



©2026 Issue #7

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SEND YOUR NEWS AND PICS TO NEWS@STONEBRIDGEPRESS.NEWS Thursday-Friday, February 19-20, 2026

33rd Annual Cartoon Character Breakfast a community success

SOUTHBRIDGE — Despite frigid temperatures on Super Bowl Sunday, families from Southbridge and the Tri-Community area filled the Southbridge Community Center for the 33rd Annual Southbridge Lions Club Cartoon Character Breakfast.

Guests enjoyed a hearty breakfast of pancakes, French toast with ham, and assorted cereals, while children — and plenty of adults — spent the morning visiting and taking photos with their favorite cartoon characters. The event once again proved to be a cherished community tradition, bringing together multiple generations of families for a morning of laughter, connection, and fun.

In the spirit of Super Bowl Sunday, thank you to the many attendees who came out in their Patriots gear, and congratulations



to our six Rockin' the Pats Gear winners.

The Lions Club extends sincere thanks to the com-

munity for its continued support. Proceeds from the breakfast will benefit local charitable organizations, schools, community events, and individuals in need.

A special thank you goes out to the following friends, businesses, and organizations whose support continually helps make this event the success it is including the

National Honor Society from Southbridge High School and their advisor Elaine Bond, the National Honor Society from Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School and their advisor Ben Estabrooks, the Bay Path Leo Club and their advisor Kara Donovan, students from the Bay Path Culinary shop, Sue Guerin, Gary Galonek, Russ

Labarge, Jill Congdon, Mike Comeau, Dave Lacasse, Ben Tully, Judy LaRochelle, Big Bunny Market, St. John Paul II Parish, the staff of the Southbridge Community Center, Garelick Farms, H.P. Hood Company, Pizza Chef, Central Pizza, The Southbridge News, Glenn Petit from Casella Waste Systems, Magic World Party Rentals, and

Kerrin Graphics, and the dedicated community members and high school students who brought the beloved characters to life.

As the characters return to “fantasy land” for another year, the Southbridge Lions Club looks forward to welcoming families back next winter for another morning of pancakes and smiles.

Hitchcock Academy announces upcoming historic talks

BRIMFIELD — Hitchcock has lots to talk about this winter, and those interested in local history and healthy eating alike will delight in upcoming offerings.

Local educator Jill Ahlstrand will guide those seeking to add more plants to their diet without sacrificing protein or flavor in her talk “Get Enough Protein – A Plant-Based Talk” on Thursday, Feb. 26 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Registration is required and is \$25 per person.

Wondering how to get enough protein without relying on meat? This practical, beginner-friendly talk breaks down exactly how to meet your protein needs on a plant-based diet—no complicated math, supplements, or rigid rules required. You’ll learn what protein does in the body, how much you really need, where to find high-quality plant-based protein sources, and how to build satisfying meals that keep you full and energized. We’ll also cover common protein mistakes and simple ways to avoid them. Perfect for anyone curious about plant-based eating or looking for clear, realistic guidance on protein.

Ahlstrand is the founder of Harvesting Flavor, where she helps people learn how to cook delicious, satisfying plant-based meals that support real-life nutrition. A self-described foodie, Jill believes that food needs to taste good first — nourishment and flavor should always go hand in hand.

Ahlstrand’s work grew out of her own journey into plant-based eating and a desire to make it approachable rather than restrictive. Jill focuses on helping people understand how to meet their nutritional needs on a plant-based diet — especially protein, energy, and long-term health — through meals that are practical, flavorful, and deeply enjoyable. Through talks, classes, and coaching, she supports people who are curious about eating more plant-forward and want guidance that fits everyday life.

For more information, visit www.hitchcock-academy.org.

Hitchcock Academy is a community center located at 2 Brookfield Rd. in Brimfield, serving the community with educational, recreational, and cultural programming.

Southbridge Lions Club hosting annual Texas Hold ‘Em Poker Tournament

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Lions Club is set to host its highly anticipated annual No Limit Texas Hold ‘Em Poker Tournament, on Saturday, March 7. The event will take place at Maqui’s, located at 61 Chestnut St., Southbridge.

Poker enthusiasts are encouraged to register early, as participation is limited to the first 150 players. Same-day registration will be available at the door starting at 4 p.m., though early registration is strongly recommended. The tournament officially kicks off shortly after 5 p.m., with appetizers served to attendees.

A \$100 donation secures players \$8,000 in chips, and competitors will be vying for \$2,500 guaranteed first-place. Additionally, for every 10 players beyond the first 30, extra prize placements will be awarded. All prizes will be paid via money orders. Participants must be at least 18 years old to enter the tournament.

Proceeds from the event will benefit individuals in need within the local community, reinforcing the Lions Club’s commitment to service.

For more details on playing or volunteering, contact Russ Labarge at 774-230-1624 or Wayne Boiteau at 774-230-1982.

Mini-Golf at Joshya Hyde Library

STURBRIDGE — Got a case of the Winter Blues? Feeling stir crazy? Looking for a fun way to get the kids off the couch? Come to the Joshua Hyde Public Library in Sturbridge Feb. 28-March 1 for a round of Mini-Golf!

That weekend, the library will be transformed into a multi-hole mini-golf course that wends its way through the entire library. Holes will take you through mystery, travel, science fiction... up, down and all around. Don’t miss this chance to have a “hole” lot of fun and support your library at the same time!

The course will be open Saturday, Feb. 28 from 10:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. and Sunday, March 1 from 12:30 – 4 p.m. The price is \$5 per person with a \$20 maximum per family.

This event is sponsored by the Friends of the Joshua Hyde Public Library, and is its most fun FUNdraiser of the year.



Brimfield to mark 250th anniversary of Independence

BRIMFIELD — Save the date! On Saturday, June 13, a community-wide celebration marking the 250th anniversary of our nation’s freedom will take place in Brimfield.

In recognition of this year’s historic milestone, a full day of remembrance and celebration is planned. All are welcome to attend the day’s events, which include the following: Revolutionary War themed cemetery tours, a ceremony at the town common gazebo, a parade, and fun-filled festivities at the Brimfield Winery. The evening will close out with a spectacular fireworks display.

Additional details and updates will be available through the Friends of Historic Brimfield event Web site, www.fohbrimfield.org. Tax-deductible donations can also be made in support of this celebration through this website, and in gratitude, donors will be recognized in the event program. Donations can also be mailed to: Friends of Historic Brimfield, P.O. Box 52, Brimfield, MA 01010 with “Spirit of Brimfield” in the memo.

This event is currently being sponsored by the Massachusetts Army National Guard and Classic Hits 97.7 FM. If you or your company are interested in any level of corporate or business sponsorship, please visit the event website at www.fohbrimfield.org.

fohbrimfield.org. Additional volunteers are needed for both planning and to help with activities during the event, or if you are interested in putting a float in the parade, contact Friends of Historic Brimfield at (413) 239-0288 for more information.

Be sure to save the date for this celebration of the founding of our country! More information will follow.

REAL ESTATE

Charlton
\$600,000, 76 Number 6 Schoolhouse Rd, Prw Enterprises LLC, to Harris, Joshua, and Harris, Halie.
\$565,000, 204 Brookfield Rd, Cirbus, Douglas A, and Cirbus, Diane L, to King, Justin J, and King, Philicity A.
\$417,500, 57 Carpenter Hill Rd, Shunaman, Darrian M, and Picard, Erin J, to Mortell, Travis J.
\$400,000, N Sullivan Rd #1-2, Pmz Development LLC, to Sellow Rt, and Sellow, Brent W.
\$400,000, N Sullivan Rd #1-3, Pmz Development LLC, to Sellow Rt, and Sellow, Brent W.
\$400,000, N Sullivan Rd #1-4, Pmz Development LLC, to Sellow Rt, and Sellow, Brent W.
\$65,000, N Main St #2-1, Venetis, Agatha, to Hansen, Christopher R, and Hansen, Krystal L.
\$20,000, Number 6 Schoolhouse Rd, Torte Jr, Anthony, to Sanchez, Wilfred.
\$960,000, 43 Ramshorn Rd #1, Dna Family Lp, to L&e Properties LLC.
\$960,000, 43 Ramshorn Rd #2, Dna Family Lp, to L&e Properties LLC.
\$960,000, 43 Ramshorn Rd #3, Dna Family Lp, to L&e Properties LLC.
\$960,000, 43 Ramshorn Rd #4, Dna Family Lp, to L&e Properties LLC.
\$960,000, 43 Ramshorn Rd #5, Dna Family Lp, to L&e Properties LLC.
\$960,000, 43 Ramshorn Rd #6, Dna Family Lp, to L&e Properties LLC.
\$960,000, 43 Ramshorn Rd #7, Dna Family Lp, to L&e Properties LLC.
\$960,000, 43 Ramshorn Rd #8, Dna Family Lp, to L&e Properties LLC.
\$590,000, 23 Jennings Rd, Lajoie, Seth L, and Lajoie, Agata C, to Lajoie, Agata C, and Sullivan, Alex.
\$480,000, 33 Ramshorn Rd #1, Dna Family Lp, to L&e Properties LLC.
\$480,000, 33 Ramshorn Rd #2, Dna Family Lp, to L&e Properties LLC.
\$480,000, 33 Ramshorn Rd #3, Dna Family Lp, to L&e Properties LLC.
\$480,000, 33 Ramshorn Rd #4, Dna Family Lp, to L&e Properties LLC.
\$360,000, 29 Ramshorn Rd #1, Dna Family Lp, to L&e Properties LLC.
\$360,000, 29 Ramshorn Rd #2, Dna Family Lp, to L&e Properties LLC.
\$360,000, 29 Ramshorn Rd #3, Dna Family Lp, to L&e Properties LLC.
\$279,000, 6 Bond Rd, Brassard, Pepper, to Constitution Prop LLC.

SOUTHBRIDGE
\$1,520,000, 320 Elm St, Benali Properties LLC, to Payne Properties LLC.
\$1,350,000, 114 Pleasant St, Suchadeal LLC, to Center Of Hope Fndtn Inc.
\$387,000, 51 Warren St, Paul, Shawn D, to Rodriguez, Jonathan.
\$130,000, 1049 Lebanon Hill Rd, Mahan, Theresa A, and Larochelle, John, to Pah Properties LLC.
\$530,000, 467 Durfee St, Langevin, David H, and Langevin, Louise H, to Blais, Molly C, and Blais, Paula C.
\$150,000, 138 Charlton St, Wojciechowski, Nicholas J, to John & D Johnson Ft, and Johnson, John.

STURBRIDGE
\$564,000, 6 Apple Hill Rd, Linton, Mario E, to Williams, Pamela C, and Howard, Richard A.
\$560,000, 62 Allen Rd, Finnegan, Stephanie A, to Caulfield, Bret, and Richardson, Marissa.
\$375,000, 8 Cedar Pond Dr, Laliberte Craig D Est, and Adamo, Janine A, to Kim Chau LLC.
\$1,200,000, 243 Big Alum, Peterson, Ronald V, and Peterson, Yulie, to Mcdevitt, Jessica, and Mcdevitt, Keegan.
\$655,000, 28 Allen Rd, Cadena, Paul A, and Cadena, Monika H, to Nichols, Isaac, and Nichols, Michelle.

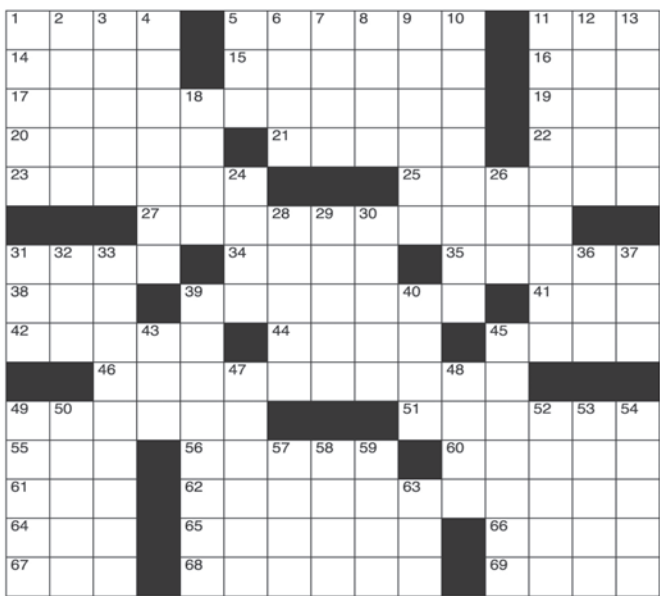


ARTHRITIS?

Is your arthritis care all that you would hope it to be?
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- ### CLUES ACROSS

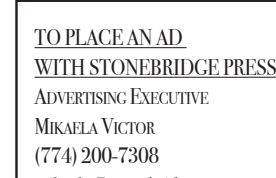
 - Cut quickly
 - A way to state clearly
 - River in NE Scotland
 - Expansive
 - Lacking social polish
 - Amount of time
 - Frame
 - Automobile
 - Toadstools
 - High school dances
 - Utilize
 - Experimented with
 - One-sided
 - Acquisitive
 - Potted plants
 - Everyone has one
 - Kalahari Desert lake
 - Unidentified flying object
 - People 65 and over
- Small amount
 - Daughter of Acrisius
 - Ornamental box
 - Government agents
 - Uncertain
 - A cotton fabric with a satiny finish
 - Treeless plains
 - One’s sense of self-importance
 - Consumer advocate
 - Type of lounge
 - Body part
 - Can be persuaded
 - Woman (French)
 - Ready and willing to be taught
 - Arab ruler title
 - Unhappy
 - Gradually went away
 - Able to think clearly

- ### CLUES DOWN

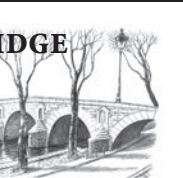
 - Brushed
 - Small water spirit (Germ.)
 - Heroes
 - Monetary units
 - Some don’t want to share theirs
 - Free-swimming invertebrate
 - Litigates
 - Outer
 - Parallelograms
 - Uneasy feelings
 - Cross
 - A way to remove
 - Pages can be dog-__
 - Ukrainian city
 - A citizen of Denmark
 - Month
 - Hindu queens
 - Group of chemicals
 - Rider of Rohan
 - Wet dirt
- Southwestern Russia city
 - Observed
 - Angry
 - Drivers’ licenses
 - Musical composition
 - Auction
 - They __
 - Women
 - Be filled with love for
 - Thick-soled sock
 - Appears
 - Old World lizard
 - The leading performer
 - Protein
 - “Gunga Din” script writer
 - __ Blyton, children’s author
 - Abnormal breathing
 - A place to rest

PUZZLE SOLUTION

Э	Н	У	С	Д	Э	О	О	Н	Э	Д	У	С		
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Э	Э	О		Л	У	Э	С	У	У	Д	И	У	У	У



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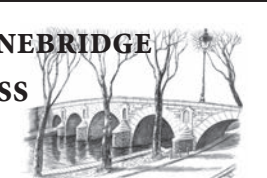
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STONEBRIDGE PRESS



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The Charlton Villager (USPS#024-954) is published weekly by Stonebridge Press, Inc., 25 Elm St., Southbridge, MA 01550. Periodical postage paid at Southbridge, MA and additional mailing office(s). POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Stonebridge Press P.O. Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550.

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Heritage School (508) 248-4884
Charlton Middle School..... (508) 248-1423
Shepherd Hill Regional High School
..... (508) 943-6700
Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical
High School
..... (508) 248-5971 or (508) 987-0326

HOLLAND: 413-245-7108
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STURBRIDGE 508-347-6463
Weekdays 8:30 – 5:00 and Sat. 9:00 -12:00

BRIMFIELD: 413-245-3451
Weekdays: 9:00 – 4:30 and Sat. 9:00 -12:00

WALES: 413-245-9808
Weekdays 8:30 – 12:30 and 2:00 – 4:30 and
Sat. 9:00 – 12:00

CHURCH LISTINGS

- **Central Baptist Church**
256 Main St., Southbridge, MA 01550
Tel 508/764-6365; Worship 10:00 A.M.
- **Charlton Federated Church**, 64 Main St., 508- 248-5550, Sunday worship 10:30 a.m. Summer worship is 9:30 a.m. www.fed-church.org
- **Charlton Baptist Church**, 50 Hammond Hill Road, 248-4488, www.charltonbaptist.org, Sunday worship 10 a.m.
- **Charlton City United Methodist**, 74 Stafford St. 248-7379, web site: CharltonCityUMC.org
Sunday worship and Children’s church 10am
- **St. Anne St. Patrick Church**, 16 Church St., Fiskdale (508) 347-7338
www.stannestpatparish.com
Saturday Vigil Mass at 4 pm, Sunday 8 am, 10 am, 12 noon, Youth Mass (September to May) 5 pm. Daily Mass Mon - Thurs 7:30 and 10 am, Fri and Sat 7:30 am
- **Elm Street Congregational Church**, 61 Elm Street, Southbridge, Ma 01550
Phone: 508-764-8085 • Sunday service 10:00 am
Pastor Kathryn Light
- **Faith Baptist Church**, 515 Dennison Drive, Southbridge
Phone number 508-764-6132,
Worship Service: Sunday 10:00 a.m.
- **St. Joseph’s Church**, 10 H. Putnam Ext, 248-7862, www.stjosephscharlton.com, Saturday Vigil Mass 4:30 p.m., Sunday Mass 8 a.m., Sunday Family Mass 10 a.m., Sunday LifeTEEN Mass 5 p.m., Weekday Mass Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 a.m.
- **Wayside Church**, 6 Haggerty Road, 248-5144
- **Assemblies of God Southern New England District Headquarters**, Route 20, 248-3771, snedag.org, Office hours Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Living Word Church of Charlton**, 10 Main Street - Grange building 1st Floor, Charlton, Ma 01507, Pastor Craig Bellisario, (508) 233-8349
Sunday Service 10:00am.
www.livingwordcharlton.com
info@livingwordcharlton.com
- **New Life Fellowship A/G, SNED Chapel**, 307 Sturbridge Road, Rt. 20, Charlton, MA, Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.
- **Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale-** 8 Maple St. Sturbridge, 774-304-1021
www.sturfed.org
Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.
- **Bethlehem Lutheran Church-** 345 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566
Phone 508-347-7297
Web: www.bethlehemsturbridge.org
Services - Sunday 9:00 am
Pastor Dan Purtell
- **Holland Congregation Church**
“Where the Bible is preached.”
11 Sturbridge Road, Holland, 413-245-9926
Hollandchurch.org
Sunday Service @ 10:00 am
Pastor Dan Maketansky
- **Holy Trinity Episcopal Church**
446 Hamilton St., Southbridge, MA 01550
Phone: 508-765-9559
Web: www.holytrinitysouthbridge.org
Sunday Service 11:00 am
Pastor Dan Purtell
- **St. John Paul II Parish**
279 Hamilton St., Southbridge
Rev. Carlos Ardila, Pastor
Weekend services Saturday 4 p.m.,
Sunday 8 a.m., 10 a.m., and noon
Weekday masses 8:30 & 8:45 a.m., St. Mary’s Church (508) 765-3701

Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale Irish Feast coming March 16

STURBRIDGE — A Sturbridge tradition returns just in time for your St. Patrick’s Day celebration. The Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale will host its annual Irish Feast on Monday, March 16, at the historic Publick House Restaurant, inviting the community to gather for good food, good company, and a good cause.

This year’s Irish Feast will benefit both the Federated Church and The Center of Hope Foundation, Inc., a Southbridge-based nonprofit that supports people with disabilities and their families from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds,

helping them access resources, services, and opportunities to live meaningful, fulfilling lives.

“We’re fortunate to partner once again with the Publick House, which makes this evening possible year after year,” said event chair Ken Benson. “This dinner has always been about community,

and we’re especially proud that it will also support the important work being done by The Center of Hope right here in our region.”

Pastor Rev. David Cote added, “An Irish Feast is about more than corned beef and cabbage. It’s about neighbors sitting down together, sharing a meal, and supporting orga-

nizations that reflect our shared values of care, inclusion, and compassion.”

Guests will enjoy a buffet-style Irish dinner featuring corned beef and cabbage, boiled potatoes, carrots and turnips, dinner rolls and Irish soda bread, a choice of beverage, and a cupcake for dessert. Dinner will be served in two seat-

ings: The early seating will take place from 4:30 – 6 p.m., while a later seating happens from 6:30 – 8 p.m. Adult tickets are \$18, and children ages four to 12 are \$7.

Tickets must be purchased by March 15 as no tickets will be sold at the door. Tickets will be available Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon starting February 13 in the Federated Church of Sturbridge parlor, 8 Maple Street, where

you may use cash, check, credit/debit card, or Venmo.

The church website at sturfed.org and Facebook page both offer payment links and QR codes for those wishing to purchase tickets using PayPal. You may also purchase tickets electronically using Venmo at @Federated-Church. Please include your address, the number of meals you wish to purchase, and your preferred seating time. Time permitting, tickets pur-

chased by Venmo will be mailed to the address provided. Late orders will be held at the door.

For more information or to purchase tickets, contact the Church Office at 774-304-1021 or Ken Benson at 774-230-3848. The Federated Church of Sturbridge & Fiskdale joyfully celebrates Christ’s presence and God’s grace in our lives. Learn more at sturfed.org or email churchoffice@sturfed.org.

Tantasqua tops division in Fall Vocabulary Bowl competition

FISKDALE — Tantasqua Regional Junior High School in Fiskdale has claimed the top spot in its division in the Fall 2025 Vocabulary Bowl, the world’s largest academic contest, for the first time. This is an impressive feat, as this was the biggest season to date, drawing in one million students from 6,000 schools spanning 120 countries!

The Vocabulary Bowl turns vocabulary building into a game, making it fun and rewarding for learners of all ages and abilities. Students master words at their own pace using Vocabulary.com’s adaptive technology, earning points for themselves and their schools. Teachers rally their classes by celebrating top scorers and team wins. Every

word learned helps develop the reading, writing and communication skills students need for school and beyond.

For details on how to participate in the Spring 2026 season, visit <https://www.vocabulary.com/bowl/rules>.

A b o u t Vocabulary.com Founded in 2010, Vocabulary.com transforms vocabulary instruction, teaching students

the words they need to know to achieve more in school and life. The adaptive platform personalizes learning by identifying each student’s vocabulary needs and creating individualized learning plans. With over 17,000 curated resources aligned with textbooks, novels and English language learner content, Vocabulary.com seamlessly inte-

grates into any curriculum. Gamified features, including the Vocabulary Bowl, engage and motivate students through fun, interactive competitions. To date, 4 million learners have answered 8 billion questions and mastered 400 million words on Vocabulary.com. Vocabulary.com joined the IXL Learning family in 2020.

Jasenia Montano graduates from Elms College

CHICOPEE — Jasenia Montano of Uxbridge received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Elms College following the conclusion of the Fall 2025 semester.

Montano was among 60 students

who received their degrees in December.

Elms College is a co-educational Catholic college offering a liberal arts curriculum that prepares stu-

dents holistically for a purposeful life in a diverse and interconnected world. Founded in 1928 by the Sisters of St. Joseph, Elms College has a

tradition of educating reflective, principled and creative learners, who are rooted in faith, educated in mind, compassionate in heart, responsive to civic and social obligations, and capable of adjusting to change without compromising principle.

Crocodile River Music to perform at Jacob Edwards Library

SOUTHBRIDGE — Join Crocodile River Music on Feb. 26 at 6:30 p.m., when they return to Jacob Edwards Library in Southbridge for a celebration of Black History Month!

This is a free event thanks to the support of Southbridge Cultural Council and Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Fiskdale Legion post hosting corned beef dinner

FISKDALE — The Champeau Vilandre American Legion Post 109, 507 Main St., Fiskdale, is having our corned beef dinner on March 8, from 3 to 5 p.m.

Dinner will include corned beef, cabbage, carrots, potato, desserts, coffee and tea. There will be raffles, and a 50/50 drawing. All proceeds will benefit our Veteran and Youth programs.

Tickets will not be sold at the door. Please contact the Legion at 508-347-3248 for more information or to purchase tickets.

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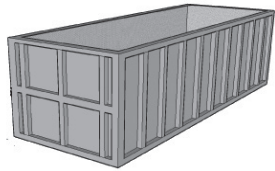
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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
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EDITOR

Caring for the caregivers close to home

In towns like Southbridge, Sturbridge and Charlton, we take pride in being self-reliant. We mow our own lawns, shovel our own driveways and show up when a neighbor needs a hand. It is part of the culture here.

But there is a quieter group among us who give far more than a hand. They give their time, their energy and often their peace of mind. They are the caregivers.

They are the daughter who drives from Charlton to Southbridge after work to check on an aging parent. The husband in Sturbridge learning to manage medications and appointments after a spouse’s diagnosis. The grandparent stepping in to raise grandchildren when circumstances change. The adult child juggling full-time work and weekend visits to a rehabilitation facility.

Caregiving rarely comes with a title or a paycheck. It comes with responsibility, emotion and exhaustion.

As our region ages, more families are finding themselves in this role. According to state data, Massachusetts continues to see growth in its senior population, particularly those over 75. That reality touches every community, including our own.

Local resources exist. Senior centers in all three towns offer programs and support. Regional agencies on aging provide guidance on benefits and services. Faith communities and nonprofit groups step in with meals, transportation and companionship.

Yet caregiving often remains isolating. Many caregivers hesitate to ask for help. They feel it is their duty. They worry about burdening others. Some are unaware of available services. Others assume that if they are “managing,” they do not qualify for assistance.

We can do better by acknowledging that caregiving is not a private struggle to be endured silently. It is a community issue.

Town leaders can continue to ensure that information about elder services, respite programs and support groups is easy to find. Employers can recognize that flexible scheduling is not merely a perk but a practical necessity for many working caregivers. Neighbors can check in with more than a polite wave, offering a concrete gesture such as a prepared meal or a ride to an appointment.

And perhaps most important, we can shift the way we talk about caregiving. It is not a sign of weakness to need support. It is a sign of commitment to accept it.

Small towns have an advantage here. We are not anonymous. We see one another at the grocery store, at school events and on the sidelines of youth sports. That visibility can be an asset if we allow it to foster genuine connection rather than quiet observation.

We often celebrate milestones: ribbon cuttings, graduations, parades. Caregiving rarely earns applause. It happens behind closed doors.

But it deserves recognition.

Strong communities are measured not only by their tax base or new development but by how they care for their most vulnerable members and those who support them. If we truly value neighborliness, then we must extend it to the caregivers among us.

They are carrying more than we may realize.

And they should not have to carry it alone.

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.

OPINION

What should you do with your tax refund?

It’s almost time for people to begin receiving their tax refunds. If you get one, what will you do with it?

The answer will depend somewhat on the size of your refund. Last year, the average was \$3,167, according to the Internal Revenue Service’s Filing Season Statistics report.

Whatever the size of your refund, you’ll want to maximize its benefit. Here are some suggestions:

- Contribute to your IRA. If you receive \$3,167, it could go a long way toward funding your IRA for the year, but any amount would help. You have until April 15 to contribute for the 2025 tax year, but if you’ve already “maxed out” contributions, you could use your refund for 2026, when the annual contribution limit for an IRA is \$7,500, or \$8,600 if you’re 50 or older. Beginning early toward fully funding your IRA can help reduce the pressure of coming up with large amounts later.

- Build an emergency fund. Your tax refund could help you start or expand an emergency fund. It’s a good idea to keep three to six months’ worth of living expenses in such a fund, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account, separate from the funds you use for your daily expenses. You might need to draw on this fund for unexpected expenses, such as a major home or car repair or a large medical bill. Without an emergency fund in place, you might be tempted to dip into your IRA or other retirement accounts to pay for these types of costs, and that could be expensive, resulting in taxes, penalties and lost opportunities for growth.

- Contribute to a 529 plan. If you have children or grandchildren and want to support their education, you might con-



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sider investing in a 529 education savings plan. Earnings and withdrawals are federally tax free, provided the money is used for qualified education expenses. Your 529 plan may provide state tax benefits, too. (It’s possible, though, that 529 withdrawals could affect financial aid packages, depending on who owns the account.) A 529 plan can be used to help pay for college, accredited trade school programs, some K-12 expenses and even some student loans.

- Pay down debts. You may wish you could reduce your debt load. Your tax refund could offer you that chance. But which debts should you tackle first? You could follow the “snowball” method by paying off the smallest of your loans or debts as quickly as possible. Or you could choose the “avalanche” route by making minimum payments on all debts and using extra funds – such as your tax refund – to pay off those with the highest interest rates. Either method could help you save money in the long term.

- Prepare for other tax obligations. Your refund can also be set aside in a separate savings account to pay estimated quarterly taxes or personal property or real estate taxes.

It’s not often that you receive a financial windfall such as a tax refund — so think carefully about how you can maximize its benefits.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Trevor Nielsen, your local Edward Jones Advisor in Sturbridge at 508-347-1420 or trevor.nielsen@edwardjones.com. Edward Jones, Member SIPC

The quiet confidence of knowing your way

LANTERNS ALONG MAIN STREET By CHARLES

There is a certain kind of confidence that does not announce itself.

It does not come with raised voices or bold claims. It does not rush to prove anything. You notice it most often in people who know exactly where they are, even if they could not explain how they got there.

I think about this whenever I see someone navigate a place they have known for years without hesitation. They take the right turn without thinking. They park instinctively in the same spot they always have. They greet someone by name, even if they have not seen them in a while.

None of it is flashy. All of it is earned.

In small towns, this kind of confidence used to be common. You learned it slowly. You figured out which roads flooded after a hard rain, which shortcuts were worth taking, and which were not. You knew where the sun hit the sidewalk in winter and which side of the street stayed cooler in summer.

That knowledge lived quietly in the body. It did not require a screen or an update. It came from repetition, observation, and time.

Now, many of us rely on directions for even familiar trips. We check schedules we already know. We second-guess routes we have taken for years. There is nothing wrong with that, but something subtle changes when we stop trusting our own sense of place.

I do not miss getting lost. I do miss the confidence that came from not needing constant confirmation.

There was a time when knowing your way meant more than geography. It meant knowing when to speak and when

to wait. Knowing which questions mattered and which ones could sit unanswered. Knowing that not every problem required immediate action.

You still see this kind of assurance in certain people. Often, they are older, but not always. They move through a room without urgency. They listen more than they talk. When they do speak, it is usually measured, and often helpful.

They are not slow. They are steady.

That steadiness is something our towns quietly depend on. It shows up in long-serving clerks, familiar faces at local counters,

and neighbors who seem to understand how things work without needing to explain themselves.

They remind us that experience does not need to shout to be valuable.

I catch myself trying to relearn some of that confidence. Leaving the phone in my pocket. Trusting memory instead of prompts. Letting familiarity do its work without checking to see if it is still correct.

Sometimes it is. Sometimes it is not. But the act of trusting it again feels important.

In a world that constantly asks us to verify, update, and refresh, there is something grounding about knowing your way well enough to move forward without asking permission.

That quiet confidence does not draw attention. It does not need to.

Like so many good things along Main Street, it is simply there, doing its work, steady as ever.

TO THE EDITOR

We can strengthen trust between schools and families in Southbridge

To the Editor:

My name is Ashley Daniels Ramos, and I am a Southbridge parent and candidate for School Committee.

Community advocacy has always been central to who I am. While living in Framingham, I helped organize and advocate for safe and accessible splash pads for families. Through collaboration with local leaders and consistent community engagement, we elevated concerns about equitable access to recreational spaces for children. That experience reinforced my belief that when families organize thoughtfully and leaders listen, meaningful progress is possible.

In my professional work, I support families navigating complex systems, including education and behavioral health. I see every day how communication gaps, unclear processes, and inconsistent follow through create stress for families who are already carrying heavy responsibilities. Systems work best when expectations are clear, timelines are honored, and collaboration is intentional.

As a parent in Southbridge, I have also experienced the school system firsthand, particularly while navigating spe-

cial education and student mental health needs. Having seen how different districts operate, I understand how communication structures and accountability practices shape a family’s experience. Families deserve transparency. Students deserve timely and coordinated support. Educators deserve policies that are clear and workable.

I am running because I believe Southbridge can strengthen trust between families and schools. My priorities include improving communication systems, ensuring mental health responsiveness, supporting collaborative problem solving, and encouraging accountability in how policies are implemented.

Southbridge has dedicated educators, resilient families, and strong potential. I am committed to constructive leadership that focuses on solutions, partnership, and student well being.

Sincerely,

Ashley Daniels Ramos
Southbridge

Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale

announces 2026 Lenten services schedule

STURBRIDGE — The Federated Church of Sturbridge & Fiskdale has announced its 2026 schedule of Lenten services, starting with Ash Wednesday, and culminating in the Easter Sunday celebrations. Services are held at the church located at 8 Maple Street and the community is welcome to attend.

The Rev. David W. Cote will officiate the services, which begin on Feb. 18 with a 6:30 p.m. Ash Wednesday service and continue through Easter Sunday on April 5. Refreshments will be served in Fellowship Hall following each of the Sunday services.

On April 3, Good Friday, the congregation will gather in the Chapel at noon for meditation and prayer. An ecumenical Stations of the Cross service will also be held at St. Anne's Shrine, 16 Church St., Fiskdale.

"On Easter Sunday, the community

is invited to join us at 6:00 a.m. as we celebrate with a special sunrise service at the original Baptist Meetinghouse, which is now located at Old Sturbridge Village," says Rev. Cote. "Following the sunrise service, we will return to the Federated Church Meeting House sanctuary at 8 Maple St. for our 9:30 a.m. Easter morning service."

The sunrise service at Old Sturbridge Village is an ecumenical service, with local faith communities participating, including Bethlehem Lutheran Church (Sturbridge), Brookfield Congregational Church (Brookfield), Elm Street Congregational Church (Southbridge), Holy Trinity Church (Southbridge), and St. Anne/St. Patrick Catholic Church (Fiskdale). Area residents who wish to attend are advised to

enter the Meetinghouse by way of the security gate at the top of the parking lot, dress appropriately for the weather and wear sturdy walking shoes. Food and drink are not permitted, except for bottled water. The Village will not be open for touring during this event and restrooms will not be available.

The Lenten season includes the following services:

February
18 - 6:30 p.m., Ash Wednesday
22 - 9:30 a.m., First Sunday of Lent

March
1 - 9:30 a.m., Second Sunday of Lent
8 - 9:30 a.m., Third Sunday of Lent
15 - 9:30 a.m., Fourth Sunday of Lent

Lent
22 - 9:30 a.m., Fifth Sunday of Lent

29 - 9:30 a.m., Palm Sunday

April
1 - 6:30 p.m., Maundy Thursday
3 - 12 p.m., Good Friday, Meditations and Prayer (Federated Church)

Ecumenical Stations of the Cross (St. Anne's Church)
5 - 6 a.m., Ecumenical Easter Sunrise Service at Old Sturbridge Village
9:30 a.m., Easter Sunday Service (Federated Church)

The Federated Church of Sturbridge & Fiskdale joyfully celebrates Christ's presence and God's grace in our lives. Community members are always welcome to join in worship on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. Services are also live-streamed on the church's Facebook page. For more information, call 774-304-1021 or visit sturfed.org.

Local residents named to William & Mary Dean's List

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. — Charlotte Ardis and Lila Caslowitz of Sturbridge were recently named to the Dean's List at the College of William & Mary for the fall 2025 semester.

In order to achieve Dean's List status, a full-time degree seeking undergraduate student must take at least 12 credit hours and earn a 3.6 Quality Point Average during the semester.

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New York Times bestselling author Tess Gerritsen to headline Stewing Over Mysteries Event

Friends of the Joshua Hyde Public Library presents an evening with the master of medical thrillers



Tess Gerritsen

STURBRIDGE — The Joshua Hyde Public Library is thrilled to announce that renowned author Tess Gerritsen will be the featured guest at the upcoming Stewing Over Mysteries event on Wednesday, March 11 at 6:15 p.m. at the Publick House in Sturbridge.

Tess Gerritsen, a New York Times bestselling author known for her gripping medical thrillers and the beloved Rizzoli & Isles series, will share insights into her writing process, discuss her latest work, and engage with mystery enthusiasts in an intimate setting. With more than 30 million copies of her books sold worldwide and the inspiration behind the hit TNT television series, Gerritsen brings a unique perspective as both a former

physician and master storyteller. "We are absolutely delighted to have Tess Gerritsen as our speaker at this year's Stewing Over Mysteries event," said Library Director Becky Plimpton. "Her ability to blend medical expertise with edge-of-your-seat suspense has captivated readers around the world. This is a rare opportunity for our community to meet one of the most influential voices in contemporary mystery and thriller fiction."

The Stewing Over Mysteries event will feature audience Q&A and book signing by Ms. Gerritsen. Attendees will have the chance to purchase Ms. Gerritsen's books on-site. Tickets are available now on the library website, sturbridgelibrary.org, and at the Joshua Hyde

Public Library. Tickets are \$22 for the event and dinner, or a savings of \$3 on a \$36 package bundle that includes a signed copy of The Summer Guests. The book vendor for this event is Book Club on the Go. Seating is limited, and this event will sell out.

About Tess Gerritsen
Tess Gerritsen is the New York Times bestselling

author of more than 25 novels, including the Rizzoli & Isles series. Her books have been translated into 40 languages and have sold more than 30 million copies worldwide. A former physician, she now writes full-time and lives in Maine.

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LEGALS

SALES OF MOTOR VEHICLES
Under G.L. c.255 Sec.39A
Notice is hereby given by Cruise Control Transportation Inc. Pursuant to the provisions of Under G.L. c.255 Sec.39A that on or after March 6, 2026, at Cruise Control Transportation Inc. The following motor vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy our garage keeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, care and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicles.

VEHICLE MAKE:
2011 BMW 5 Series
VIN # WBAFU7C52BC780855
Last Registered Owner:
Papee Paye
36 Honeysuckle Rd
Worcester Ma, 01607-1824

VEHICLE MAKE:
2016 Ford Escape
VIN # 1FMCU9GX7GUA24951
Last Registered Owner:
Kayla Jensen
67 Catharine St Apt 2
Worcester Ma, 01605

VEHICLE MAKE:
2006 Honda Accord
VIN # 1HGCM56306A047128
Last Registered Owner:
Michael Adu-Gyamfi
104 Elm St
Southbridge Ma, 01550

VEHICLE MAKE:
2013 Infiniti G37 Sedan
VIN # JN1CV6AR6DM764757
Last Registered Owner:
Ria Chanel Lovel
2 Elton St APT 4H
Brooklyn NY, 11208

VEHICLE MAKE:
2011 Chevy Impala
VIN # 2G1WG5EK2B1269114
Last Registered Owner:
Aria Alyssa Mayo
362 Leicester St
Auburn Ma, 01501-1441
Timothy Fortuna
124 Old County Rd
Holland Ma, 01521-3218

VEHICLE MAKE:
2016 Toyota Corolla
VIN # 2T1BURHEXGC712372
Last Registered Owner:
Reginald James-Ray Rushin
26 Caron St APT 1
Southbridge Ma, 01550-2612

VEHICLE MAKE:
2002 Ford Explorer Sport Trac
VIN # 1FMZU77E62UC81802
Last Registered Owner:
Lori Reid
49 Pleasant Valley DR #205
Worcester Ma, 01605-1574

VEHICLE MAKE:
2006 Dodge Ram 1500
VIN # 1D7HU18206S551924
Last Registered Owner:
Deusdedit Dos Santos Junior
8 Lanesboro Rd APT 1
Worcester Ma, 01606

VEHICLE MAKE:
2014 Audi A5
VIN: WAULFAFH3EN002590
Last Registered Owner:
Gerard Planas
91 Grafton St
Shrewsbury, Ma 01545

February 20,2026
February 27, 2026
March 6, 2026

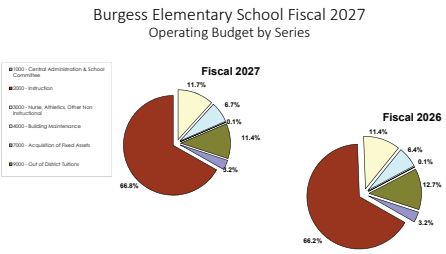
Planning Board Public Hearing

In accordance with MGL Ch. 40A, and the Town of Brimfield Zoning Bylaw section 7, the Planning Board will be holding a **Public Hearing on Tuesday, March 2, 2026, at 7:30 p.m. at Hitchcock Academy located at 2 Brookfield Rd. Brimfield, MA 01010.** The purpose of the hearing is to consider a request from **Manal Sara Moussaid for a change of use for the property located at 33 Sturbridge Rd. Brimfield, MA 01010.** Ms. Moussaid is requesting to convert the property from a residence to a liquor store and pouring lounge.
David Killian
Planning Board Chair
February 20,2026

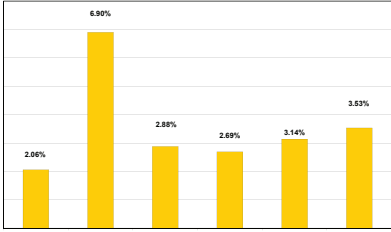
TOWN OF STURBRIDGE Board of Selectmen Public Hearing

National Grid has made a petition to the Sturbridge Select Board to construct a line of underground electric conduits on Podunk Road. National Grid to install beginning at a point approximately 378' feet northeast of the centerline of the intersection of Wells State Park Rd & Podunk Rd and continuing approximately 300' feet in a north direction. Install 300' of conduit between P30 & P31-50 on Podunk Rd. Installation of (2) Manholes. The pole hearing will take place on **Monday, March 2, 2026 at 6:35 p.m.** at the Sturbridge Town

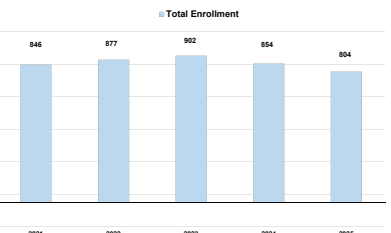
Hall, 2nd floor, Veteran's Memorial Hall located at 308 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566.
February 19, 2026



Burgess Elementary School Budget Historical Budget Changes



Burgess Elementary School Enrollment History - October 1st DESE Figures



February 19, 2026

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. WO26P0357EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate Of:
Barbara A Giguere
Date of Death: 11/04/2025

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **David Giguere of Southbridge 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: **David Giguere of Southbridge 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 03/03/2026.**

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. Kathryn M. Bailey, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 05, 2026
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
February 19, 2026

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. WO26P0450EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate Of:
Denise Irene Stewart
Also known as: Denise I Stewart
Date of Death: 01/20/2026

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Jennifer J McKinstry of Charlton 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: **Jennifer J McKinstry of Charlton**

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 03/10/2026.**

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. Kathryn M. Bailey, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 11, 2026
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
February 19, 2026

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. WO26P0196EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate Of:
Joann P Sapunka Miller
Date of Death: 05/20/2020

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **S/A - Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Arthur J. Broadhurst of Methuen 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: **Arthur J. Broadhurst of Methuen 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 03/10/2026.**

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. Kathryn M. Bailey, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 06, 2026
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
February 19, 2026

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. WO26P0448EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate Of:
Sally Kingston Baum
Date of Death: 10/09/2025

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Deborah A. Somadelis of Auburn MA** re-

questing that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: **Deborah A. Somadelis of Auburn 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 03/10/2026.**

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. Kathryn M. Bailey, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 11, 2026
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
February 19, 2026

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. WO25P1139EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR ORDER OF COMPLETE SETTLEMENT
Estate of:
Valerija Sinkuviene
Date of Death: 04/10/2014

A Petition for **Order of Complete Settlement** has been filed by **Helen Lozoraitis of Mattapoisett MA** requesting that the court enter a formal Decree of Complete Settlement including the allowance of a final account , 1st and other such relief as may be requested in the Petition.

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 03/03/2026.** 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.

WITNESS, Hon. Kathryn M. Bailey, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 05 2026
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
February 19, 2026

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Sturbridge Historical Society presents

“Exploring Massachusetts Property Records”

STURBRIDGE — On Thursday, Feb. 26, at 7 p.m. at The Publick House, the Sturbridge Historical Society, in collaboration with the Joshua Hyde Public Library, will present “Exploring Massachusetts Property Records” by genealogist Seema-Jayne Kenney.

Are you curious about who once owned your home? Wondering what land your ancestors may have bought or sold? This presentation introduces everyday researchers to the fascinating world of Massachusetts land records. Learn how to use online tools like MassLandRecords.com, understand the meaning behind different types of deeds, and uncover surprising details—from property disputes to family connections. Whether you’re exploring genealogy or local history, land records can help piece together the past in a way few other sources can.

Kenney started in the business of genealogy after completing the Genealogical Research Certificate Program at Boston University’s Center for Professional Education in 2010. Since then, she continued her education via ProGen & NIGR in 2012. Along the way, she joined several Genealogy Societies, attended local conferences, and enjoyed several webinars. Kenney has been a successful presenter in the past of programs at the Joshua Hyde Public Library.

Kenney is presenting two additional programs this spring in Sturbridge about genealogy. On March 26, the Joshua Hyde Public Library will host “Getting Started with Ancestry.com: A Practical Introduction to Family History Research”. This beginner-friendly session introduces you to the core features of Ancestry.com, including how to navigate your family tree, evaluate hints, and organize genealogical information on one of the most widely used family history platforms. And in June Kenney will be at the Senior Center to present “Become the Ancestor Your Family Remembers”. This session offers practical guidance on documenting your own life story using a variety of formats—from job applications and photo captions to vivid personal memories.

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Sturbridge Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

The program is free and open to the public; and is generously hosted by the Publick House.

University of Rhode Island students named to Fall Dean’s List

KINGSTON, R.I. — The University of Rhode Island is pleased to announce that several area students have been named to its Fall 2025 Dean's List. Among them are:

- Luke May of Charlton
- Kyle Norberg of Charlton
- Jeff Popsuj of Charlton
- Cristina Sage of Charlton
- Lizzy Maxfield of Brimfield
- Vanessa Ricci of Brimfield
- Lidia Barbalho of Sturbridge
- Stella Buday of Fiskdale
- Haley Willits of Fiskdale
- Makena Pentoney of Holland

Libby Dodson of Sturbridge
Erin Farrell of Sturbridge
Landon Grover of Sturbridge
Elise Mazeika of Sturbridge
Jillian Winco of Sturbridge
Yetzabeth Beltre Colon of Southbridge

To be included on the Dean's List, full-time students must have completed 12 or more credits for letter grades which are GPA applicable during a semester and achieved at least a 3.30 quality point average. Part-time students qualify with the accumulation of 12 or more credits for letter grades which are GPA applicable earning at least a 3.30 quality point average.

Students named to the Dean's List represent nearly all of Rhode Island's cities and towns, all six New England states, New York and New Jersey, and many other states and countries.

About the University of Rhode Island

The University of Rhode Island is a diverse and dynamic community whose members are connected by a common quest for knowledge. As a global education leader and the state of Rhode Island's flagship public research institution, URI offers distinctive opportunities designed to meet the global challenges of today's world and the rapidly evolving needs of tomorrow. Founded in 1892, URI now enrolls more than 18,000 students and offers more than 200 degree programs across nine schools and colleges. As a land- and sea-grant institution, URI is a key driver of economic development in Rhode Island and contributes significantly to the health and vitality of the state, the New England region, and the nation. To learn more, visit: uri.edu.

LEGALS

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. WO26P0400EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate Of:
John M Curboy, Jr.
Date of Death: 01/11/2022
To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Late and Limited Formal Testacy and/or Appointment**

has been filed by **Brian Curboy of Altoona FL** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.
The Petitioner requests that: **Brian Curboy of Altoona FL** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **With Corporate 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 appear-

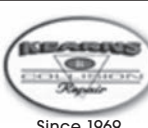
ance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/10/2026**.
This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an 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. Kathryn M. Bailey, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 10, 2026
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
February 19, 2026



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OBITUARIES

Robert L. Bruneau, Sr.

Southbridge: Robert L. Bruneau, Sr., 79, of Dennison Hill Rd., passed away with his family by his side on Monday, Feb. 9th, in the UMass Memorial Medical Center, University Campus, Worcester, after a long illness.

He leaves his wife of 57 years, Wanda S. (Stepkowski) Bruneau; his three sons, Robert L. Bruneau, Jr., with whom he lived, of Southbridge, Dean S. Bruneau and his wife Kristen of Brimfield and Adam D. Bruneau and his wife Jenn of Pomfret, CT; his three grandchildren, Natalie Bruneau, Noah Bruneau and Arabella Bruneau; his niece, Sheila Berg and her husband John of Florida; and his niece, Carol Lawhorne and her husband Rich of Florida. He also leaves behind his sisters-in-law, Stacia Miller of Bellingham, Washington, and Florence Stefancik of Holyoke, MA, and their families. He was predeceased by his brother, Paul Bruneau, Jr. and his two sisters, Rita Melton and Joyce Bennett. Robert was born in Southbridge the son of the late Paul and Hazel (Rathbun) Bruneau and grew up in Woodstock, CT. He was a graduate of Woodstock Academy and attended Ellis Tech.

Robert was a longtime service manag-



er for Patrick Motors Saab and Subaru in Worcester and later worked as a service manager for Herb Chambers Hyundai in Auburn, retiring many years ago. He was a member of St. Hedwig's Church in Southbridge and it's St. Stanislaw Society. He was also a member of the Italian American Club in Southbridge, the Pilsudski Polish American Club in Southbridge and Southbridge Senior Center.

Robert was an avid pitch player and played pitch at both the Southbridge Senior Center and the Italian Club in Southbridge. Robert had a love for lighthouses. He enjoyed woodworking and was always working on a project. He was also a car enthusiast.

Calling hours for Robert will be held on Saturday, Feb. 21st from 10:00am to 12:00pm in the Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge, with a funeral service in the funeral home to follow at 12:00pm. Burial in St. Hedwig's Cemetery, Southbridge, will be held at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Second Chance Animal Shelter, 111 Young Rd., East Brookfield, MA 01515.

www.morrillfuneralhome.com

Gateway Players to hold auditions for “Charlotte’s Web”

SOUTHBRIDGE — Gateway Players Theatre in Southbridge is hosting auditions for "Charlotte's Web."

Adapted by Joseph Robinette. Based on the book by E.B. White. Auditions will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 24 at 6 p.m. and Sunday, March 1 at 4 p.m. in Fellowship Hall at Elm Street Congregational Church, 61 Elm St., Southbridge.

Auditions will consist of cold readings from the script and role playing. This is a Youth Production for ages seven to 17. Performance dates are May 1, 2, 3, 8 & 9. Rehearsals will be held on Thursdays at 6 p.m. and Saturdays at 2 p.m. Character information is listed below. Directed by Lou-Ellen Corkum, and Produced by Stephanie Ruggiere. For more information, please contact Gateway at 508-764-4531. Presented by permission through special arrangement with

Dramatic Publishing.

The Children's Literature Association named this "the best American children's book of the past two hundred years," and Joseph Robinette, working with the advice of E.B. White, has created a play that captures this work in a thrilling and utterly practical theatrical presentation. The costumes and unit set may be simple or as colorful and elaborate as you wish; it's the story and relationships that make the show. All the enchanting characters are here: Wilbur, the irresistible young pig who desperately wants to avoid the butcher; Fern, a girl who understands what animals say to each other; Templeton, the gluttonous rat who can occasionally be talked into a good deed; the Zuckerman family; the Arables; and, most of all, the extraordinary spider, Charlotte, who proves to be "a true friend and a good writ-

er." Determined to save Wilbur, Charlotte begins her campaign with the "miracle" of her web in which she writes, "Some pig." It's the beginning of a victorious campaign which ultimately ends with the now-safe Wilbur doing what is most important to Charlotte.

Main Characters
Fern Arable young girl
John Arable her father
Martha Arable her mother
Avery Arable her brother
Homer Zuckerman her uncle
Edith Zuckerman her aunt
Lurvy a hired hand
Wilbur a pig
Templeton a rat
Charlotte a spider
Goose, Gander, Sheep, Lamb farm animals
3 Narrators
Ensemble
Reporter, Photographer, Spectators
Judges, Fairgoers, Announcer, Uncle (a pig), Spiders

Matthew Denton named to University of Mississippi Fall Chancellor’s Honor Roll

UNIVERSITY, Miss. — Matthew Denton, of Uxbridge, was named to the University of Mississippi's Fall 2025 Honor Roll.

Denton, in the B.S.C.S. in Computer Science program, was named to the Chancellor's Honor Roll, which is reserved for students who earn a semester GPA of 3.75-4.00.

"We are very proud of the students earning the Chancellor's Honor Roll designation," Chancellor Glenn Boyce said. "This recognition reflects their academic excellence and achievements and

exemplifies the hard work, commitment and dedication that define our university community."

To be eligible for honor roll designation, a student must have completed at least 12 graded hours for the semester and may not be on academic probation during the semester.

The University of Mississippi, affectionately known as Ole Miss, is the state's flagship university. Included in the elite group of R1: Doctoral Universities - Highest Research Activity by the Carnegie Classification, it has a

long history of producing leaders in public service, academics and business. Its 16 academic divisions include a major medical school, nationally recognized schools of accountancy, law and pharmacy, and an Honors College acclaimed for a blend of academic rigor, experiential learning and opportunities for community action. Recognized among the nation's most beautiful, Ole Miss' main campus is in Oxford, which is routinely acknowledged as one of the country's best college towns.

“Spring” into something new this March with Bay Path Continuing Education

CHARLTON — Bay Path Continuing Education is excited to highlight some offerings from the Winter/Spring Term. Our talented instructors are offering an inspiring lineup of classes, including some new ones not in the catalog. Whether you're looking to learn a new skill, meet new friends, create lasting memories, or simply relax and reconnect your mind and body, there's something waiting for you. Explore the offerings and register today—we can't wait to welcome you up to Bay Path.

A sampling of upcoming classes:

• Auto Damage Appraising
Tuesdays & Thursdays, Feb. 24-April 7, 6-9 p.m., \$499 (Class ID: 42886)

• Cultivating Resilience for Parents & Children Thru Self-Compassion
Wednesdays, Feb. 25-Mar 13, 6:30-8 p.m., \$129 (Class ID: 42832)

• Yoga For All (Drop In Class)
Thursday, Feb. 26, 7-8 p.m., \$15 per class (no registration required)

• MA Real Estate Person's Course - Prelicense required education
Monday & Thursday, March 2-April 30, 6-9 p.m., \$459 (Class ID: 42861)

• Beginner's Country Line Dancing
Monday, March 2-April 17, 6-7:15 p.m., \$79 (Class ID: 42818)

• Introduction to Beekeeping
Mondays, March 2-March 9, 6-8 p.m., \$69 (Class ID: 42795)

• Ballroom for Beginners Dance

Package
Tuesday, March 3-May 12, 6:30-8:45 p.m., \$169/Couple, \$85 Single (Class ID: 42811)

•How to Plan, Start, and Operate a Small Business
Tuesdays, March 3-April 7, 5-7:30 p.m., \$159 (Class ID: 42896)

• Stronger Together: An Introductory Guide to Understanding Special Education
Tuesday, March 3, 6-7:30 p.m., \$39 (Class ID: 42870)

• Exam Prep: MA Construction Supervisors Unrestricted License (CSL)
Wednesdays, March 4-April 8, 6-8 p.m., \$899 (Class ID: 43361)

• Introduction to Bracelet Making Using Stone, Glass & Crystal Beads
Wednesdays, March 4-April 8, 6-8:30 p.m., \$79 (Class ID: 42840)

• Introduction to Welding
Wednesdays, March 4-April 29, 5-8 p.m., \$539 (Class ID: 42897)

• Yoga For All (Drop In Class)
Thursday, March 5th & March 12, 7-8 p.m., \$15 per class (no registration required)

• Introduction to Songwriting
Monday, March 9-May 4, 6:30-8:30 p.m., \$129 (Class ID: 42882)

• *Newly Added* The Beauty of Ikebana: An Introduction to Japanese Floral Art Design (43357)
Tuesday, March 10, 6:30-8 p.m., \$59 (Class ID: 43357)

• Learn About Elder Law & Estate Planning
Tuesday, March 10, 6-8 p.m., Couples \$59,

Individuals \$39 (Class ID: 42792)

• Bob Ross Painting Session: Mountain Rhapsody
Tuesday, March 10, 5-8 p.m., \$69 (Class ID: 42848)

• Learn how to Paint with Acrylics
Wednesdays, March 11-April 15, 7-9 p.m., \$179 (Class ID: 42837)

• Date Night! Shamrock Ravioli: Decorative Pasta Mastery
Thursday, March 12, 5:30-8:30 p.m., \$145 per couple (Class ID: 42878)

• Investing: Rules of the Road
Tuesday, March 17, 6-7 p.m., \$39 (Class ID: 42887)

• Considering Real Estate Sales as a Career?
Wednesday, March 18, 6-9 p.m., \$39 (Class ID 42899)

• Introduction to Computers II
Wednesdays, March 18-April 1, 6-8 p.m., \$69 (Class ID: 42917)

• *Newly Added* The Beauty of Ikebana: An Introduction to Japanese Floral Art Design (43357)
Wednesday, March 18, 6:30-8 p.m., \$59 (Class ID: 43358)

Registration is open & rolling throughout the term. Classes are offered through May 2026.

You can register three ways:

Online at <https://bay-path.augusoft.net>

By Phone: 508-248-5971, ext. 1715

In Person: 57 Old Muggett Hill Rd., Charlton, MA 01507. Monday-Thursday 1-9 p.m.

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank is now accepting applications for its 2026 scholarship program, awarding 18 scholarships of \$2,500 each to local high school seniors planning to study business or finance. Applications are due April 13.

"We are proud to support students who are thinking seriously about their future and taking meaningful steps toward it," said Cornerstone CEO Todd Tallman. "These scholarships help remove barriers and encourage young people who want to make a positive impact through business and financial leadership."

Applicants must be graduating from high school in 2026 and plan to attend an accredited, degree-granting institution full time beginning in fall 2026. Students must demonstrate academic achievement, community involvement and interest in a business or financial career. Required materials

include an official transcript and GPA along with a completed application and a one-page essay describing career goals, steps toward achieving them and how the scholarship will support their path to success.

The application and more information can be found on the bank's Web site.

Scholarship recipients will receive funds after successful completion of their first college semester and upon submission of an official first-semester transcript and second-semester bill.

About Cornerstone Bank

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

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

St. Anne – St. Patrick’s Calendar Raffle celebrates Lucky Month

STURBRIDGE — St. Anne – St. Patrick Parish is celebrating the month of March with a St. Patrick’s Day Calendar raffle. One lucky winner will be drawn each day. The winning ticket will be reentered for more chances to win. Raffle tickets are \$10 each.

The calendar features four \$100 prizes drawn every Saturday in March as well as several random cash prizes throughout the month. On St. Patrick’s Day, the lucky winner will receive \$500. Other prizes include gift cards to St. Anne’s Gift Shop, Tutti Quanti,

Napoli’s Pizzeria, Elm Street Café, Big Bunny Supermarket, Nova’s Restaurant Holland, Publick House, and tickets to Entertainment Luxury Theater. Raffle tickets may be purchased in the St. Anne Gift Shop and in the St. Anne – St. Patrick

office. Proceeds benefit St. Anne – St. Patrick Parish.

St. Anne - St. Patrick Parish is an active parish community. It offers daily Mass for worship, religious education, and community ministries. It welcomes visitors to St. Anne Shrine, the new

Memorial for the Unborn, the Hall of Saints, the Russian Icon Exhibit, the Votive Chapel, the Generations Statue, and the Angel of Hope Monument. Our pilgrims feel at peace walking the ground, including the Stations of the Cross and the Holy Stairs. And

weather permitting, pilgrims also have access to a picnic grove. The Daily Rosary is recited at 3 p.m. in the St. Patrick Chapel, and weekend Masses are celebrated in its outdoor pavilion in the summer. Its religious gift shop is open every day from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.



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

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Impressive view! 1/2 acre overlooking Cranberry Meadow Pond! Nicely appointed Colonial, better than new! 3 bedrooms, 2-1/2 Bath! Master Bedroom Suite. 2 car garage Howe State Park close by. Deeded Beach Rights! a Must See! assisted sale \$545,000



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Webster - 24 Cooper Rd New Construction- Craftsman Style home

Tucked away on Cooper Rd. Webster Lake with access at Lakeside beach/boat ramp. 3rd of 4 homes being built at this site. Offers 2,155 sq. ft +/- of living area, 7 rms, 4 bds, 2 1/2 baths, 9ft ceiling, wood flooring throughout with ceramic tile baths. Spacious main BR Suite w/ walk-in closet, and private full bath, double sink vanity, finished lower level walk-out w/ slider. Central AC, garage \$649,900.00



Condominium - 78 Athol Street Killingly, Ct.

End Unit! Nice floor plan! 2 Bedroom, 1-1/2 Bath, Sliding Door to Deck. Basement w/Bulkhead. Priced to Sell! assisted sale \$205,000

On the shores of Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg

Webster Lake Waterfront - 31 Bayview!!



Panoramic View, from this absolutely lovely home. 2600 +/- SF, 3+ Beds, 2 full baths, 2 car detached garage! 63' +/- waterfront. .37 Acres! Sandy Waterfront! \$1,100,000

Webster Lake - 302 Killdeer Island



Renovated + move-in ready lakefront home w/1,700+/- sq ft. Open kitchen/dining/living w/cathedral ceilings + wall of windows. Primary suite w/private bath! 2 add'l bedrooms, 2nd Full bath. Lower level family room w/walkout to water. Wraparound deck, new vinyl railings, terraced yard, sandy beach, professional landscaping. Many updates \$775,000

Webster Lake Waterfront Listing!! On Indian Point # 10 "Private Rd"



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WILBRAHAM — Wilbraham & Monson Academy Middle School students earned the top prize at the Future City New England Regional Finals in Boston on Jan. 24 to advance to the national competition, which will be held in Washington, D.C., Feb. 14-17. “This is the result of many hours of work both in and out of the classroom,” explained Future City faculty advisor Mark Weber. “There is no exam, no vocabulary to memorize - it's all about tapping into the students' innate creativity and passions. Each student can find a task that suits their skills and interests, so everyone is engaged and dedicated to the final outcome. It's important to remember that this is a student-run project. There are adults who act as advisors and help the students learn some organizational skills, but at the end of the



Courtesy

Wilbraham & Monson Academy Middle School students win Future City State title!

day, this is their project and their victories.”	Gianna Lovelace '31, Noelle MacDonald '31,
The team included Henry Adams '31,	Mikey Mannix '31, Charlie Proctor '31,
Gonzalo Baz Arroyo '31,	Logan Sheffer '31 and Jade Villamaino '31.
Colleen Chesky '31, Lily Hoar '31, Emerson Letendre '31,	The same team won the Western New England

Regional on Jan. 17 in Connecticut. "The team was proud of what they had created and achieved, but they knew they were facing other truly excellent teams," said Mr. Weber, referring to the difference between the regional and state contests. "Some last minute preparations on the bus ride set them at ease, and they went in knowing they had done everything

they could to prepare.” Using this year’s farm-to-table theme while playing off Brazil’s Rio de Janeiro 100 years into the future, WMA designed a model of “Soil de Janeiro.” Colleen, Noelle and Henry presented and explained the creation to the judges.

“The presenters were much more comfortable, knowing they already had

a victory," Mr. Weber described. "Some small improvements to the presentation and a few artistic enhancements to the model added to the team's confidence. The team also showed grace and dignity throughout the day, and were gracious in their victory."

To learn more about the WMA Middle School, visit www.wma.us/middle-school.

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