.

The Nest: Make Money as a Stock Photographer - Thursday, February 13th 5:00-8:00PM

If you are an amateur or professional digital photographer who loves taking pictures, you might want to consider stock photography as a possible source of additional income. A stock photographer shoots a variety of images and then sends them off to their stock photo agencies for them to display on their web sites. Come learn from photographer Peter Glass how to make money as a stock photographer.

ADULT PUZZLE NIGHT - Thursday, February 13th 6:00-7:30PM

NEW GENRE BOOK CLUB - Tuesday, February 18th 6:00-7:30PM

Starting in February, join us for a genre book club. February's book is a romance: Before I Let Go by Kennedy Ryan. Email Jess to add your name to the list: jfontaine@cwmars.org. March will be a sci-fi book!

ADULT BOOK GROUP - Monday, February 24th 6:30PM

Join us in the Community Room as we discuss Imprisoned: The Betrayal of Japanese Americans During World War II by Martin W. Sandler.

The Nest: Leading with Listening - Monday, February 24th 6:00PM

Join Andrew Morrison of Real Custom Training to learn leadership skills that you can use in your small business.

WINTER FEET RETREAT - Tuesday, February 25th 6:00PM

Join Lorri Ducharme of Prestige Nails as she teaches tips and pointers on how to care for your dry winter feet. Proper nail trimming and filing, soothing foot soak, and more! Participants will leave with foot-care product samples. Registration Required

Children's and Young Adult

Programming

Scavenger Hunt--- All Month Long

What's more exciting than a scavenger hunt? Come upstairs to the Children's room to pick up a list of things to find all around the library. Once you've completed the scavenger hunt, check in with the Children's Librarian to redeem a prize.

TAKE AND MAKE CRAFT--- All month long

Take and Make craft kits are available for pick up upstairs in the Children's Room. Each month will feature a different craft to create and instructions will be provided with the supplies. New Take and Make kits will be available for pick up on the 1st of every month, while supplies last, and are limited to one per patron.

PLAY-DOH PLAYTIME - MONDAYS at 10:00AM

Drop-in to our Children's Program Room every Monday morning to play, make, and build with our collection of colorful Play-Doh, sculpting tools, and various sets. This is a fun, sensory playtime to foster creativity and exploration. Perfect for ages 2-6. Siblings are welcome.

MAKER MONDAYS - MONDAYS from 3:30-4:30 PM

Feeling artistic? We will have a variety of craft materials available to put your creativity to the test! In January we're using Perler Beads!

T O D D L E R PLAYTIME--- TUESDAYS at 10:00 AM

Kids 0 to 6 are invited to get their wiggles out with weekly obstacle course and fun.

STUFFED ANIMAL STORYTIME - WEDNESDAYS at 10:00AM

Join Youth Services Librarian Andrew for stories, songs, and fun with our plush pals! This storytime is geared toward ages birth to 3, but siblings are welcome.

STEM BEGINNINGS: YOUNG SCIENTISTS - WEDNESDAYS at 10:00AM

Children, ages 3-6, with a parent/caregiver will learn STEM

(Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) concepts through hands-on activities, story time, challenges and simple experiments in this weekly STEM series. Registration through the YFCP website.

ME AND MY MINI - THURSDAYS at 10:00AM

A creative movement group for ages 0 through 2.5. Get groovy to upbeat music with fun props and a story.

TEEN VIDEO GAME - THURSDAYS at 3:00PM

Teens are invited to play games on our Nintendo Switch!

BEGINNER ORIGAMI - FRIDAYS at 3:45PM

Come explore the art of origami mak-

ing! A creative and meditative craft. Open to kids of all ages.

SENSORY BIN STORYTIME - FRIDAYS at 10:00AM

Come join us for a fun filled Storytime as we read together and then let our imaginations fly through different sensory bin activities. Each week will offer a different theme exploration related to the books and bins provided.

SNOW MUCH FUN - SATURDAYS at 11:30AM

We'll be featuring several fun activities on Saturdays this winter: Saturday, February 8th is Dragons Love Tacos Storytime, with make your own tacos!

WEBSTER SENIOR CENTER

5 Church St.
(508) 949-3845

Email: SeniorCenter@Webster-MA.gov

Senior Center hours are Monday- Friday 9 a.m.- 4 p.m., with every first Thursday 9 a.m.- 7 p.m.

Like the Webster Senior Center Facebook page to view our photographs, news and announcements. Please stop by to pick up our monthly newsletter for a complete list of activities, upcoming events, and our monthly lunch menu. You may also join our email list to view our newsletter online. You do not have to be a resident of Webster to participate in our activities and programs. ALL Seniors are welcome!

Tri-Valley Lunches are served Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 11:30 am. Please call (508) 949-3845 at least forty-eight hours in advance to reserve or cancel your meal. A \$3.00 donation for 65 and up, and \$5 for 55- 64 is appreciated. All meals include milk, bread, and fruit or dessert. This week's menu: Tuesday, 2/11, Shepherd's Pie, carrots, peas. Wednesday, 2/12, Hot Dog, baked beans, coleslaw. Thursday, 2/13, Lemon Pepper Haddock, O'Brien potatoes, summer, corn. Friday, 2/14, Soup du Jour, turkey salad sandwich, bean salad.

Need Transportation? Contact SCM Elderbus at 1-800-321-0243 at least two business days in advance to schedule transportation. Elderbus is available Mondays- Fridays 8:30 am- 3:00 pm.

FUEL ASSISTANCE has returned to the Senior Center. WCAC will be here every other Thursday from 9:30 am- 2:30 pm. Please call WCAC for an appointment 508-754-1176.

Come on down to the Bomba Beauty Salon at the Webster Senior Center! Call 508-341-8724 for an appointment. Bomba Beauty Salon is open for walk in appointments on Wednesdays from 10:00 am- 1:00 pm, and Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays by appointment only from 10:00 am- 3:00 pm. Please call (508) 341-8724 to schedule an appointment.

We are now offering MOVIE MATINEES every Wednesday at 1:00 pm! Popcorn is provided. No registration needed. The movie for February 12th is You've got Mail, February 19th is Judy, and February 26th is The Six Triple Eight.

The first Thursday of every month we will be open until 7:00 pm with entertainment starting at 5:45 pm. For February we will be playing Pass the Trash. There will be a \$6.00 fee to play.

COA Meetings are the first Thursday of the month. For February, they will meet at the Senior Center on the 3rd at 10:00am.

Friend's Meetings are the second Wednesday of the month. For February, they will meet at the Senior Center on the 12th at 10:00am.

Chair Dancing Exercise classes with Forty Arroyo are the perfect workout for any fitness ability! The cost is a recommended \$3.00 donation per class. Classes are on Mondays, and Wednesdays at 9:30 am.

Knitting/Crochet group meets on Mondays from 10:00 am- 12:00 pm.

Bingo is every Tuesday and starts promptly at 1:00 pm. Please plan to arrive by 12:30 pm to allow time to buy your bingo sheets. Bingo sheets are not sold after 12:45 pm.

Do you like to play Cribbage? Our weekly Cribbage group meets every Thursday at 1:00 pm. Feel free to join us!

Calling card players or interested persons to the Webster Senior Center! Come join us for six-card or thirteen-card pitch! Six-card pitch meets on Wednesdays at 1:00 pm. Thirteen-card pitch meets on Thursdays at 1:00 pm.

Mahjongg group meets every Friday at 1:00 pm. Beginners welcome!

The Worcester County Sheriff's Office House Numbering Program will create a custom wooden sign with your house number free of charge. One sign per senior household. Please contact the Webster Senior Center at (508) 949-3845. If you are interested in having a house number sign made for you.

Senior SAFE is a program that supports fire and life safety education for seniors. The Webster Fire Dept. will do a home visit to ensure that you have the correct smoke and CO2 alarms, and that they are working properly. This is at no cost to you! All you have to do is give them a call at (508) 949-3875.

We are partnering up with the Charlton and Southbridge Senior Centers and the Overlook to offer a Day in Maine with a Clambake on Sunday, July 20, 2025. This trip includes a stop for freshly baked breads at When Pigs Fly, and a visit to Nubble Lighthouse. Your bake includes New England clam chowder, freshly dug Maine clams, mussels, Maine lobster, corn on the cob, red bliss potatoes, and blueberry crumb cake with your choice of coffee, iced tea, or lemonade. In place of lobster, there is BBQ chicken, or a vegetarian option. After your clambake, if time allows, you will stop at Stonewall Kitchen for jams and jellies, and Yummie's candy store. The price for this trip is \$109.00 per person and includes transportation, clambake, driver, and escort gratuities. There is a \$25 registration fee, and the last day to sign up is June 20, 2025. If you have questions please contact Webster Senior Center 508-949-3845.

REAL ESTATE

AUBURN
\$6,271,200, 320 Southbridge St, Auburn Four LLC, to Mister Auburn LLC.
\$6,271,200, 322 Southbridge St, Auburn Four LLC, to Mister Auburn LLC.
\$415,000, 12 Colonial Rd, Mehrtens, John J, and Mehrtens, Lisa A, to Jones, Catherine, and Bruyere, Devon.

DUDLEY
\$475,000, 26 Henry Marsh Rd, Stomski, Susan A, and Stomski, Michael C, to Lemoine, Taylor L, and Dilucchio, Austin G.

OXFORD
\$490,000, 12 Maple Ave, Gagnon, Roger, and Carignan, Ann M, to Estrada, Katalin K, and Estrada, Sefora M.
\$85,000, Hope Ave, Pine Grove RET, and Prouty, Daniel M, to Vuong, Thanh.

WEBSTER
\$455,000, 7 Nipmuck Dr, Cjj Adventure LLC, to Chaisson, Paul, and Johson, Eric.
\$290,000, 10 Goddard St, Gouin, Barbara L, and Lemoine, Beverly A, to Prizio, Frank.

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PET of the WEEK



Angeline
Sweet Angeline has been waiting a long time to find her family - could you be the ones she's been waiting for? Angeline has come a long way since being rescued. She was underweight, nervous, and not loving shelter life. Luckily a loving foster home has taken her in and she has gained weight, and continues to come out of her shell. She has shown her goofy side, and how smart she is. She gets along with other dogs and is always happy to meet a new friend. Angeline can be nervous in new situations and takes a little time to get to know you, but she warms up quickly if you offer her a tasty treat! Angeline has an adorable and unique nose. While cute, it looks the way it does since she has a cleft (aka bifid) nose. We think Angeline would do best in a home with teens and older, she could live with another dog or solo. No cats for this girl please. If you think this gorgeous girl could be the one for you, apply for her at BaypathHumane.org.
500 Legacy Farms North • Hopkinton, MA 01748



Milford Federal Bank is proud to sponsor Baypath Humane Society's Pet of the Week!

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Dudley Woman's Club invites you to A Stew & Story of Giving

DUDLEY - The Dudley Woman's Club invites you to our most popular meeting of the club year, A Stew & Story of Giving. The Feb. 13 meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. at the Dudley Town Hall.

Please join our more than 70 members as we share warm stews and donation checks with representatives from Our Bright Future, Together We Blossom and the JAK-L Foundation as we hear their stories of giving. As a part of Stew & Story, we will also send donation checks to Literacy Vols of Central Mass, Make-a-Wish of Mass & Rhode Island, and Animal Assisted Therapy Services. Our voluntary February Giving Project is disposable diapers in any size for the Webster-Dudley Food Share. Learn more about the DWC at dudleywomensclub.org.

For Advertising Information
Call 774-200-7308
email: mikaela@stonebridgepress.news

Auction news 375



I'll get back to my top 10 antiques and collectibles list in my next column as there's been some interesting news that I'd like to share this week. Two thrift store finds, and an estate sale purchase have been making headlines.

A Goodwill store in Cincinnati, Ohio, sold some donated collectibles online last year that turned out to bring more than they expected. The shop manager of the Ohio Valley Goodwill listed two Star Wars Jawa figures with another fig-

ure on the charity's website. The shop's Public Information Officer said that they went up around \$5,000 in the first week and "we knew it was more than just a couple Star Wars characters." Someone knowledgeable about the figures informed the staff that they were unpunched, meaning the tab was still intact where they would have hung on racks in the store, increasing the value. The figures sold for over \$19,000. The store manager said that it will change a lot of lives "whether it be a person with a disability or a homeless veteran we're able to get in off the streets." The figures were shipped to a winning bidder in Florida.

Late last year, another valuable Goodwill find was uncovered. Baseball cards were mass produced during the 1980s and 1990s, and most produced during that time

have little value now. A collector, Beau Thompson, bought pallets of cards from his local Goodwill store in his quest to collect one million unique Chicago Cubs baseball cards, according to Sports Illustrated. Thompson paid \$700 for a 700-pound pallet of cards; it was the 21st pallet that he had purchased. Thompson said that he typically had to throw away 10,000 junk cards per pallet. His luck changed though when he found a 2009 Bowman Chrome Mike Trout prospect autograph card. The 1 of 150 issued card is expected to sell for \$10,000 when he auctions it at the start of baseball season. Thompson has completed his collection of one million Cubs cards and Topps presented him with his own card for his accomplishment.

There is debate as to whether a Minnesota garage sale purchase is an original work by Vincent Van Gogh or just worth the \$50 the buyer paid for it. After purchasing the



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

painting, the buyer submitted information to the Van Gogh Museum asking them to verify the authenticity, according to ArtNet. The portrait of a man smoking a pipe with the sea in the background titled "Elimar" is said to be Van Gogh's version of a painting originally done by Michael Ancher. However, the Van Gogh Museum couldn't confirm that it was Van Gogh's work "based on stylistic features." The estate sale buyer sold the painting to a New York based science company called the LMI Group for an undisclosed figure. LMI claims that their new analysis proves that it was painted by Van Gogh in 1889 while he was at the Saint-Paul asylum in the south of France. LMI's approach is described as one "which considers formal analysis, provenance, and historical context—with newer scientific methods." If real, it's estimated value is around

\$15 million. The Van Gogh Museum remains unconvinced and stands by their original decision. It will now be up to potential buyers to make their own determination. Purchasing the painting will be like buying a very expensive scratch ticket.

Our single estate Civil War auction is expected to be over 1,000 lots as we continue to catalog. We are also working on a sports cards, comic book and collectibles auction, a Beacon Hill online estate auction and are beginning to catalog a collection of Laurel and Hardy memorabilia this month. We are always accepting consignments of estate jewelry, sterling silver, art, coins, and other items in our top 10 list. Please visit our website <https://centralmassauctions.com> for links to upcoming events.

Contact us to consign items or for auction information at: Wayne Tuiskula Auctioneer/ Appraiser Central Mass Auctions for Antique, Collectibles Auctions and Appraisal Services info@centralmassauctions.com or (508-612-6111)

Area residents named to dean's list at Quinnipiac University

HAMDEN, Conn. — The following area students were named to the dean's list for the Fall 2024 semester at Quinnipiac University:

Auburn
Morganne Lucier

Dudley
Christina Gunsalus, Owyn Law

Oxford
Nicole Moore

Webster
Jasmine Creighton
Rachel Dube

To qualify for the dean's list, students must earn a grade point average of at least 3.5 with no grade lower than C. Full-time students must complete at least 14 credits in a semester, with at least 12 credits that have been graded on a letter grade basis to be eligible. Part-time students must complete at least

six credits during a semester. Names followed by an asterisk denotes with honors.

Quinnipiac is a private, coeducational, institution located 90 minutes north of New York City and two hours from Boston. The university enrolls 9,400 students in 110 degree programs through its Schools of Business, Communications, Education, Computing and Engineering, Health Sciences, Law, Medicine, Nursing and the College of Arts and Sciences. Quinnipiac is recognized by U.S. News & World Report and Princeton Review's "The Best 388 Colleges." The university is in the midst of program expansion and renewal for both traditional and adult learners, attraction of diverse communities, development of innovative corporate partnerships and construction of an ambitious set of capital projects. For more information, please visit qu.edu. Connect with Quinnipiac on Facebook and follow Quinnipiac on X @QuinnipiacU.

Springfield College recognizes Dean's List students

SPRINGFIELD — Springfield College Recognizes Dean's List Students for the 2024 Fall Semester.

Springfield College has named Jillian LaBonte from Auburn to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. LaBonte has a primary major of Exercise Science / Applied ES.

Springfield College has named Sydney Clark from Dudley to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Clark has a primary major of Communication Sci & Disorders.

Springfield College has named Carly Cornacchioli from Oxford to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Cornacchioli has a primary major of Health Science / Pre-PT.

Springfield College has named Hannah Cushing from Dudley to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Cushing has a primary major of Physical Education & Hlth/FCS.

Springfield College has named Liam Gravel from Dudley to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Gravel has a primary major of Pre-Prof Athletic Training.

Springfield College has named Katelyn Hakala from Dudley to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Hakala has a primary major of Health Science / Pre-PT.

Springfield College has named Audrey Hayes from Oxford to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Hayes has a primary major of Health Science / Pre-OT.

Springfield College has named Colby Mayen from Dudley to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester.

Mayen has a primary major of Pre-Prof Athletic Training.

Springfield College has named Garrett Morin from North Oxford to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Morin has a primary major of Human Services.

Springfield College has named Anais Ortiz from Oxford to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Ortiz has a primary major of Exploratory Studies.

Springfield College has named Ryan Steiner from Oxford to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Steiner has a primary major of Sport Management.

Springfield College has named Patrick Welliver from Oxford to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Welliver has a primary major of Sport Management.

The criteria for selection to the Dean's List are as follows: The student must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded coursework for the term, exclusive of "P" grades. The student must not have any incompletes or missing grades in the designated term. The student must have a minimum semester grade average of 3.500 for the term. Student must not have been barred from Dean's List due to disciplinary action.

Endicott College announces local Dean's List students

BEVERLY — Endicott College, the first college in the U.S. to require internships of its students, is pleased to announce its Fall 2024 Dean's List students. In order to qualify for the Dean's List, a student must obtain a minimum grade point average of 3.5, receive no letter grade below "C," have no withdrawal grades, and be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits for the semester.

The following students have met these requirements:

Auburn
Jillian Treveloni, Nursing

Dudley
Abigail Connole, Education

Oxford
Isabella Biedrzycki, Nursing
Jessica Parent, Interdisciplinary Studies

Endicott College offers doctorate, master's, bachelor's, and associate degree programs at its campus on the scenic coast of Beverly, Mass., with additional sites online and at U.S. and international locations. Endicott remains true to

its founding principle of integrating professional and liberal arts education with internship opportunities across disciplines. Through the Endicott Experiential Edge, students gain unparalleled hands-on learning experiences that prepare them for career success and lifelong personal growth. For more, visit endicott.edu.

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STONEBRIDGE PRESS PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Slow down— technology is stealing your time

We live in a time where technology promises to make life easier, yet somehow, we have less time than ever. Every advancement, faster Internet, instant messaging, smart devices, claims to free up space in our schedules, but instead, we're drowning in notifications, endless emails, and a to-do list that never seems to go away. Life has become a constant cycle of "work, work, work," and the simplicity many of us grew up with feels like a distant memory.

Think about it: technology was supposed to cut down on the time we spend working. Instead of making things easier, it has made us always available, always connected, always doing something. The lines between work and personal time are blurred, and instead of freeing us up to enjoy life, our devices keep us tethered to obligations. We're answering emails at dinner, checking texts before bed, and scrolling through social media when we could be outside, catching up with friends, or just doing nothing for a change.

Somehow, we've been tricked into believing that productivity equals worth, that every spare moment should be filled with checking off tasks. Half the time we spend responding to "urgent" messages, organizing digital clutter, or trying to keep up with the latest trends is time wasted. The hours we lose staring at screens, overthinking schedules, and squeezing in one more thing could be spent actually living.

Remember when life was simpler? When fun wasn't something we had to "schedule," but something that just happened? As kids, we didn't check emails or try to multitask joy. We just had fun riding bikes, playing outside, having actual conversations without checking our phones every five minutes.

It's time to reclaim some of that simplicity. Give yourself permission to step away. Carve out time not just to cross things off your to-do list, but to breathe, to laugh, to enjoy. Be deliberate about setting boundaries with work and technology. Put the phone down. Close the laptop. Go outside. Call a friend instead of sending a text. Spend an afternoon doing something just because it makes you happy.

Life isn't just about being productive. It's about being present. The world won't fall apart if you take a break. And when you do, you might just realize how much time you've been wasting trying to keep up with a pace that was never meant to be sustainable in the first place.

Letter submission policy

Letters to the Editor must include the author's name, address, and a daytime phone number for purposes of verification in order to be considered for publication. Only the author's name and the town in which they reside will be published. Letters submitted without all of the required information will not be accepted.

It is the sole prerogative of the Editor to determine whether a submission satisfies our requirements and decency standards, and any submission may be rejected at any time for any reason he or she might deem appropriate.

VIEWPOINT

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

Seeing God's beauty all around us

At the Metro Station in Washington, D.C. on a cold January morning in 2007, a man with a violin played six Bach pieces for about 45 minutes. During that time, almost 1100 people went through the station, most on their way to work. After about 3 minutes, a middle-aged man noticed that there was a musician playing. He slowed his pace and stopped for a few seconds, and then hurried on to meet his schedule.

At 4 minutes, the violinist received his first dollar. A woman threw money in the hat and, without stopping, continued to walk. A minute later, a young man leaned against the wall to listen to him, then looked at his watch and started to walk away. He was late for work.

The one who paid the most attention was a three-year-old boy, but his mother tugged him along hurriedly. The kid stopped to look at the violinist again, but the mother pushed hard and the child continued to walk, turning his head the whole time. This action was repeated by several other children, but every parent - without exception - forced their children to move on quickly.

During the 45 minutes, only six people stopped and listened for a short while. A mere 27 out of 1,097 passing travelers gave a total of \$37.17. When he finished playing and silence took over, no one noticed and no one applauded. There was no recognition at all.

No one realized that the violinist was Joshua Bell, one of the greatest musicians in the world, playing one of the most intricate pieces ever written by Bach, with a violin worth \$3.5 million dollars. Two days earlier, Joshua Bell played before a sold-out theater in Boston where people paid an average of \$100 to listen to him play the same music.

This true story was organized by a Washington Post writer Gene Weingarten, who won a Pulitzer Prize for his article describing this social experience on perception, taste and people's priorities. At an inappropriate time and in a commonplace environment, would people recognize beauty? And if so, would they stop to appreciate it?

Weingarten noted, "Each passerby had a quick choice to make, one familiar to commuters in any urban area where the occasional street performer is part of the cityscape - Do we stop and listen, or do we hurry past with a blend of guilt and irritation, aware of our cupidity but annoyed by the unbidden demand on our time and wallet? Do we throw in a buck, just to be polite? Does our decision change if the musician is really bad or really good? Do we have time for beauty? And shouldn't we make the time?"

Think about this experiment for a moment - a world class musician playing a magnificent piece of music, yet so few people notice, and even fewer

Life doesn't always give us the outcomes we hope for. In those moments, it's easy to let your emotions take control. But as history shows us, cooler heads prevail. Let these stories remind you of the power of keeping your composure, even in the most trying times.

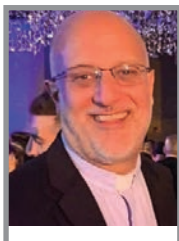
Alexander Hamilton was a brilliant statesman and one of America's Founding Fathers, but he had a knack for making enemies. His sharp tongue and political writings made him no stranger to conflict, and one of his fiercest foes was Aaron Burr.

When Hamilton's private remarks about Burr being "despicable" were published, Burr demanded satisfaction through a duel. Instead of defusing the situation, Hamilton, bound by honor and societal expectations, reluctantly agreed to face Burr on the dueling grounds.

The duel, which took place in 1804, ended with Hamilton fatally shot. Burr, though victorious in the duel, saw his political career spiral into ruin due to public outrage. Hamilton's decision to defend his honor cost him everything, while Burr's inability to let go of his anger ensured his own downfall. Sometimes, swallowing your pride is better than risking everything to defend it.

"When anger rises, think of the consequences," wrote Confucius.

But pride isn't the only emotion that



BEYOND THE PEWS

By FR. LUKE A. VERONIS
SAINTS
CONSTANTINE
AND HELEN
GREEK
ORTHODOX
CHURCH,
WEBSTER

take the time to enjoy. If less than 3% of the commuters had time to simply pause at such beauty, how many other things are they, and we missing as we rush through life?

Each and every day, God speaks to us through beauty - whether through nature or music or writing or some other experience - as well as through His most beautiful creation, our fellow human beings. God is present everywhere, in everyone, trying to communicate with us. The question should never be, "Where is God?" Instead, we need to ask ourselves, "Where are we? Do we have the eyes to see Him? Do we have the ears to hear His soft, quiet voice? Can we perceive His Spirit active and present all around us and in our lives?"

I remember when I was a seminarian, we had an elderly Bishop, Gerasimos, living on campus. Although He was retired and didn't teach any classes, I learned more from this holy man than from most of my professors, especially because of his saintly, peaceful, and joy-filled presence. One thing that remains etched in my mind is the way he would walk around campus and enjoy the beauty all around. He would tenderly stop and smell the roses in front of his apartment. He would admire any squirrel or animal crossing his path, and seemingly speak to the birds. He was in communion with nature, as well as at peace with all people, because He understood God's presence everywhere and in everyone.

When Jesus preached Good News to the crowds, He often concluded by saying, "Those who have ears to hear, let them hear." Thousands of people listened to Christ, but only a few perceived what He truly said, and even fewer responded positively to Him. When we don't feel God's presence in our lives, it's not that He is absent. He is present, but we often may be too busy to even notice. We may be too occupied with our own superficial or inconsequential affairs, or even with what we perceive as significant and important. We may think "I don't have time to stop for this subway musician?" or "What do I have to learn from this homeless person?" We forget that God is present, possibly speaking through this person, or talking to us through the beauty of this unexpected event.

When we rush throughout the day, with distractions crying out for our attention, going 24/7, it is hard to hear God's voice. Yet if we set aside time, consciously open our eyes and minds, and seek after God, or even wait for God, the wonder is that we will not only hear Him, but we will actually meet Him. The more we allow God's Spirit to dwell within us, the more we begin to see Him everywhere and in everything.

So let us reflect on Joshua Bell and his Metro music concert. God's beauty is all around us, and He is trying to speak to our hearts. Are we listening?

Control yourself

can cloud judgment—despair can be just as destructive.

Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, was known for her intelligence and cunning, but her love for Mark Antony led her to make a devastating mistake.

After Antony's forces were defeated at the Battle of Actium, he received false news that Cleopatra had died. Overcome with despair, Antony took his own life. Cleopatra, stricken with grief and unwilling to be paraded as a trophy in Rome, ended her life soon after.

Her death marked the end of Egypt's independence, as the kingdom was annexed by Rome under Octavian.

While Cleopatra's love and despair were deeply human, her fate also underscores the political stakes of her choices. Despair, unchecked, can lead even the most powerful to their knees.

"Do not let your emotions overpower your intelligence," wrote Marcus Aurelius.

Confidence is a valuable trait, but unchecked arrogance can lead to ruin.

General George Armstrong Custer, who famously led the 7th Cavalry, was known for his boldness but also for his tendency to overestimate his abilities.

In 1876, tasked with confronting a coalition of Sioux and Cheyenne warriors led by Sitting Bull, Custer dismissed advice to exercise caution.

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Once you retire, you'll likely need to draw on a variety of financial sources — and one of the most important ones may be your 401(k). And for 2025, you can put even more money into your plan than ever.

You can invest in your 401(k) in one of two ways, depending on your employer's plan. With a traditional 401(k), you contribute pre-tax dollars, which can lower your taxable income, and your money can grow tax deferred. If you have a Roth 401(k) option, you can contribute after-tax dollars, which aren't deductible, but your eventual withdrawals will be tax-free if you've had your account at least five years and you're at least 59½.

For either a traditional or Roth 401(k), as well as similar plans such as a 457(b) (for government employees) or a 403(b) (for educators and employees of some nonprofit groups), the contribution limit has increased by \$500 for 2025, to \$23,500. If you're 50 or older, you can contribute an additional \$7,500, for a total of \$31,000. And under the SECURE 2.0 legislation, if you are between 60 and 63, you have a higher catch-up contribution — \$11,250, instead of \$7,500, for a total of \$34,750.

If you can afford to contribute the full amount to your 401(k) or similar plan, consider doing so. Of course, not everyone is in that position. If you're a younger worker, you may well have other financial obligations, such as paying off student loans. And even if you've been in the workforce for a while, you may be putting away money for other things — such as your children's education — as well as your own retirement. But even if you can't "max out" on your 401(k), try to contribute at least enough to earn your employer's matching contribution, if one is offered.

Regardless of how much you contribute to your 401(k), consider these suggestions on managing the money within your plan:

Create a portfolio that fits your risk tolerance. Most 401(k) plans offer up to a dozen investment options, while some plans offer many more. You obviously want to increase your 401(k) balance as much as possible, but that doesn't necessarily mean putting all your 401(k) dollars into the most aggressive funds available. Instead, consider spreading your 401(k) contributions among a range of investments, which can help you lower your risk level while still giving you opportunities for long-term growth. Everyone's risk tolerance is different, though, so you'll want to evaluate yours when constructing your 401(k) portfolio.

Adjust your portfolio as needed. It's a good idea to review your 401(k)'s investment mix at least once a year to see if it's performing as you'd hoped. But be patient — one "down" year doesn't necessarily mean you must make changes. However, as you approach retirement, you may want to lower the risk level of your 401(k) by moving some of your dollars into more conservative vehicles. Still, even when you're retired and have started drawing money from your 401(k), you might want to keep some growth potential in it to help you stay ahead of inflation.

By contributing what you can afford to your 401(k), and by carefully managing the investments within your plan, you can help maximize the value of this powerful retirement savings vehicle — and give yourself a key asset to help you enjoy your retirement years.

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

Annual Cold/Flu (& More) Guide

This time of year seasonal cold and flu outbreaks are common. In fact, up to one in five Americans are expected to experience the flu this season. While most recover within a week, some symptoms linger on. With this in mind, this column's Annual Cold and Flu guide is offered – along with timely updates, additions, and natural and proactive methods you can employ to increase your odds of staying healthy this season.

Note: This information is offered as a guide only, NOT medical advice. Seek out a health professional to treat any respiratory illness.

** Cold, Flu, Covid, RSV? The common cold, the flu, Covid-19, and RSV are all respiratory illnesses caused by different viruses. Symptoms of these maladies can be similar at the start of the illness, they are often treated differently, so it's important to identify them.

** Most common this time of year are colds and flu. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a cold is a milder respiratory

ailment that has symptoms that last a few days; the flu can last weeks and result in such serious health problems as pneumonia. While a stuffy nose and aches and pains are symptoms typically present in both colds and flu, a temperature reading can often differentiate the two. A common cold rarely causes a temperature to reach over 101 degrees. Also, body aches are much more common with the flu virus.

** Cold Symptoms: Symptoms usually begin with sore throat, runny nose followed by congestion and cough. Mucus may become thicker and darker. A slight fever is possible. Cold symptoms usually last for about a week. During the first three days that you have cold symptoms, you are contagious.

** Flu Symptoms: Flu symptoms usually come on quicker than cold symptoms are typically more severe. They can include a sore throat, (sometimes hacking) cough, congestion, accompanied by headache, fatigue, chills and fever 102 to 104 degrees. Most symptoms improve



TAKE THE HINT
KAREN TRAINOR

in about five days, but fatigue can linger on for a week or more. The flu virus can be contagious from the day before the onset of the virus up to a week after.

** Covid-19 Symptoms (subject to change as new strains are discovered): According to the CDC, as of January 2025, the dominant variant nationwide is XEC, with 47% of cases, followed by LP8.1, with 15% of cases, and KP3.1.1, with 14% of cases. Experts claim while the original omicron variant is gone, sub-variants of omicron are circulating, including MC.1, KP.3, and LF7.

The most common symptoms of the dominant XEC and KP3.1.1 variants are similar to those of previous variants. Symptoms include fever, chills, sore throat, body aches, new loss of taste or smell, cough, runny nose, headache, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting. Depending on the variant, symptoms develop 2-14 days after exposure and can last from several days to weeks.

Emergency treatment should be sought for the following symptoms:

Inability to wake or stay awake; Lips, skin, and nail beds that appear pale, blue, or gray; New confusion; Persistent pain or pressure in the chest; Trouble breathing. Free rapid COVID tests (four per household) are still available at COVIDtests.gov

** RSV: Symptoms of RSV mimic the common cold but may become more severe over time. Symptoms can last over a couple of weeks. Typical RSV symptoms are a runny nose, cough, wheezing, sneezing, and reduced appetite. In more serious cases RSV infections can lead to bronchitis or pneumonia.

According to the CDC, People infected with RSV are usually contagious for 3 to 8 days and may become contagious a day or two before they start showing signs of illness. However, some infants, and people with weakened immune systems, can continue to spread the virus even after they stop showing symptoms,

for as long as four weeks.

** How viruses are spread: Respiratory viruses are spread when an infected person releases germs in the air via coughing, sneezing and close contact. Such viruses can live for hours on surfaces such as desks, door knobs, handrails, phones, etc.

** Home Remedies: The following remedies are effective "first step" treatments for respiratory illnesses. Symptoms that last more than a few days or become severe should be checked by a physician.

*According to several Japanese studies, gargling with black tea twice a day from October to March, significantly improved participants' abilities to fend off the flu bug.

*Feel a case of the sniffles coming on? The fiery spice cayenne is a hot commodity in home remedies,

*Have a head cold? A dash or two of cayenne powder in a cup of hot tea relieves congestion.

*Touted as a natural antibiotic, a few shakes of Tabasco sauce into tomato juice is said to boost the immunity and fight flu. But never give cayenne to kids!

*A hot bath can be a powerful cold chaser and in Chinese medicine very hot baths are used to "sweat" out a cold at its earliest stages. To kick up the detox power of a bath, add a few drops of eucalyptus, rosemary or thyme essential oils to the water.

Note: Check with your doctor before taking a hot bath if you are pregnant, diabetic, have heart disease or other complications.

*Giving colds a two-step punch with a double dose of ginger and lemon can relieve cold and flu symptoms. Adding ginger and lemon to a hot cup of tea not only soothes the throat, but ginger's antimicrobial properties and lemon's vitamin C help fight the bug. To break up mucus, add a pinch of cayenne pepper to the hot tea.

*It's true that chicken broth can offer cold and flu sufferers relief, but did you know it's the bone broth from the homemade brew that provides much of the healing power? Broth made from boiling bones (for about 12 hours for maximum benefit) offers magnesium, sulfur, phosphorus and other trace minerals that are easily

absorbable not always readily available.

*Whether you like it hot or cold, a compress applied to sinuses can relieve congestion quickly. A freeze pack (or bag of frozen vegetables) works as a cold pack on the sinus area to decrease symptoms. Or, heat up a wet facecloth in the microwave (not to hot) and apply across the bridge of the nose for similar relief.

*While there's no cure for the common cold some foods appear to reduce susceptibility to catching colds, or at least reduce the severity of the symptoms. Foods containing beta-carotene, vitamin C, and zinc have shown to have immune repairing and boosting properties. Research suggests that zinc (which is in many over the counter products to prevent colds) can work to reduce the duration and severity of a cold. But it is only effective if it's started early, at the very first signs of illness.

*Did you know you can reach into the refrigerator to clear congestion? Apple juice and purple grape juice both have properties to help clear congestion and a runny nose. As a bonus dark grape juice is rich in tannins, which have been known to kill viruses.

*Hot foods may be the weapon to battling mucus. Studies show foods such as chili peppers, horseradish and garlic help reduce congestion by driving out mucus. How so? The same agent that induces tears also helps thin out excess mucus.

*Coughs and congestion is uncomfortable, but relief can be as close as your water bottle.

Keep hydrated by drinking at least 64 ounces of water a day. Water is the best expectorant, and will help thin the mucus and loosen the cough.

** Did you know 3% hydrogen peroxide is a natural disinfectant that can help keep cold and flu germs at bay? Hydrogen peroxide is a thrifty alternative to pricey germ killer sprays. Use it full strength to kill germs on phones, keyboards, door handles or more.

** Win a Three Course 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 (or whenever I receive enough tips for a column) 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 E-mail KDRR@aol.com. Hints are entered into a drawing for dinner for two at the historic Publick House Inn.

POSITIVELY

continued from page A6

Underestimating the size and coordination of the Native forces, he divided his already small command and advanced with only 200 men. Outnumbered nearly 10 to 1, Custer and his men were overwhelmed at the Battle of the Little Bighorn, known as "Custer's Last Stand."

Had Custer listened to his subordinates and taken the time to assess the situation, the outcome might have been different. His arrogance turned a preventable defeat into a tragic cautionary tale of hubris.

He reportedly said, "There are not enough Indians in the world to defeat the Seventh Cavalry"—a chilling testament to his overconfidence.

Anne Boleyn, King Henry VIII's second wife, was known for her intelligence and charm, but her fiery nature often made her enemies.

After rising to power and captivating Henry, Anne's outspoken nature and unwillingness to defer to him created tension in their marriage. When she failed to produce a male heir, Henry's affections turned to Jane Seymour, and Anne's enemies at court seized the

opportunity to act against her.

Charged with adultery, treason, and even witchcraft, Anne was arrested and executed in 1536.

Historians agree the charges were fabricated, but her sharp tongue and ambition made her an easy target in a court where enemies were always watching.

Her story shows that unchecked emotions, no matter how justified, can erode even the strongest positions. Tempered words and actions often yield far greater power than fiery outbursts.

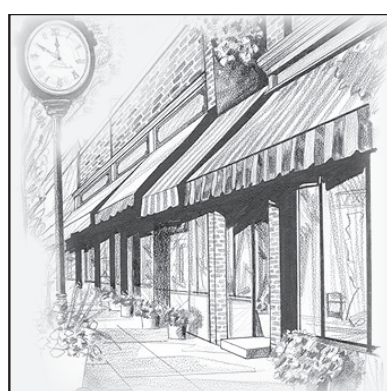
"If you can't control your temper, how can you hope to control your fate?" – Anonymous

Each of these stories—from Hamilton's pride to Cleopatra's despair, Custer's arrogance, and Anne Boleyn's fiery temper—reminds us that emotions can be powerful, but unchecked, they're destructive.

Losing your cool doesn't just impact the moment—it can change the course of your life.

Cooler heads prevail because they see the bigger picture, weigh the consequences, and act with clarity instead of impulse.

Staying in control isn't about suppressing emotions—it's about mastering them.



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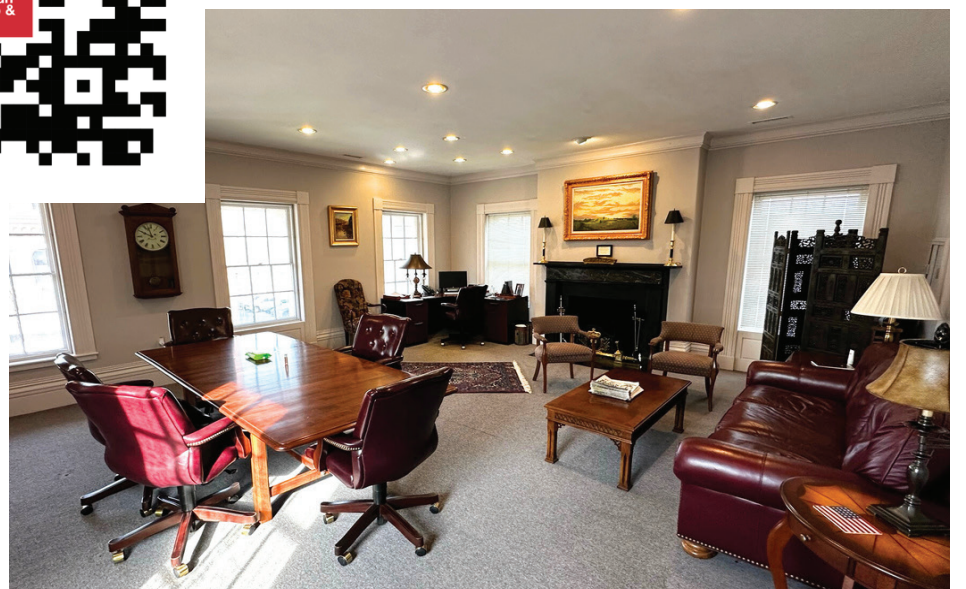


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Amira Seddiki selected for a year of Project 351 leadership & service

BOSTON — Eighth-grade service Ambassadors representing the Commonwealth's 351 cities and towns kicked-off a year of youth-led service with Project 351 on Saturday, Jan. 25. This year's Class includes Amira Seddiki, an eighth grader at Webster Middle School.

Six students were nominated by staff members to be Webster Middle School's 2025 ambassador. Amira was selected based on her core values of kindness, compassion, humility, and gratitude, which she demonstrates every day with every person. Amira has been part of WMS's Unified Basketball team through Special Olympics and has volunteered at the elementary school's Girls on the Run program.

On Saturday, Jan. 25, Ambassadors were joined by Gov. Maura Healey, Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll, Massachusetts Secretary of Education Patrick Tutwiler, and other community leaders for a day of service and celebration in Boston.

"The young people who serve with Project 351 are great examples of what

makes Massachusetts a leader in so many important ways," said Healey. "These Ambassadors demonstrate what is possible when we work together to make the changes we all want to see in our own communities. I'm proud to join them as they embark on this important year of leadership and service."

Project 351, a non-profit organization, annually unites a class of unsung heroes for a transformative year of leadership development, enrichment, and impact through unifying state-wide service campaigns. This year, Project 351 celebrates its 15th year with a collective social impact on more than 1.4 million lives. Project 351's annual Launch celebration honors the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King.

"It's inspiring to see the incredible passion of these young people at work in their schools and communities," said Lieutenant Governor Driscoll. "With every service project that is undertaken, a ripple effect travels across the state, impacting thousands of lives and strengthening



Amira Seddiki

the bonds that connect us all."

Launch Day kicks-off 12 months of leadership development through Alumni mentorship and enrichment through Project 351's Service Leadership Academy. Through Project 351, Ambassadors develop the skills and confidence

to mobilize their hometowns in service campaigns that address critical issues including hunger, clothing insecurity, and educational equity.

"I first experienced Project 351's amazing students while principal at Brighton High School," said Tutwiler. "I continue to be impressed by these

young Ambassadors and what they're able to achieve in communities across Massachusetts. The students associated with this incredible organization will be the next generation's leaders and they should inspire and energize all of us."

On Launch Day, Ambassadors traveled from across the state to convene at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum for a celebratory morning program. The program also included remarks by James Gallagher, General Counsel, John Hancock/Manulife, a founding sponsor. Wearing their signature navy tee, Ambassadors mobilized by Service Hero teams for an afternoon of service at La Colaborativa, Brighton High School, and Cradles to Crayons. In partnership with these community leaders, Ambassador service impacted more than 34,000 neighbors.

"Project 351 is powered by the idealism and ideas of 8th grade change makers," said Carolyn Casey, Project 351 Founder and Executive Director. "As we welcome our 5,588th Ambassador, we celebrate

the transformative good made possible when we unite in common cause. And we uplift the values they stand for -- kindness, compassion, and respect for the dignity of all."

About Project 351
Founded in 2011, Project 351 is a youth-led movement for change powered by an eighth-grade unsung hero and high school Alumni mentors selected to represent every city and town in Massachusetts. Youth are recognized by hometown educators for an exemplary ethic of service; values of kindness, compassion, humility, and gratitude; and devotion to equity and inclusion. The Ambassadors' 12-month term of leadership development and service is the foundation of Project 351's leadership model. High school, college, and career Alumni steward Project 351's mission and model of impact as mentors, program leaders, and governance. Through the 35ONE enrichment continuum, a new generation of leaders develops the skills, knowledge, and courage to achieve bold change. For more information, visit <https://project351.org/>.

Worcester Polytechnic Institute announces Dean's List

WORCESTER — A total of 2,393 undergraduate students at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) were named to the university's fall 2024 Dean's List. The criteria for the WPI Dean's List differ from that of most other universities as WPI does not compute a grade point average (GPA). Instead, WPI students are named to the Dean's List based on the amount of work completed at the A level in courses and hands-on projects.

"WPI's academic programs are rigorous and require a level of independence beyond what is required in traditional courses. WPI students work on real-world, open-ended problems on campus and in communities around the globe. Far from being simple academic exercises, the projects students complete have genuine and lasting impacts in our partner communities," said Provost Andrew Sears. "Some of this nation's best and brightest students come to WPI to study engineering, science, business, and the humanities. Those named to the Dean's List have excelled in all of their work, and we are exceptionally proud of these outstanding students."

The following students were named to the Dean's List for Fall 2024:

- Alysha Creelman of Auburn, class of 2025, majoring in Data Science
- Kevin Duong of Auburn, class of 2028, majoring in Mechanical Engineering
- Audrey Johnson of Auburn, class of 2025, majoring in Mechanical Engineering
- Tien Nguyen of Auburn, class of 2028, majoring in Computer Science
- Finn O'Donnell of Auburn, class of 2027, majoring in Electrical and Computer Engineering
- Nicholas Palumbo of Auburn, class of 2026, majoring in Computer Science and Robotics Engineering
- Mina Boktor of Dudley, class of 2027, majoring in Computer Science
- Zoe Butzke of Oxford, class of 2027, majoring in Mechanical Engineering
- Nathan Card of Dudley, class of 2028, majoring in Aerospace Engineering
- Gabriel Colebourn of Webster, class of 2027, majoring in Chemical Engineering
- Christian Consiglio of Oxford, class of 2025, majoring in Computer Science
- Andrew Demicco of North Oxford, class of 2028, majoring in Mathematical Sciences
- Marlee Donohoe of Dudley, class of 2026, majoring in Biomedical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering
- Sarah Fenton of Dudley, class of 2025, majoring in Chemical Engineering
- Talia Gardner of Webster, class of 2026, majoring in Biology and Biotechnology
- Parker Glispin of Oxford, class of 2025, majoring in Computer Science
- Elijah Gray of Oxford, class of 2026, majoring in Computer Science
- Samantha Loy of Webster, class of 2028, majoring in Biology and Biotechnology
- Szymon Mamro of Webster, class of 2026, majoring in Computer Science
- Sofia McCarty of Dudley, class of 2028, majoring in Computer Science
- Sofia Napierata of Webster, class of 2026, majoring in Interactive Media and

Game Development

Benjamin Perry of Dudley, class of 2026, majoring in Computer Science and Interactive Media and Game Development - Technology

Luke Poirier of Dudley, class of 2028, majoring in Civil Engineering

Rami Rachid of Dudley, class of 2027, majoring in Biomedical Engineering

Patrick Ryan of Dudley, class of 2026, majoring in Physics

William Tyrrell of Dudley, class of 2025, majoring in Electrical and Computer Engineering

Amanda Warchal of Webster, class of 2026, majoring in Biology and Biotechnology

About Worcester Polytechnic Institute

WPI is a top-tier STEM-focused research university and a recognized

pioneer and global leader in project-based learning. Founded in 1865 on the principle that students learn most effectively by applying the theory learned in the classroom to the practice of solving real-world problems, WPI's continued mission is to transform lives, turn knowledge into action to confront global challenges, and revolutionize STEM through distinctive and inclusive education, projects, and research. WPI's project-based curriculum engages undergraduates in solving important scientific, technological, and societal problems throughout their education and at more than 50 project centers around the world. Today WPI offers more than 70 bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs across 18 academic departments in science, engineering, technology, business, the social sciences, and the humanities and arts. To help address ongoing challenges,

improve lives, and help create a more sustainable world, WPI faculty and students pursue groundbreaking research in such areas as the life sciences, smart technologies, materials and manufacturing, and global initiatives.

Local student earns President's List recognition at Norwich University

NORTHFIELD, Vt. — Maria Piekarczyk of Dudley has been recognized on the President's List at Norwich University for the Fall 2024 semester:

Full-time undergraduate students, who earned a semester grade point average of 4.0 are awarded President's List honors.

About Norwich University

Norwich University is a diversified academic institution that educates traditional-age students and adults in a Corps of Cadets and as civilians. Norwich offers a broad selection of traditional and distance-learning programs culminating in baccalaureate and graduate degrees. Norwich University was founded in 1819 by Captain Alden Partridge of the U.S. Army and is the oldest private military college in the United States of America. Norwich is one of our nation's six senior military colleges and the birthplace of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC). www.norwich.edu

Deirdre Legasey named to Dean's List at University of Maryland Global Campus

ADELPHI, Md. — Deirdre Legasey of Auburn was named to the Dean's List for the fall 2024 term at University of Maryland Global Campus. To be eligible for the honor, a student must complete at least six credits during the term, earned a grade point average of at least 3.5 for the term, and maintained a cumulative GPA of 3.5 at UMGC.

University of Maryland Global Campus was founded more than 75 years ago specifically to serve the higher education needs of working adults and military servicemembers. Today, UMGC is the largest provider of postsecondary education in Maryland and continues its global tradition with online and hybrid courses, more than 175 classroom and service locations worldwide, and more than 135 degrees and certificates backed by the reputation of a state university and the University System of Maryland. For more information, visit umgc.edu.

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OBITUARIES

Alfred C. Reich, Jr., 87



PIC FLAG

DUDLEY – Alfred C. Reich, Jr., 87, died Thursday, January 30, 2025 in UMass/Memorial University Campus, Worcester.

He leaves his wife of 66 years, Nancy B. (Ducharme) Reich; 3 children, Anne L. Melendez of Webster; Christopher R. Reich of Stuart, FL, and Jonathan Reich and his wife Liliana of Dudley; 6 grandchildren, Christopher J. Melendez and his wife Meredith, Matthew C. Reich and his fiancée Peyton Guess, Tyler Reich and his wife Alexa, Ruben Reich, Gabriel Reich and Wilson Reich; 4 great-grandchildren, Camden, Jaxon, Brayden and Charlie; nephews and nieces. He was preceded in death by his grandson Jesse C. Melendez in 2014, by his grandson Julian Reich in 2022, and by 3 sisters Freida, Marion and Mildred. He was born on April 9, 1937 in Webster, the son of Alfred C. Reich, Sr. and Elsie (Miller) Reich and graduated from Saint Louis High School in 1955. He earned his Bachelors of Science Degree from Worcester State College in 1970, his first Masters Degree in Education in 1973, his second Masters Degree in Counseling in 1980, an Associates Degree in Science and Law Enforcement in 1986 and was awarded a Graduate Degree in Education in 1990 from Worcester State College. Mr. Reich was a U.S. Navy veteran serving from 1955 to 1958. As a naval reservist he served in Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Somalia and the Haitian Crisis, where he saw action serving with the 1st Marine Division. He also was recalled for special work in Operation Sea Signal. He retired from the reserves in 1997 with the rank of Master Chief Petty Officer. From 1999 to 2001 he worked on the United Nations International Police Task Force as a sta-

tion commander in Capljina, Bosnia and Herzegovina. He was a life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Webster-Dudley American Legion Post # 184 and the Disabled American Veterans.

He was first employed as police officer for the Webster Police Department from 1960 to 1973, attaining the rank of sergeant. He was the juvenile probation officer for Southern Worcester County and later became an adult probation officer for the Southern Worcester County District before retiring in 1998. He was also a teacher of social studies at Southbridge Junior High School for one year and then tutor at the Worcester County House of Correction. He was a member of Saint Louis Church in Webster. He was a founder of the Dudley Peewee Football League and later coached his own sons in the Dudley Little League. As an avid Red Sox fan he revered Ted Williams. He loved to read and liked to golf. He served as a selectman for the Town of Dudley from 2003 to 2006. He also was a Notary Public and a Justice of the Peace. He was long time member of Bay Path Regional Technical School Committee. His life was dedicated to his family and his community. His funeral will be held on Saturday, February 8, from the Sitkowski, Malboeuf & Hickey Funeral Home, 340 School Street, Webster, with a Mass at 11:00 AM in Saint Louis Church, 14 Lake Street, Webster. Burial will be held at the convenience of the family with military honors provided by the Webster-Dudley Veterans Council. Visitation will be held from 5:00 to 7:00 PM Friday, February 7, in the funeral home. Donations in his memory may be made to Saint Louis Church, 52 Negus Street, Webster, MA 01570. www.websterfunerals.com



Anna B. Fijal, 103

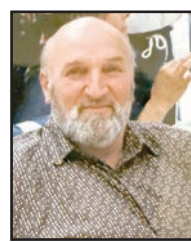


WEBSTER - Anna B. (Tryba) Fijal, 103, died Wednesday, January 15, 2025, in the same home where she was born, surrounded by her family. Her husband of 47 years, Theodore S. Fijal died in 1988.

She leaves 2 daughters, Barbara A. Kryger, with whom she lived, and Patricia A. Williams of Dudley; 8 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; 6 great-great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her daughter and son-in-law Carolyn M. Hughes and Thomas E. Hughes, by her son-in-law, Warren W. Williams, by her grandson Thomas M. Hughes and by her 5 brothers and 4 sisters. She was born in Webster on September 1, 1921 a daughter of Joseph and Helen (Fidalski) Tryba and was a life-long resident. Mrs. Fijal first worked as a stitcher at Webster Shoe, then as a candy and cookie counter clerk at W.T. Grants and finally as a waitress at McGeary's

Lunch Counter, The Campus, Vernon Drugs and the Grey Den, all in Webster. She was a communicant of Saint Joseph Basilica and a former member of its Polish Women's Club. She enjoyed crocheting, baking, cooking, sewing stuffed animals and dolls for her grandchildren, making aprons for the church bazaar, completing Circle Word puzzles and taking care of her grandchildren. The family would like to thank Kelsey, Bruce and all the staff of Care Central VNA and Hospice for their care and compassion. Her funeral Mass was held on Tuesday, January 21 at 11:00 AM in Saint Joseph Basilica, 53 Whitcomb Street (please meet at church). Burial was in Saint Joseph Garden of Peace. A calling period took place on Tuesday morning before Mass in the church from 10:30 to 11:00 AM. The family requests that all flowers be omitted and instead donations in her memory may be made to Saint Joseph Basilica, 53 Whitcomb Street, Webster, MA 01570 or to Care Central VNA and Hospice, PO Box 534, 534 School Street, Webster, MA 01570. www.websterfunerals.com

Claude Jean Marie Fafard, 86



Webster - Claude Jean Marie Fafard, age 86, beloved husband of Dale (Barrett) Fafard, died peacefully at home, surrounded by his family, on Thursday, January 30, 2025. Claude was born in Worcester, MA, son of the late Norbert and Germaine (Arteau) Fafard.

Mr. Fafard worked many years at the former Rotman's furniture store as a furniture refinisher. Claude was an avid Hudson automobile aficionado and was a member of the Hudson Essex Terraplane chapter of New England. Along with car enthusiasm, some of the things that brought great joy to his life were his family, grandchildren and recently great grandchildren! His favorite activities were Christmas, camping, photography, breakfast, storytelling and most of all, bargain hunting!

In addition to his wife Dale, Claude is survived by daughter Lynn Schleis

and her husband Dale of Ware. Son, David Fafard and his wife Christina of Webster; and daughter Holly Fellows of Plymouth; his grandchildren, Brittany Evans and husband Wayland Leonard, Khelsi Evans and partner Jimmy O'Connor, Thomas Fafard and fiancée, Brynn Tessier, Tyler Fafard, Jillian Fellows, Lindsey Fellows and fiancé Tyler Hanlon; two great-grandchildren, Ruairi Leonard and Logan O'Connor. Claude also leaves behind his niece Diane Fowler and husband Bill. Nephews Jim Fafard, Michael Fafard and wife Kate and Mark Fafard and wife Joyce. He is predeceased by his four beloved brothers, Jacques, Louie, Andrew and Yvon.

Family and friends are invited to services for Claude, beginning at 2:00pm on Saturday, February 8, 2025, at the Shaw-Majercik Funeral Home, 48 School Street, Webster. A prayer service will begin at 3:00 pm. A memorial guestbook is available at www.shaw-majercik.com.

Mary Jean Slota, 73

WEBSTER - Mary Jean (LeMay) Slota, 73, of Sutton Road, died Sunday, February 2, 2025, in her home. She is survived by her husband of 51 years, Robert B. Slota of Webster; two daughters, Lisa K. Wilcox of East Lyme, CT, and Kerry L. Nawrocki and her husband Edgar Lubecki of Oxford; and three grandsons, Cody Wilcox, Craigan Nawrocki, and Gavin Nawrocki. She was predeceased by a brother, John F. LeMay who died in 2003.

She was born in Worcester, daughter of the late Jean F. and Marie Agnes (Hairyes) LeMay, and lived in Oxford before moving to Webster 52 years ago. She graduated from Oxford High

School in 1969 and attended Hannon Hairdressing School.

Mrs. Slota was a hairdresser at Essential Beauty Salon in Webster for 14 years, retiring in 2020. Previously, she worked for Headlines, Red Carpet, and Rob Roy. She was a member of St. Roch's Church in Oxford. She enjoyed crafts, sewing, cooking, and baking.

A funeral service will be held at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, February 12, 2025, at Paradis-Givner Funeral Home, 357 Main St., Oxford.

A calling hour will be held on Wednesday from 5-7 p.m., prior to the service.

Ronald H. Neulieb, 89



Funeral services for Ronald Neulieb, 89, of Alta, Iowa, will be at 10:00 A.M., Saturday, February 8, 2025 at the St. Paul Lutheran Church in Aurelia, with Pastor Merritt Demski officiating. Burial will

follow at St. John Cemetery, Hanover (rural route), Alta, IA. Visitation will be Friday, February 7 from 4:00 P.M. to 7:00 with the family present at the St. Paul Lutheran Church in Aurelia. Ron died Friday, January 31st, 2025 surrounded by his loving family at his home in Alta. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be directed to Concordia University in Seward, NE. The Redig Funeral Home in Aurelia is in charge of arrangements. Funeral service will be live streamed at redigfuneralhome.com under Ronald H. Neulieb.

Ronald Herman Neulieb was born in Webster, Massachusetts, on July 10, 1935, to Walter and Eleanor (Schur) Neulieb. He attended school in Webster, MA. When Ron moved to Iowa, he married Darlene Huseman in St. John Lutheran Church at Hanover. Ron and Darlene had four children: Craig, Dawn, Darron (Deceased 1965) and Joelle (Deceased 1968). Darlene died July 19, 1985. Ron was the owner of Control System Specialists in Alta, retiring

in 2000. Ron then married Marjorie Huseman Peterson on January 1, 1988 in Webster, MA. They traveled to all 50 states and Mexico. Marjorie died on February 26, 2023. He never lacked for things to do. He enjoyed participating in these groups: SLOBS (Storm Lake organization of Boat Sailors); Storm Lake Rotary Club; SERPACI Car Club; Buena Vista Historical Society; Albert City Threshermen's Society; Hanover Historical Society where Ron loved to run the saw mill with his Antique Steam Engine. Ron was a former Mayor of Alta, and an active member of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Aurelia.

Preceding Ron in death were his parents, two wives and several brother and sister in laws.

Surviving Ron are his children: Craig and his wife Kendra Neulieb of Alta, IA, Dawn Neulieb Paradis and her significant other Jim Stacey of Webster, MA, Sister Patricia Bean of Webster MA. Eight grandchildren: Alicia, Ashley, Natasja, Shawn, Corey, Jeremy, Johnathan, Nicole. Step children: Kathy Sliz of Bluffton, SC, Bruce and his wife Carla Peterson of Aurelia, IA, Jayne and her husband Harlan Mortenson of Des Moines, IA. Several step-grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Friday's Child

Victory
Age 12
Registration # 8682

Hi! My name is Victory and I like hugs and affection!

Victory is a joyful, adorable, and sweet little boy. Those who know him best describe him as gentle and loving and say that he almost always has a big smile on this face. When he gets excited, Victory will clap and jump up and down. His joy is contagious! Victory loves trains and playing with toys that have wheels. He can engage in imaginative play for lengthy periods of time. He also enjoys using his tablet. Victory is fascinated by bright lights and reflections and creatively uses items to reflect and observe light.

<https://adopt.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/child/8682>

Can I Adopt?

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. As an adoptive parent, you won't have to pay any fees, adoption from foster care is completely free in Massachusetts.

The process to adopt a child from foster care includes training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you. These steps will help match you with a child or sibling group that your family will fit well with.

To learn more about adoption from foster care visit www.mareinc.org. Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) can give you guidance and information on the adoption process. Reach out today to find out all the ways you can help children and teens in foster care.

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Dahlia combinations for gardens and bouquets

Dahlias come in various colors, shapes, and sizes making them easy to include in any garden, container, and bouquet. Grow them in their own dedicated space, mix them with other flowers, or plant a few at the end of the vegetable garden.



GARDEN MOMENTS
.....
MELINDA MYERS

Consider including different varieties of dahlias for added interest and beauty in the garden and your arrangements. Select colors that you imagine will look great together in a vase. This will make it easy to create a lot of creative combinations on the fly.

Grow dahlias with flowers of different shapes and sizes to create more interesting arrangements. Dahlias offer many options and it's one of the reasons they are such a popular cut flower. Longfield Gardens provides help and inspiration in Types of Dahlias: 8 Great Looks.

You'll find the widest range of colors and styles with new varieties in the decorative dahlia group continually being released. Add a bit of elegance to the gar-

den and bouquets with Mondriaan's soft pink petals tinged with pastel yellow, apricot, and lavender. Decorative dahlias make great cut flowers, and their sturdy stems make them easy to grow with other flowers in gardens and containers.

Add interesting texture to your gardens and bouquets with anemone-flowered and collarette dahlias. The anemone-flowered dahlias have a cluster of tubular florets in the center surrounded by more traditional petals. The two different lengths of petals in the collarette varieties add to their charm.

Enjoy an abundant harvest of cut flowers when growing ball and pompon dahlias. These perfectly round flowers are packed with tightly rolled petals and are long-

lived in arrangements. Their size makes them excellent additions to mixed bouquets helping to connect the various flowers for an impressive display.

The unique blossoms of waterlily dahlias have made it one of the most popular for cutting. The relatively flat flowers have tightly closed centers surrounded by several rows of flat or slightly curved petals.

Grow a few single dahlias for you and the pollinators to enjoy. The daisy-like flowers have a prominent center surrounded by a single row of petals. Their airy appearance complements a variety of late-season perennials in the garden and bouquets. Mix in a few peony-flowered varieties for a showier display. These also have a prominent center but are surrounded by two or more layers of petals.

Add a bit of excitement to any arrangement with cactus and semi-cactus varieties. Their tightly curled petals make them a standout in the garden and bouquets.

You'll only need one or

a few dinnerplate dahlia blooms to make a statement in a vase or arrangement. The large flowers can grow up to 10 inches across on four- to five-foot-tall plants. Tag team a pair of dinnerplate dahlias for the back of the border. Labyrinth and Tyrell have apricot flowers with pink and yellow accents that blend nicely with a wide range of colors in the garden.

If you feel overwhelmed by all the choices or can't decide on the best combination, let the experts lend a hand. Consider purchasing one or more ready-to-plant dahlia combinations selected to look great in the garden and arrangements. The bumblebee collection includes pollinator-favorite Kelsey Sunshine collarette and the coral pink decorative Great Silence. Or for a big splash of purple try the Berry Spritz dinnerplate collection (longfield-gardens.com) with lavender-pink, lilac, and eggplant purple blooms.

Take pictures of your favorite combinations and notes of what you want to try next year, and most importantly, enjoy the fan-



Courtesy — Longfield-Gardens.com

Dinnerplate dahlias, like this Berry Spritz collection, can grow up to 10 inches across on four- to five-foot-tall plants.

tastic blooms. Fortunately, any flower combination is sure to brighten your day.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the recently released Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition and Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD instant video

series and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment TV & radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and was commissioned by Longfield Gardens for her expertise to write this article. Her Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

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LEGALS

The Attorney General's deadline for a decision on Warrant Articles 14 & 15 (General) of the Special Town Meeting held on October 21, 2024, is extended for an additional 90 days under the authority conferred by G.L. c 40, § 32. A decision on Articles 14 & 15 will be issued on or before April 27, 2025. Warrant Articles #11, #12, and #13 (General) of the Special Town Meeting held on October 21, 2024, have received approval from the Attorney General's Office on January 23, 2025. The entire text of these by-laws is posted in the following five places in accordance with G.L. c. 40 § 32: Dudley Municipal Complex, Pearle Crawford Memorial Library, Mason Road School, Dudley District Court House and Shepherd Hill High School.
Attest: Lori A. Smith,
Dudley Town Clerk
 January 31, 2024
 February 7, 2025

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate
and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO25P0236EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION
 Estate Of:

Nicholas Anthony Colonero, Jr
Date of Death: 10/14/2024

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Jeremy Colonero** of **Los Angeles CA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that:

Jeremy Colonero of **Los Angeles CA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/25/2025.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy,
First Justice of this Court.

Date: January 27, 2025

Stephanie K. Fattman,
 Register of Probate

February 7, 2025

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate and Family
Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508)831-2200
Docket No. W025C0030CA
CITATION ON PETITION TO
CHANGE NAME

In the matter of:

Olivia Karys Beaudry

A **Petition to Change Name of Minor** has been filed by

Olivia Karys Beaudry of **Oxford MA** requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:

Eloise Karys Beaudry

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Worcester Probate and Family Court before 02/25/2025 at 10 a.m. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A Keamy, First Justice of this Court.

Date: January 23, 2024

Stephanie Fattman,
 Register of Probate

February 7, 2025

MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by John J. Adams, Sr. to "MERS", Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., a separate corporation acting solely as nominee for "Lender", Residential Mortgage Services, Inc. and its successors and assigns dated January 19, 2021 and recorded with the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds, in Book 64303, Page 1, as assigned by Assignment of Mortgage dated May 23, 2024; recorded in Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds, Book 70578, Page 210, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at **Public Auction at 11:00 AM, on March 3, 2025**, on the premises known as **22 Morris Street, Webster, Massachusetts**, the premises described in said mortgage, together with all the rights, easements, and appurtenances thereto, to wit:

The land with the buildings thereon, situated on the northerly side of Morris Street in Webster, Worcester County, Massachusetts, bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at a stake in the ground on the northerly line of said Morris Street and being the southwesterly angle of the tract hereby conveyed;

Thence Northerly one hundred thirty (130) feet by land of one Jezierski to a stake in the ground at land of Angela Kokocinski, now or formerly;

Thence Easterly sixty-six (66) feet by land of Angela Kokocinski, now or formerly, to a stake in the ground at land of John Konkeli;

Thence Southerly one hundred thirty (130) feet by land of one Davis to a stake in the ground on said Morris Street;

Thence Westerly sixty-six (66) feet by said Morris Street to the point of beginning.

Being Lot No. 6 as shown on Plan of Lots owned by Angela Kokocinski, Webster, Mass. Dated June 7, 1941 drawn by J.R. Kleindiesnt, Eng., recorded in Plan Book 154, Plan 99.

Being the same premises conveyed to the herein named mortgagor(s) by deed dated July 26, 2019, and recorded with the Worcester District of Deeds in Book 60800, Page 139.

Terms of Sale: These premises are being sold subject to any and all unpaid real estate taxes, water rates, municipal charges and assessments, condominium charges, expenses, costs, and assessments, if applicable, federal tax liens, partition wall rights, statutes, regulations, zoning, subdivision control, or other municipal ordinances or bylaws respecting land use, configuration, building or approval, or bylaws, statutes or ordinances regarding the presence of lead paint, asbestos or other toxic substances, sanitary codes, housing codes, tenancy, and, to the extent that they are recorded prior to the above mortgage, any easements, rights of way, restrictions, confirmation or other matters of record.

The purchaser shall also bear all state and county deeds excise tax. The deposit of \$10,000.00 is to be paid in cash or bank or certified check at the time and place of the sale, with the balance of the purchase price to be paid by bank or certified check within thirty (30) days after the date of the sale, to be deposited in escrow with Guaetta and Benson, LLC, at 73 Princeton Street, Suite 208, North Chelmsford, Massachusetts.

In the event that the successful bidder at the foreclosure sale shall default in purchasing the within described property according to the terms of this Notice of Sale and/or the terms of the Memorandum of Sale executed at the time of the foreclosure, the Mortgagee reserves the right to sell the property by foreclosure deed to the second highest bidder or, thereafter, to the next highest bidders, providing that said bidder shall deposit with said attorney, the amount of the required deposit as set forth herein within five (5) business days after written notice of the default of the previous highest bidder.

Other terms, if any, are to be announced at the sale.

Dated: January 31, 2025

Present holder of said mortgage, Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency

by its Attorneys, Guaetta and Benson, LLC, Peter V. Guaetta, Esquire, P.O. Box 519, Chelmsford, MA 01824

February 7, 2025

February 14, 2025

February 21, 2025

Citation in the matter of the Adoption of Mary-Jane Jennifer Hall

To Matthew Lewis Hall and any unnamed or unknown parent or persons interested in a petition for the adoption

of Mary-Jane Jennifer Hall: a petition to adopt Mary-Jane Jennifer Hall and to change her name to Mary-Jane Jennifer Carey, has been filed in the Worcester Probate and Family Court. If you desire to object to the adoption, you or your attorney must file a written appearance in said court, located at 225 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01608, on or before 10:00 am on the morning of April 8, 2025.

January 24, 2025

January 31, 2025

February 7, 2025

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate
and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO22P1893EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION
 Estate Of:
John Arthur Brousseau
Date of Death: 04/24/2022

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Rhonda L Brousseau** of **Oxford MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that:

Rhonda L Brousseau of **Oxford MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/25/2025.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy,
First Justice of this Court.

Date: January 28, 2025

Stephanie K. Fattman,
 Register of Probate

February 7, 2025

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate
and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO25P0313EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION
 Estate Of:
Raymond E Grandone
Date of Death: 12/24/2024

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Charles F Proctor Esq** of **Oxford MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that:

Charles F Proctor Esq of **Oxford MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/04/2025.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS

UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy,
First Justice of this Court.

Date: January 29, 2025

Stephanie K. Fattman,
 Register of Probate

February 7, 2025

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

Premises: 205-207/207A Main Street, Oxford, MA 01540

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Andrea M Loconto to Citizens Bank of Rhode Island, and now held by **Citizens Bank, N.A. f/k/a RBS Citizens, N.A. s/b/m Citizens Bank of Rhode Island**, said mortgage dated February 25, 2005 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 35943, Page 145, as affected by a Loan Modification dated August 5, 2016 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 58358, Page 85; for breach of the conditions in said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at **Public Auction** on March 13, 2025 at 10:00 AM Local Time upon the premises, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

The land with the buildings thereon situated in the Town of Oxford, County of Worcester, State of Massachusetts, being on the westerly side of Main Street, shown as Parcel A and off the westerly side of Main Street, being Parcel B on a plan by Albert L. Fitzpatrick dated October 11, 1973, in Plan Book 403. Plan 94 and to which plan reference may be had for a more particular description of both parcels. Being the same premises as conveyed to the Mortgagor by deed recorded with Worcester County Registry of Deeds, in Book 35118, Page 238

The description of the property contained in the mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

For Mortgagor's Title see deed dated November 17, 2004 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 35118, Page 238.

TERMS OF SALE: Said premises will be sold and conveyed subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens and assessments, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described.

FIVE THOUSAND (\$5,000.00) Dollars of the purchase price must be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check at the time and place of the sale by the purchaser. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check within thirty (30) days after the date of sale.

Other terms to be announced at the sale.

Brock & Scott, PLLC

23 Messenger Street

2nd Floor

Plainville, MA 02762

Attorney for Citizens Bank, N.A. f/k/a

RBS Citizens, N.A. s/b/m Citizens

Bank of Rhode Island

Present Holder of the Mortgage

(401) 217-8701

February 7, 2025

February 14, 2025

February 21, 2025

For Legal Advertising Information Call

508-909-4127

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legals@

stonebridge

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HEARING

continued from page A1

strict residency), while the project would bring in about \$2.13 million a year in property taxes, \$235,290 a year in excise taxes, and \$436,800 in one-time permit fees (excluding subcontractors).

"From a revenue standpoint, it's a big net positive to the community," he claimed.

To Anna Watkins of Ashworth Drive, "the community is not just how much money you bring in." She argued the project will also cause everyone's insurance costs to rise, while others thought its proximity would reduce their property values. Watkins was particularly concerned about ensuring Ashworth remains only emergency access, saying seeing regular traffic there is "unacceptable in our eyes." (It's now a long dead end starting in Auburn.)

Some citizens also disputed Huffman's five student assumption, which he said was based on other Eastland age-restricted projects. Deb Amerault said she's been



Courtesy

The phasing plan for Ashworth Hills.

in Thayer Pond 25 years and has seen "a lot more than five kids" there.

One retired teacher agreed, predicting "that number five is going to go way up" when the "schools are already struggling for resources." Another person noted he already goes to Marlboro for daycare because local services are full.

More concerning for some was the blasting, with several noting they can already feel it and have seen cracking and other issues despite being some distance away. One person said they need to do a blasting survey, but objected to the fact the law only requires it within 250 feet, when the effects are felt farther away. Others also want to see the cumulative effects studies, with some citing the fact they've already made repairs and are seeing more damage and one predicting "the continu-

al vibration is going to affect everything" long-term.

"I can't imagine what we're into for trouble when you come closer to us," the teacher added.

Huffman responded by saying that in some projects "we've literally blasted under houses and had no issues." He said they plan to build this subdivision out over eight years at about 40 homes per year with development to start this summer.

Acting Chair Matt Pearson said the board can include blasting



Google Maps screenshot shows the main street of Ashworth Hills already exists to some degree. The loop in the lower left corner is the Thayer Pond neighborhood; the dead end at the top is Ashworth Drive, and the road at the bottom is Route 20. The double line at top is the Mass Pike.

issues in its conditions. Most of it to date has been to "bring that cliff face down to road level" along Route 20, but blasting deeper inside the project's area won't be "bringing it down 50 or 100 feet like at the front."

He said the project's homeowners' association will handle road mainte-

nance and related issues. The board is still waiting for peer review of the traffic study and plans to discuss that, drainage and other issues at the hearing's next session, set for Feb. 24.

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

SCHOOL

continued from page A1

it, second and third graders are paired with high schoolers for two years, one hour every two weeks. The "bigs" get community service hours, the "littles" get social, emotional and life skills from "a mentor, a friend [who is] just really dedicated to them."

"Both our high school students and our elementary students clearly are benefiting in huge ways from these relationships," Seddiki said.

Pierangeli agreed, noting the teachers and kids organized it "all on their own."

Pierangeli brought up technology as part of her report's summary of attending a recent superintendent's conference. She said the conference included a talk on using AI in school and the toolkit. The latter was designed by the attorney general's office to look at cellphone and other technology use in schools, community norms and curriculum guidelines. It advocates avoiding cellphone use during school days, but she noted using it effectively requires working with families outside school.

The toolkit itself starts by noting it aims to control "pervasive distractions caused by cell phones and social media use" in school and various issues they've been linked with, "including distractions from learning, shortened student attention span, increased anxiety among students, negative peer interactions, and increases in cyberbullying, harassment, and hate incidents." Regarding cell-

phones specifically, it refers to three types of policies — "bell-to-bell" use bans, where phones are stored in a central location; "off-and-away," where they're off but still in the kids' possession; and "limited use," where they're off during class but allowed at lunch and certain other times.

It cites examples of districts using each type, encourages districts to consider how they work with school-issued technology and how to enforce them, and issues surrounding letting students and families know about them. It also aims to have schools create stakeholder groups of up to 10 people to look at how social media use outside school affects the kids, particularly surrounding "smartphone" use for younger students. At one point, it suggests limiting use to "dumb phones" up to eighth grade, and urged reminding kids "not to text, message, or post anything online that they wouldn't want everyone to see."

Later, it gets into designing "digital media literacy" programs starting in elementary school. Those include such issues as "analyzing media, understanding bias, and evaluating credibility," responsible use, how algorithms work, and "the mental health impacts of technology."

The toolkit is available at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/cell-phones-and-social-media-in-school-a-toolkit-for-school-leaders-and-communities-1232025/download>.

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

STEVENS

continued from page A1

ect will take as the mill remains at risk of abuse in its current dilapidated state. Gumpert stressed that they feel the project will raise the standards of the community rather than lowering it, that their lenders won't allow affordable housing, and that the company has a proven track record of renovating mills successfully. Gumpert also responded to the fears of environmental issues on the property. While every old mill has its problems, hesaid the Stevens Linen Mill is one of the cleaner properties they've worked with over the

year.

"Certainly, we have asbestos. Certainly, we have lead paint. That's almost a building component. It's not really considered environmental. We may have a buried tank that we couldn't get to in order to investigate when the small appendage roof collapsed. We've since taken that roof off so we can get to it. As these mills go, this one has very few environmental concerns attached to it," said Gumpert.

He further promised that any details about the project will be brought to the public in full. Specifically answering concerns about whether the project would include

affordable housing, Gumpert promised that the public will be a big part of the process the whole way through.

"We're not going to hide anything from anybody. We're going to show you exactly what we're going to do. It's easy to see. What we typically do is we have walkthroughs for the public to come look at it at various stages of development, so we really do invite the public to come in and see what it is we're doing," Gumpert said adding that he believes firmly that their project will be a "asset to the community."

The presentation did not provide a solid timeline, but the mill remains

a significant focus for the company and for town officials as well. Town Administrator Jonathan Ruda concluding the discussion by championing the renovation as a positive for Dudley.

"I think we're moving in the right direction in terms of reclaiming and redeveloping this mill as opposed to watching it slip into the river with everything that it contains and everything floating right down the river and causing more problems than we're talking about here tonight. I understand everyone's concerns, but the idea is to mitigate and reclaim and develop as opposed to just letting it sit," Ruda said.

PeoplesBank, Cornerstone Bank complete merger of holding companies

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank, a community bank with locations throughout Central Massachusetts, has merged holding companies with PeoplesBank of Holyoke.

PeoplesBank and Cornerstone Bank have announced that they have completed the merger of their holding companies and will now operate under PeoplesBancorp, MHC, as of Jan. 31. The holding company will have over \$6 billion in assets. However, PeoplesBank and Cornerstone Bank will continue to operate independently under their own names and brands, and there will be no

changes from a customer perspective. Both banks are adding new branches.

Cornerstone Bank added a new branch in 2024 and expects to add another in the second quarter of 2025. PeoplesBank is opening two new banking centers in February.

"The banking industry is shrinking while becoming more competitive," stated Tom Senecal, Chairman and CEO of PeoplesBank, "and asset size matters for scalability. This new relationship means that with our mutual charter, we will realize a new ability to efficiently compete, as well as attract and retain the highest-quality associates, while also con-

tinuing to invest in our communities."

"This merger was always about the people—not only our employees but also the community," explained Todd Tallman, CEO of Cornerstone Bank. "It provides an immense opportunity to invest in people, communities, technology, and, of course, growth."

With the completion of the merger, Thomas Senecal remains CEO and Chairman, Todd Tallman has become President, and Brian Canina has become the Chief Operating Officer of PeoplesBancorp, MHC, and will remain President of PeoplesBank.

Both institutions benefit from the combined financial strength of two strong community banks coming together to create one of the largest mutual multi-bank holding companies in the Northeast. PeoplesBank, serving western Massachusetts and northern Connecticut, and Cornerstone Bank, serving central Massachusetts, will each continue their normal operations with no disruption to customers. Both banks' account information, branch banking, and digital access remain the same.

LEGALS

(SEAL)
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT

25 SM 000158
ORDER OF NOTICE

To:

John H. Sullivan ; Patricia Sullivan and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq): Wells Fargo Bank, National Association, successor by merger to Wells Fargo Bank Minnesota, National Association, as Indenture Trustee for GMACM HOME EQUITY LOAN TRUST 2000- HE4, claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Dudley, numbered 158 Southbridge Road, given by John H. Sullivan and Patricia Sullivan to GMAC Mortgage Corporation, a Pennsylvania Corporation, dated October 23, 2001, and recorded in Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 25106, Page 242, and now held by plaintiff by assignment, has/

have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/ Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108 on or before March 10, 2025 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act. Witness, Gordon H. Piper, Chief Justice of this Court on 1/21/2025. Attest: Deborah J. Patterson Recorder 24-016618 February 7, 2025

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate and Family Court
225 Main Street

Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO25P0301EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate Of:
David J Partington
Date of Death: 12/20/2024

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Charles F Proctor Esq of Oxford MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: **Charles F Proctor Esq of Oxford MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of**

02/25/2025.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.

Date: January 29, 2025

Stephanie K. Fattman,

Register of Probate

February 7, 2025

Anna Maria College announces Dean's List

PAXTON — Anna Maria College recently announced academic honors for students named to the Dean's List for Fall 2024 Semester. Anna Maria College awards Dean's List recognition to students enrolled in a full-time undergraduate day program in good standing who have attained in the previous semester a GPA of 3.5 with no grade lower than "B" for a minimum of four courses.

The following Massachusetts students achieved Dean's List:

Rafael Albino	Auburn
Ayva Borelli	Auburn
Nathan Cook	Auburn
Aleisha Martinsen	Auburn
Paige Stewart	Auburn
Emily Goodwin	Blackstone
Donovan Turner	Blackstone
Ivy Ballou	Charlton
Megan Burdett	Charlton
Jenna Johnson	Charlton
Chloe Lanier	Charlton
Sarah Happy	Douglas
Lucas Miglionico	Dudley
Ethan McNerny	Grafton
Megan Wajer	Grafton
Mae McGowan	Leicester
Sage Charpentier	Leominster
Tyler Godin	Leominster
Julianna Lavoie	Leominster
Emily Crowther	Linwood
Lia Mucera	Milford
Angelina Botelho	Fritze
	North Brookfield
Evan Calderone	North Grafton
Lauren Decoteau	Northbridge
Macy Hutchinson	Oxford
Erika Melendez	Southbridge
Manuel Abraham	Toribio
Spencer	
Joseph Barbato	Spencer
Marissa Randall	Spencer

Patricia Rwanarugari Asimwe
Spencer

Drew Gage Sterling
Jenelle Remy Sterling
Brooke Macey Sturbridge
Heather Monroe Sturbridge
Naomi Moura Sturbridge
Thomas Vanasse Sturbridge
Michael Mosher Templeton

Sophia Mone Uxbridge
Madison Tousignant Uxbridge
Kayla Berthiaume Webster
Kayla Brown Webster
Nyia Gonzalez Webster
Carly Impey Webster
Becky Ramirez Webster
Tyler Withers West Brookfield
James Donnelly Whitinsville
Sehila Ryerson Worcester
Tiffany Salazar Worcester
Karisyia Suarez Worcester
Matthew Sullivan Worcester
Justin Taylor Worcester
Patrick Tineo Ruiz Worcester
Melannie Valdes Worcester
Seth Williams Worcester

About Anna Maria College
Founded in 1946 and located in Paxton, Massachusetts, Anna Maria College is a private, co-educational institution inspired by the ideals of the Sisters of Saint Anne. We prepare our students to become ethical leaders by combining a values-based, service-focused education with strong functional knowledge and the skills necessary to address the rapidly changing needs of their world. Anna Maria delivers undergraduate and graduate degrees along with certificate programs on campus and online. For more information, visit www.annamaria.edu

Law enforcement officials lobby for more leeway in detaining non-citizens

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — As the new bi-annual legislative session begins for Massachusetts lawmakers, local officials are promoting a bill meant to improve public safety.

Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis and Plymouth County Sheriff Joseph McDonald, Jr. have expressed their support of the proposed legislation, which calls for a 36-hour buffer for their departments and other law enforcement agencies to hold non-citizens with ICE detainees.

Bill HD.4221, An Act to promote and protect safety in the Commonwealth, seeks to enhance cooperation among state court officers, local and state law enforcement, and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE).

Specifically, the bill addresses a loophole in state public safety laws that arose from the 2017 Lunn v. Commonwealth ruling, officials said. This loophole prevents law enforcement officials from hold-

ing non-citizens with ICE detainees beyond certain timeframes, allowing these individuals to walk free after committing serious crimes, supporters of the bill said.

As part of its mission to identify removable non-citizens, ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) lodges immigration detainees against non-citizens who have been arrested for criminal activity and taken into custody by state or local law enforcement. An immigration detainer is a request from ICE to state or local law enforcement agencies to notify ICE as early as possible before a removable non-citizen is released from their custody.

In 2017, ICE detainees were challenged in the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court (SJC). As a result, the SJC deferred to the legislature to create guidelines for local and state law enforcement agencies to follow when complying with immigration detainees.

After a failed attempt by the Baker Administration to pass legislation addressing the ruling, the topic has since fallen dormant.

"With the Massachusetts SJC ruling almost eight years ago that the legislature should create guidelines, it is beyond time for us to enact laws that allow local and state agencies to detain those here illegally and charged with additional crimes," said State Sen. Peter Durant (R-Spencer). "These new

laws will improve public safety by allowing time for ICE to remove people who are increasingly victimizing others, including children, while illegally in the United States."

In October 2024, Evangelidis issued a statement highlighting an increase in crimes committed by non-citizens.

"The number of individuals with ICE detainees coming through our facility has more than doubled since 2021," Evangelidis said. "These individuals have committed serious crimes, including murder, rape, drug trafficking, and more. This bill will ensure that my staff can utilize all available tools to protect the safety of Massachusetts residents."

According to ICE officials, detainees focus enforcement resources on removable non-citizens who are already in custody for criminal activity.

Since detainees result in the direct transfer of a non-citizen from state or local custody to ERO custody, they also minimize the potential that an individual will re-offend, officials said.

Supporters of the bill encourage Massachusetts residents to request that their legislators advocate for the passage of the bill. Residents can find their legislators' contact information by visiting www.MALegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator.

Math Blocks

Fill in the missing blocks with numbers between 0-20. The numbers in each row add up to the totals on the right. The numbers in each column add up to the totals on the bottom.

14			23
1		5	15
	12	2	22
23	24	13	

2	12	8
5	6	1
6	3	14

Solution

Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.

B N S E L I B N O D S E E S

Answer: Nibbles on seeds

62: An earthquake strikes in Pompeii, Italy.

1852: The New Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg, Russia, opens to the public.

1924: The Royal Greenwich Observatory begins broadcasting the hourly time signals.

a young bird that is learning to fly

Animal FACT!

This activity is a popular hobby that enables people to interact with and observe wildlife.

Answer: Bird feeding

How they say that in...

English: Seed
Spanish: Semilla
Italian: Seme
French: Graine
German: Samen

Did You Know?

Bird feeders can be placed at different levels, including on the ground, on a table top or higher. This allows various birds to enjoy a meal.

Get the PICTURE?

Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Hummingbird

CRYPTO FUN

Solve the code to discover words related to low vision. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 5 = s)

A. 7 19 6 20 26 20 25 5 5
Clue: Not being able to see

B. 25 3 25 5
Clue: Enable sight

C. 16 6 5 6 2 20
Clue: State of being able to see

D. 4 19 8 5 5 25 5
Clue: Help with sight

Answers: A. blindness B. eyes C. vision D. glasses

SUDOKU

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!

		3	4				2	
		5	8		2			
				7	1			
5	2		7					
			9				8	
6		9						
4						3		
	7					2	6	1
9		2			7			

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!

4	5	7	8	2	2	9	6	3
1	9	2	6	4	7	2	8	3
6	8	3	2	7	1	4	5	9
2	2	4	5	4	3	1	6	8
1	3	6	4	2	6	7	3	5
8	6	8	6	8	7	1	4	2
5	8	9	1	7	6	9	2	4
6	3	8	2	2	6	8	5	7
7	1	2	7	5	6	1	2	7

ANSWER:

QCC nursing students achieve high success rate on licensure exam

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College recently confirmed that in 2024, graduates from the Associate of Science in Nurse Education program and the Practical Nursing Certificate program achieved close to a 100 percent pass rate on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), a nationally recognized exam required to become a registered nurse (RN) and licensed practical nurse (LPN).

"Our faculty members are incredibly dedicated and continually align course learning outcomes with the resources we provide, ensuring that students benefit from all available supports," said Pat Schmohl, dean of the School of Healthcare.

QCC alum Pamela Lara, who passed the NCLEX last year and gained employment as an RN at UMass Memorial Health, already had a bachelor's degree in an unrelated field but was looking for more fulfillment as well as flexibility after having children. Like Schmohl, Lara recognized faculty for the vital support they offered.

"I encourage people to look at QCC. They have been extra helpful and everyone works together. I never felt like I was in a real group in any other college environment," said Lara, adding, "There was constant communication and they held us accountable."

Chair of the Practical Nursing Program Margaret Yoder praised QCC's faculty for their investment in the students. She also noted that professors' lived experiences and backgrounds can create an inclusive setting that enhances learning.

"Our faculty are multicultural and their diversity is reflective of our student population. We have students from different countries, cultures and various socio-economic statuses, as well as single parents and many English language learners," said Yoder.

Of the 80 Practical Nursing graduates who took the NCLEX in 2024, 97.5% passed. Of the 132 graduates from the ADN program, 97% passed the NCLEX.

"These are highly motivated students who are actively seeking to improve their lives by entering this profession," said Chair of Nurse Education Patricia Creelman. "Additionally, the clinical agency partners who collaborate with the program provide comprehensive clinical learning opportunities for students at all levels of our educational program."

Creelman noted that QCC's up-to-date educational equipment and individualized student support helped contribute to students' academic and licensure achievements.

"All of the additional services offered through the college including the food pantry, social service referrals, tutoring and counseling are very important to the students' success," said Yoder.

Graduates who become LPNs can now work in settings such as nursing homes, ambulatory care centers, mental health facilities, as well as in-home care and some hospitals. Graduates who become RNs can work in many of the same facilities however, they are more frequently hired into hospital settings.

There is still a shortage of nurses in Massachusetts, Yoder continued.

"Understaffing and burnout have caused undo stress on the nurses, causing them to exit the workforce or seek jobs in different areas of healthcare," she said, adding that it's critical to support these students who are vital to the state's healthcare system.



REAL ESTATE



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Sharon Pelletier - Owner Broker
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We Want Your Listings!

Featured Listing!!

WEBSTER - 61 PARK AVENUE

First Time Offered!! This Unique, Impressive, Well Maintained Custom Built Ranch Style Home! Incredible Functionality & More! Built in 2001 & offers 1,462 sqft+ of One Level Living, 3 BRs, 2 Full Baths! Fabulous Split Floor Plan w/2 BRs & a Full Bath w/Double Walk In Shower, & a Private MASTER SUITE w/Private Full Bath, Walk-in Closet. Spacious Entry Foyer. Lg Triple Casement Windows overlooking rolling Landscape! **\$469,000**



* June Cazeault * Laurie Sullivan * Lori Johnson-Chausse * William Gilmore II * Maureen Cimoch * Bryan Pelletier

SOUTHBRIDGE - 140-152 HAMILTON



13 Units - 4 Well Maintained & Updated Multi-Family Buildings with 2 Commercial Spaces! Located within the "Central Core" District of Downtown Southbridge!! Mixed Use Zoning !! Heated Garage Space - Room enough for up to 18 Vehicles!!
\$1,300,000

Featured New Listing!!

WEBSTER - 25 SLATER ST



Location! Location! This Oversized & Well Maintained 2 Family offers 2,472 sq Total! Apt 1 -1st Floor Unit >has 1,052 sq, 3 BRs & 1 Bath! Apt 2 -2nd & 3rd Floor Unit has 2 levels >1,420 sq, 5 BRs, 2 Baths. Corner lot w/30 acre, 22'x22' Two Car Garage! 12'x16' Concrete Patio. Apartments fully occupied. PLEASE DO NOT TRESPASS onto the Property. **\$559,900**

DUDLEY 3 PRINCE CIRCLE



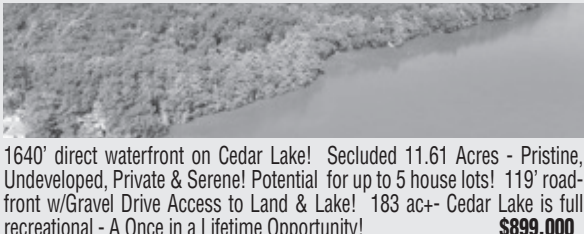
Come to Pierpont Estates! Young 2100 Sq Ft +/- Colonial on 1+ acre! Featuring 8 rooms, 4 Bedrooms! Master Bed w/Master Bath & Walk-in Closet! 2 Baths and 1/2 Bath! Cozy propane gas fireplace. Hardwood flooring & carpeting. Central air. 2 Car Garage. Yr. 2024 Taxes \$5448 . **assisted sale. \$620,000**

OXFORD - 25 SUTTON AVENUE



Location ~ Location! Move-in ready Commercial Office &/or Retail Space ! Ideal for >>> Small Businesses, Companies looking to expand, Banks, Medical facilities etc...2 Level Free Standing Building on a Corner Lot - Located in an Active area of Restaurants & Retail 1 Minute to Rt 395 & Rt 20...Zoned GB 10 units - .71 Acre - 26 Parking Spots
\$1,150,000

**STURBRIDGE - 66 WESTWOOD DR
1640' FRONTAGE - 11.61 ACRES! WATERFRONT LAND**



1640' direct waterfront on Cedar Lake! Secluded 11.61 Acres - Pristine, Undeveloped, Private & Serene! Potential for up to 5 house lots! 119' road-front w/Gravel Drive Access to Land & Lake! 183 ac+ Cedar Lake is full recreational - A Once in a Lifetime Opportunity!
\$899,000



WEBSTER - 38 COLONIAL RD. LAKE RESIDENTIAL

Webster Lake Area! Investors take notice! Charming Ranch with possible extra buildable lot! Home has 2 bedrooms, 1 Bath. 1 Car Garage. Recent Furnace and Ductless Mini-Split System. Vinyl Siding, Replacement Windows. 100CB. Interior needs updating*
\$399,900

On the shores of Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg




WATERFRONT
Webster Lake - 237 Thompson Rd.
FOR RENT...1st floor 1 Bedroom Apartment! Sliders to large deck with outstanding views! Located in the mid section of the Lake.
Catch the sunrises!
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Courtesy

GREAT TURNOUT FOR MASONS' ANNUAL CHINESE NEW YEAR'S PARTY

On Saturday, Feb. 1, brethren and their family and friends converged at the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge in Southbridge for their annual Chinese New Year's Party (The Year of the Snake). The lodge's rear parking lot was packed with vehicles. Brethren and their families and friends from all around the 24th Masonic District attended this annual event. There was plenty of oriental food served potluck style, some made and most bought. There were games for adults and children to play. There was fraternalism and many laughs to make for a great night. A movie was shown a 1986 classic starring Kurt Russell in "Big Trouble in Little China". Fraternalism and comradery, being with brethren's, family and friends is what freemasonry is all about. If you would like more information about Freemasonry, go to www.massfreemasonry.org to find a lodge near to you.

Saint Joseph School celebrates Catholic Schools Week

WEBSTER — On Sunday, Jan. 26, Saint Joseph School began its 2025 Catholic Schools Week (CSW) observance. CSW is the annual celebration of Catholic education and its role in making the world a better place. This year's theme was, "Alive in Christ!"

As the Holy Father, Pope Francis, said in *Christus Vivit*, Section 1, "Christ is alive! He is our hope, and in a wonderful way he brings youth to our world, and everything he touches becomes young, new, full of life. The very first words, then, that I would like to say to every young Christian are these: Christ is alive, and he wants you to be alive!" Saint Joseph School certainly came to life with CSW festivities.

Each day of the week from Jan. 26 through Jan. 31 had a special theme. The celebration began with school children, their families, faculty, and administration gathering with parishioners to celebrate Saint Joseph Parish. The Mass was presided over by Bishop Robert McManus and featured the presentation of the Partners in Education Award to school nurse Leah Belanger, as well



Courtesy

Saint Joseph School Grade 8 students and National Junior Honor Society members Liana Worth, Faith Muga, and Rosemary Basha proudly present heartfelt cards created by Buddy Classes to express gratitude to the Webster Police Department, Fire Department, Emergency Medical Services, and the Emergency Department at Harrington Hospital for their dedication to the community. Pictured with Chief of Police Michael Shaw, Detective Tim Whiting, and Deputy Chief Gordon Wentworth, these students embody the spirit of Catholic Schools Week by honoring service and demonstrating appreciation for those who protect and care for others.

as a procession honoring the diversity of the students and families at Saint Joseph School. Following Mass, the school held its first open

house of the week, allowing families and guests to tour classrooms, learn about the many cultures that have influenced the town of Webster and the Saint Joseph Community, sample delicious international cuisine, and enjoy a book fair conducted by the Daughters of Saint Paul.

When the children returned to school on Monday morning, their focus turned to celebrating the community through acts of service. The students gathered with their "Buddy Classes" to create beautiful cards for members of the Webster Fire, Police, and Emergency Medical Services, as well as the Emergency Department at Harrington Hospital. They also kicked off their "Penny Wars" competition. During the Penny Wars, the Buddy Classes teamed up to raise funds for the American Red Cross to benefit victims of the wildfires in Los Angeles.

On Tuesday, Jan. 28, the Saint Joseph School administration celebrated its students. The day began with celebratory muffins for all. Then, students were treated to two assemblies – one in the morning and one in the afternoon – where awards were distributed, birthdays were celebrated, and fun games were played. Awards included certificates for the First Quarter Honor Roll, as

well as fun awards such as the Mr. Rogers Award for the Most Neighborly, the Tin Foil Award for the Most Receptive, the Big Wig Award for the Best Haircut, the Sweatpants Award for the Most Adaptable to Change, and the Diamond in the Rough Award for the Most Potential.

The following day, the school's focus turned to the nation and the world. The morning announcements included a rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner" performed by Grade 8 students Rosemary Basha and Ayla Reed. Then, Buddy Classes teamed up again to create Valentine's Day cards for residents at Notre Dame Health Center. Throughout the day, the school welcomed prospective families for tours and information sessions. Wednesday concluded with an exciting demonstration by a State Police Canine Unit. Trooper Alexander Berry and his dog, Chase, intrigued the students with a display of precision and obedience, culminating in a thrilling simulated detainment of a "suspect" – Trooper Michael Coan. The students thoroughly enjoyed this engaging presentation, and Saint Joseph School extends a heartfelt Thank You to Troopers Berry and Coan!

On Thursday, Jan. 30, students focused on celebrating vocations.

They had the opportunity to meet with several local pastors, including Rev. Jim Boulette, Rev. Richard Polek, Rev. Lucas LaRoche, and Rev. Jack Lizewski, who shared their experiences, personal stories, and insights into their calling to the priesthood. Younger students also had the opportunity to pray the Lord's Prayer and Hail Mary with their guest priests. Additionally, students visited the Daughters of Saint Paul for a family-friendly, Catholic-oriented book fair from Pauline Press. The afternoon brought an exciting event – a Lasermania laser light show, sponsored by the Saint Joseph School Home and School Association (H.S.A.). Students were joined by their grandparents, parents, and special friends, as well as the Superintendent of the Worcester Diocesan Schools, Dr. David Perda. The 45-minute laser show transformed into a joyful dance party, creating lasting memories for all.

Friday's celebration began with students and faculty attending their weekly Mass together. In the afternoon, while teachers enjoyed a luncheon provided by the H.S.A., Buddy Classes participated in lively and competitive games of bingo, with numbers called by their Pastor and Headmaster, Rev. Grzegorz Chodkowski. Many students went home with prizes, but all left with smiles on their faces. The week concluded with the Kindergarten and Grade 4 Buddy Team emerging victorious in the Penny Wars, raising an impressive \$885. The total amount raised by Saint Joseph School for the American Red Cross was \$1,881.88.

The week exemplified the theme of "Alive in Christ!" through the students' enthusiasm, generosity, and faith-filled actions. Whether competing in friendly games, enjoying a laser show, raising money for a worthy cause, or serving their community through Buddy Class activities, the students of Saint Joseph School embodied Pope Francis' words: "Christ is alive, and he wants you to be alive!" Their joy, compassion, and commitment to faith and service reflected the vibrancy of a Christ-centered education, reinforcing the profound impact of Catholic schools in shaping young hearts and minds for a brighter future.



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