



Auburn News

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Friday, March 6, 2026

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www.StonebridgePress.com

Boston Celtics honor Dudley family as Heroes Among Us

DUDLEY — In recognition of their dedication to inclusion and support for the Best Buddies community, the Benoit family of Dudley was honored as Heroes Among Us during the Celtics' home game on Feb. 11.

The Benoit family has shown a deep commitment to fostering a more inclusive world for individuals of all abilities and the families who support them.

As mentors in the Best Buddies Family Support program, they offer guidance and encouragement to families navigating a Down syndrome diagnosis, helping ensure no one faces the experience alone. Inspired by their son Xavier, Greg and Erin Benoit founded



The Benoit Family of Dudley, Massachusetts was honored as Heroes Among Us during the Celtics' Feb. 11 home game against the Chicago Bulls for mentoring families and supporting inclusive programming through Best Buddies and Team Xcitebike Racing.

Team Xcitebike Racing in 2022 to expand awareness and support for the Best Buddies mission.

Through their advocacy and leadership, the family has raised more than \$100,000 for Best Buddies, contributing to the launch of new inclusive programming across New England.

Since its establishment in 1997 by the Boston Celtics, the Heroes Among Us program has recognized outstanding individuals who have made exceptional and lasting contributions to their communities. The award is presented at every Celtics home game and pays tribute to the heroic achievements of these outstanding citizens.

Auburn Historical Society & Museum announces Spring Monthly Meetings Calendar

AUBURN — March 19 will be the first meeting this year for the Auburn Historical Society & Museum. The program will be a continuation of the 100th anniversary of Dr. Robert Goddard's first launching of a liquid fueled rocket. Speaker Sari Bitticks will present the program on Dr. Goddard that will feature many stories about his youth including his attempts to make diamonds.

All meetings will be held at the Auburn Sportsman's Club 50 Elm St.

at 6:30 p.m.

April 16 will feature a tribute to the late town historian, Ken Ethier. His widow, Ellen, will be reading some of the delightful "Chapin's Crossing" tales as he wrote about Auburn's history.

May 21: "Doc Weagle the dentist of Central St." presented by Michelle Weagle who will share stories of her father's life as a dentist, Superintendent of the Auburn Water District, member of the Auburn

Sportsman's Club and Auburn Rotary Club.

These meetings are free to the public and are made possible by the Auburn Historical Society & Museum, 41 South St. The museum is open Tuesday and Saturday mornings 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., and may be reached at auburnmuseum@verizon.net or 508-832-6856, www.auburnhistoricalmuseum.org or follow us on Facebook.

Dudley Woman's Club meets March 12

WEBSTER — Women from all local communities are invited to a fun and informative evening 6:30 p.m. March 12 at the Mill@French River, 9 Frederick St., Webster. Don a Muumuu and sip a Mimosa as we learn about fueling brain health to lower dementia risk.

The DWC membership of more than 70 women of various ages and backgrounds from Dudley, Webster, Southbridge, Charlton, Uxbridge, and several Northern Connecticut towns work together to uplift and support our communities. More information at www.dudleywomensclub.org.

Saint Joseph School students celebrate 100th day of school with creativity and fun



Courtesy

Grade 1 students at Saint Joseph School celebrate the 100th Day of School dressed as 100-year-olds with Instructor Kerri Lavelle, Teaching Assistant Noel Anderson, and special guest Headmaster and Pastor Rev. Richard Polek. The class marked the milestone with creative "mystery bag" activities, counting challenges, and lots of laughter as they celebrated being 100 days smarter.



Saint Joseph School Kindergarten students and teachers had a blast celebrating the 100th Day of School by dressing and acting like they were 100 years old—hunched over, shuffling along, and even using canes and walkers! Their playful spirit, creativity, and laughter made the day a joyful celebration of being 100 days smarter.

WEBSTER — Students in the early elementary grades at Saint Joseph School recently celebrated the much-anticipated 100th Day of School with a day full of laughter, imagination, and hands-on learning.

This annual milestone is a favorite tradition, giving students a special opportunity to explore the number 100 through engaging activities in reading, writing, math, and creative expression—all while celebrating how much they have learned since the start of the school year.

In Kindergarten, led by Mrs. Alicia Maurer, students had an amazing time celebrating by dressing up as if they were 100 years old. The day began with smiles and laughter as classmates arrived in costume, excited to see one another transformed with gray hair, glasses, canes, walkers, and plenty of personality. Students kicked off the celebration by sitting together to color a 100th Day coloring sheet.

Kindergarteners fully embraced their roles and stayed in character throughout the day—especially in the hallways. Some students walked slowly with their hands on their backs, others shuffled their feet, and a few used canes and walkers, creating many funny and memorable moments.

During the morning meeting, each Kindergarten student brought in a bag filled with 100 items along with a set of clues. One by one, students read their clues while classmates tried to guess what was inside before revealing their collections. The

class saw a wide variety of creative items, including candies, Q-tips, paper clips, pom-poms, and more.

Students also created self-portraits imagining what they might look like at 100 years old, with drawings full of creativity and character. In math, they completed a special 100th Day worksheet by searching for specific objects, coloring them, counting carefully, and adding them together to make 100—an engaging way to strengthen counting skills.

In First Grade, under the guidance of Ms. Kerri Lavelle, students also marked the special day by dressing up as if they were 100 years old. The students looked fantastic and had so much fun getting into character.

First graders also brought in "mystery bags" filled with 100 items. Each child wrote three clues about what was inside, and classmates used the clues to guess the mystery item. The activity offered a fun and meaningful way to practice writing, listening, and critical thinking skills.

In addition, students counted and tallied groups of 100 items and challenged themselves to read and spell 100 sight words, making the day both festive and academically enriching.

From imaginative costumes to creative classroom challenges, Saint Joseph School's 100th Day celebration was a joyful reminder of the growth, learning, and community that fill each school day—truly a celebration of being 100 days smarter.

Oxford Community Center Friends hosting shoe drive fundraiser

OXFORD — The community is invited to clean out their closet for a shoe drive to raise funds to help support the Oxford Community Center. Donations of gently worn, used and new shoes, boots, sneakers, sandals and slippers will be accepted

through April 15. The amount of money raised is determined by the total weight of the shoes collected.

All donated shoes will be redistributed to micro-enterprise partners through Funds2Orgs, a for profit social enterprise, and used in developing nations for impoverished people to start their own businesses.

Donations may be dropped off during business hours at the Oxford Community Center, 4 Maple Rd., or the Oxford

Free Public Library, 339 Main St.

In the US alone, more than 300 million pairs of shoes are thrown away per year. The materials used to manufacture a pair of shoes are created from chemical compounds that will create health hazards if left to disintegrate openly or in landfills. By donating your gently worn, used and new shoes to the Oxford Community Center Friends Fundraiser, your shoes are given a second chance to make a difference.

About Oxford Community Center Friends
Oxford Community Center Friends (OCCF) is an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, nonprofit organization formed to support the Oxford Community Center (OCC). The mission of the organization

is to run fundraisers and locate sources of grants, funding and contributions to supplement and expand the activities and programs offered by the OCC.

Oxford Women's Club offers scholarships

OXFORD — The Oxford Women's Club is pleased to offer the availability of three \$750 Scholarships to deserving Seniors that reside in Oxford. They are available to all pursuing a four-year college program and a two-year program.

The following Scholarships are Josie Tyler: to attend a 4 year college in education or business, Clara Barton: for attending a two- or four-year college in the medical/nursing/healthcare field and The Oxford Women's Club to attend a four-year college to pursue their future goal.

The Scholarship applications have been sent to all schools that our Seniors attend.

Questions can be directed to Anne Marie at simplyannie14@gmail.com

Oxford launches community rain barrel program

OXFORD — The Town of Oxford has teamed up with The Great American Rain Barrel Company to offer discounted rain barrels.

Order your rain barrel online at www.tgarb.com by May 3. Click on Community Programs and the select Oxford. Choose your color, quantity, and any accessories. You can pay online or call The Great American Rain Barrel Company at 800-251-2352.

Rain barrel pickup will be on Saturday, May 16, 10:30 a.m.-noon at the DPW Garage, 34 Charlton St. Oxford.

For more information, please call Oxford DPW at 508-987-6006.

www.Stonebridge Press.com

ALMANAC

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DUDLEY

DUDLEY TOWN HALL (508) 949-8000
Monday: 8:00 AM-6:30 PM (second floor offices),
Tuesday-Thursday: 8:00 AM-4:00 PM, Friday: 8:00 AM-12:00 PM.
DUDLEY POLICE DEPARTMENT (943-4411)
Staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week
DUDLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT (949-8040)
Monday-Sunday6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

OXFORD

OXFORD TOWN HALL (508) 987-6027
Board of Selectmen and Town Clerk Hours
Monday, Tues., Thurs9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday9 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Friday9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

OXFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT (987-0156)
For emergencies, call 911
OXFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT (987-6012)
Monday-Friday8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

WEBSTER

WEBSTER TOWN HALL (508) 949-3850
Office Hours:
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Tuesday-Thursday8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Friday8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.

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Saturday8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Edward Jones

> edwardjones.com | Member SIPC

Job change?

Whether retiring or changing jobs, you'll want to know your retirement account options.



There are four potential options for your 401(k) when leaving an employer:

- Leave it in your former employer's 401(k) plan, if allowed by the plan.
- Move it to your new employer's 401(k) plan, if you've changed employers and your new employer plan allows for it.
- Roll the account over to an individual retirement account (IRA).
- Cash it out, which is subject to potential tax consequences.

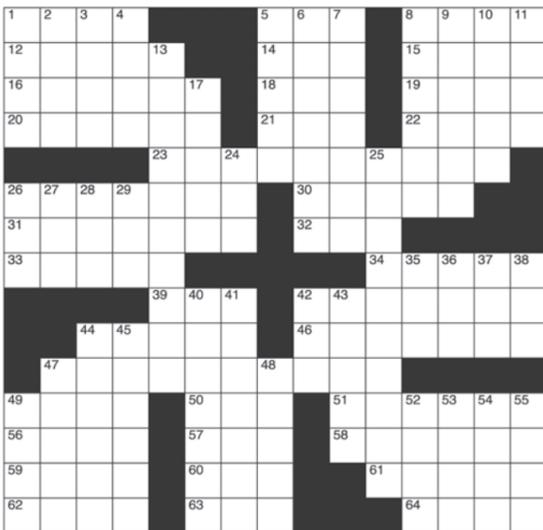
We can talk through your financial goals and find the option that works best for you.



Dennis Antonopoulos
Financial Advisor

5 Albert St
Auburn, MA 01501
508-832-5385

IRT-1948M-A AECSPAD 2798285



CLUES ACROSS

- Unit of dry measure
- One who defies authority
- Social media giant
- Render holy
- "Much ___ about nothing"
- Computer manufacturer
- Creed
- Immoral act
- Mountain pass
- Winged nut
- Don't know when yet
- Elected officials
- Corrupt tendencies
- Popular adult beverage
- Made a mistake
- Morally correct
- Type of whale
- Portable conical tent
- Native people of the Congo
- More (Spanish)
- Classroom implements
- Cognizant of
- One who tells
- Free from bondage
- Thick piece of something
- Containing two adjacent nitrogen atoms
- Removed from the record
- Legendary singer Turner
- Broke up the earth
- Hunting expedition
- Contributes
- Unit of work or energy
- Wreckage on the sea bed
- Affirmative! (slang)
- Witness
- Scrape (Archaic)

CLUES DOWN

- " ___ and flows"
- Humble request for help
- A position of leadership
- Continent
- Adherent of a particular religion
- Things that can be eaten
- Self-governing Netherlands territory
- Long-tailed crow
- Repeated
- Bluish greens
- Humanities
- Someone who serves in the armed forces
- Labor (Spanish)
- Zero
- Shared by involving three parties
- Queens ballplayer
- Consumed
- Rest here please
- Men's fashion accessory
- American time
- Sound unit
- They ___
- Soviet Socialist Republic
- Places to play video games
- A sudden attack of illness
- When you hope to arrive
- Charges
- Actress Seyfried
- A tributary of the Ohio River
- Omit when speaking
- Armored fish
- Remain
- From a distance
- Adventure story
- Geological times
- Eat dinner

PUZZLE SOLUTION

E	P	H	A		R	E	B		M	E	T	A			
B	L	E	S	S	A	D	O		A	C	E	R			
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Y	E	A	H		S	E	E			R	A	S	E		

DUDLEY POLICE LOG

DUDLEY — The Dudley Police Department reported the following arrests during the month of February.

Jamila Nur Mason, age 36, of Dudley was arrested on Feb. 17 in connection with an out of agency warrant.

Felix Rodriguez, age 50, of Webster was arrested on Feb. 27 for multiple counts of drug possession.

TOWN OF POMFRET

POSITION OPENING – HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Qualified self-starter wanted for Town of Pomfret Highway Department. Must hold Class B CDL license/valid medical card and have a background in operating heavy equipment. Position includes, but is not limited to, assignments on all municipal road work including road grading, snowplowing, landscaping, building maintenance, and any other duties as needed and assigned. Five years of driving/equipment operation experience is preferred. Must be available to work nights and weekends as needed, able to lift up to 100 pounds, possess mechanical aptitude in heavy equipment repair, pass a DOT physical and drug screen, and consent to random drug/alcohol testing as required by the DOT. Salary dependent upon qualifications and experience. Attractive benefit package. Interested persons should forward resume/application and three references to the Selectman's Office, 5 Haven Road, Pomfret Center, CT 06259 on or before March 10, 2026. Application form available at www.pomfretct.gov/first-selectmans-office. EEO/AA



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Milford Federal Bank is proud to sponsor the Pawfect Life Rescue PAW of the WEEK!

Bring your furry friend along on your next trip to MFB for a treat from our drive-up tellers, or stop in any branch and bring home a treat from our complimentary doggy biscuit bar.



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kerri@stonebridgepress.news

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OR send to Webster Times

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Inaugural exhibition “Secret World of Elephants” to open in Worcester March 7!



Courtesy

The exhibition features a life-size model of an African elephant—the largest living land animal. A video projection on one side of the African elephant model shows the skeleton of this massive mammal and provides an inside look at how it processes the huge amount of food it eats—about 300–500 pounds per day—and elephant gestation, which can last for nearly two years, longer than any other living mammal.

WORCESTER — “The Secret World of Elephants” exhibition opens at the EcoTarium at 11 a.m. on March 7, marking a new chapter for the Museum.

This is the first major national science exhibition to visit Worcester in the 200-year history of the EcoTarium. As the inaugural exhibition in the Museum’s new Stoddard Exhibition Hall, the “Secret World of Elephants” is projected to bring over 100,000 visitors from across New England to experience the lives and conservation of Asian and African elephant species.

“EcoTarium visitors, both adults and children, will love this awe-inspiring exhibit and the chance to learn about these intelligent and beautiful creatures,” said EcoTarium President and CEO Noreen Smith. “The EcoTarium is proud to be the only Museum in the region to host this new science exhibition developed by the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.”

The Secret World of Elephants is a world-class exhibition that explores the remarkable lives, abilities, and history of the world’s largest land mammals. Through immersive storytelling and cutting-edge research, the exhibition reveals new scientific insights into how elephants think, communicate, and shape entire ecosystems while also highlighting the urgent challenges they face today.

On view for a limited time from March 7 through Sept. 7.

A special Opening Day celebration will be held on Saturday, March 7 at 11 a.m. with ticket reservations encouraged.

The exhibition features life-size models, including a scientifically-accurate woolly mammoth alongside touchable teeth casts, multimedia experiences, and interactive displays that highlight elephants’ extraordinary senses and behaviors. Visitors will discover how elephants hear through vibrations in their feet, and use the 16 muscles in their trunks. Learn about how elephants form and maintain complex social bonds in the herd. Exhibit highlights include:

A life-size African elephant model with internal anatomy projection showing feeding, digestion, and the nearly two-year gestation period.

Hands-on stations exploring infrasound communication, ear-flapping thermoregulation, and how elephants engineer their habitats.

A woolly mammoth model shedding its winter coat, along with dwarf elephant reconstructions and touchable teeth casts.

Interactive stations on elephant intelligence, vocalizations, family structure, and social behavior.

Conservation exhibits examining climate impacts, human-elephant coexistence, and the global ivory crisis, plus a documentary about Reteti, a community-run elephant sanctuary in Kenya.

The exhibit also explores the long relationship between elephants and humans—from their roles in war and work to their presence in religion and cultural symbolism. Notable objects on display include Vietnamese puppets of the legendary Trung sisters and a large figure of the Hindu god Ganesh.

To learn more about The Secret World of Elephants Grand opening, visit our website.

The Secret World of Elephants is organized by the American Museum of Natural History, New York (amnh.org).

Todd A. Ethier



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Friday's Child



Jeycen
Age 9
Registration #8755

Jeycen is a happy and friendly child who brings joy wherever he goes. He enjoys getting out into the community — even everyday outings like going to the grocery store are exciting adventures for him. Jeycen thrives when he has opportunities to explore his surroundings and engage with the world around him. He loves hands-on activities and learning through play. Swimming is one of his favorite activities, and he also enjoys counting cubes and stacking blocks, showing his growing curiosity and problem-solving skills. Jeycen likes to play a variety of games, including peek-a-boo, Marble Run, and building with LEGO, where he can create and experiment in fun, creative ways. Jeycen has a special interest in drawing and especially loves building roadmaps and highways. He is fascinated by how roads connect and enjoys designing his own imaginative routes and pathways. With his bright smile, playful spirit, and creative mind, Jeycen continues to discover and explore the world in his own unique way.

<https://www.mareinc.org/child/21181580424>

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.mare-inc.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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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
STONEBRIDGE PRESS PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

The quiet importance of public safety
Most days in Webster, Dudley, Oxford and Auburn pass without incident. Children board school buses. Commuters head to work. Seniors gather at local centers. Shops open their doors.

It is easy to take that normalcy for granted. Behind it stands a network of public safety professionals and volunteers whose work is often unseen. Police officers patrol neighborhoods in the early morning hours. Firefighters train repeatedly on equipment and response protocols that, ideally, they will not have to use. Dispatchers answer calls that range from routine to life altering.

When something goes wrong, these departments are expected to respond immediately and flawlessly.

Public safety rarely draws sustained attention unless there is a crisis. Budget discussions about cruisers, apparatus, training and staffing can seem technical or routine. Yet those line items represent preparedness. They represent the difference between reaction and readiness.

In small towns, public safety is not abstract. Residents know the officers who coach youth sports or attend community events. They recognize firefighters who also work full-time jobs and answer calls at all hours. They see emergency vehicles parked at the grocery store or at a school function.

That familiarity fosters trust, but it also places pressure on departments to maintain high standards with limited resources.

Across Massachusetts, public safety agencies are confronting familiar challenges: recruitment and retention, evolving training requirements, mental health calls, and rising equipment costs. Volunteer and call firefighter models, common in smaller communities, depend on residents willing to balance family, employment and emergency response.

That model works because people step forward.

There is also a broader conversation about public safety that deserves thoughtful attention. Communities expect professionalism, accountability and transparency. Those expectations are appropriate. At the same time, the scope of calls for service has expanded. Police officers and firefighters are often the first to respond not only to fires or crimes, but to medical emergencies, mental health crises and social service needs.

That expanded role requires support. It requires adequate training, updated equipment and ongoing evaluation of how services are delivered. It also requires community understanding that public safety work is complex and, at times, unpredictable.

In Webster and its neighboring towns, residents regularly demonstrate appreciation for their first responders. Open houses at fire stations draw families. School visits introduce children to safety protocols in ways that build comfort rather than fear. Fundraisers and community events often highlight the connection between departments and the neighborhoods they serve.

Those connections matter. Public safety is not solely about response times or statistics. It is about relationships. When residents feel comfortable approaching an officer with a concern, or confident that a fire department will arrive prepared, it strengthens the fabric of the community.

As municipal budgets are discussed and priorities weighed, public safety will remain a central line item. It should be examined carefully, as all spending should. But it should also be viewed through the lens of preparedness and prevention.

The absence of major headlines is often a sign that systems are working.

In towns like Webster, Dudley, Oxford and Auburn, the quiet consistency of public safety professionals allows daily life to unfold with confidence. That quiet work, though rarely celebrated at length, is foundational to everything else a community hopes to build.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

McKenna's thoughts on Minneapolis show the Second Amendment can co-exist with common sense

To the Editor:

Towards the end of January, as the chaos was playing out in Minneapolis, I sent an e-mail to State Rep. Joseph McKenna asking him to use his voice and ask the Massachusetts Republican Party to contact the White House and urge the President to end ICE's occupation of Minneapolis.

The President had already started to withdraw ICE from Minneapolis when I received Mr. McKenna's response, but I was pleased to learn that the Representative believed, as I do, that the killing of Alex Pretti was murder.

I was pleasantly surprised Mr. McKenna

commented that maybe it wasn't a good idea for Mr. Pretti to bring a gun out on the streets while the protests were ongoing, which would suggest Rep. McKenna believes there are times and places where guns are simply inappropriate.

Hopefully, Rep. McKenna can convince his Republican colleagues that the Second Amendment and common sense can co-exist, and there really is no need to carry a gun into a library, town hall, fire station and especially a police station.

JOHN FLATTERY
OXFORD

Audit time is now

To the Editor:

Hello, Massachusetts. Are you among the 72 percent who voted for an audit of the State Legislature in 2024? Are you now just a little curious as to why this hasn't occurred, even though you and more than two million others in the Commonwealth voted for it?

A significant part of the answer is that Speaker of the House of Representatives, Ron Mariano, and the President of the State Senate, Karen Spilka, do not want it to happen. Veteran legislators, both Mariano and Spilka have formally submitted letters to the Attorney General requesting the dismissal of State Auditor Diana DiZoglio's lawsuit against them for ignoring the will of the electorate. Yes, that quarrelsome lady in the Auditor's Office is trying to hold these two top ranking legislators accountable to the will of the voters who elected them. And sadly, it looks as though the Attorney General's Office is aligned with the Speaker and Senate President.

Mariano has been in the legislature since 2011 and Spilka since 2001 (first in the House). Why have they dug their heels in on this issue? What might they know that they don't want YOU or the Auditor to know?

What is it that has to be kept from those who pay taxes, taxes which go into their respective salaries? What is behind the Wizard's curtain? What's amiss? Could it be that what the House and the Senate have been doing with the billions the state collects annually isn't all going where it should?

If everything is truly on the up and up why not honor the voter's wishes and let the Auditor do her job?

At this point, given the resistance from Mariano and Spilka even the 28 percent who opposed an audit should have questions. You don't have to be conspiracy junky to be wondering what it is you are not supposed to see.

It's safe to say that with their many years on Beacon Hill Mariano and Spilka know all too well where the money and bodies are buried.

As they say, if it quacks and walks like a duck, it just might be a duck and there certainly is a lot of ducking going on here.

Let's all wish Auditor DiZoglio well in her efforts to pluck this duck and soon.

Thank you,

RICHARD CLARK
DUDLEY

The sound of a real conversation

LANterns
ALong
MAIn
STREET
By CHARLES

The other morning, I found myself at a local diner, the kind of place where the coffee arrives before you've fully settled into the booth. The waitress called everyone "hon," and nobody seemed to mind. The grill hissed, forks clinked against plates, and someone near the window was explaining, in great detail, how to fix a snowblower carburetor.

It was a symphony of ordinary life.

At the table behind me sat a father and his teenage daughter. He had the newspaper folded in quarters. She had her phone propped against the sugar dispenser, eyes fixed on the screen, thumbs moving at a speed that suggested great urgency.

The father tried.

"So, big game Friday?" he asked.

"Mmm-hmm," she said, not looking up.

"You starting?"

"Probably."

He sipped his coffee. Cleared his throat. "That's good."

I felt for him. I've been on both sides of that exchange over the years. I've been the distracted one, and I've been the one hoping for a few more words than "probably."

After a moment, the waitress came by and refilled their cups. She looked at the girl and said, "You playing shortstop again? You made that great throw last week."

The girl's head came up. "You saw that?"

"Of course I did. Whole place was talking about it."

And just like that, the phone went face down on the table.

For the next five minutes, the girl described the play in full color. The slow roller. The scoop. The throw to first. Her father leaned in, smiling in a way that made him look ten years younger. The waitress nodded like she was reviewing game tape.

What changed? Not the setting. Not the menu. Just attention.

There is something powerful about being noticed. Not in the loud, public way that comes with likes and shares and digital applause, but in the quiet, steady way that says: I saw you. I remember. It mattered.

In small-town Massachusetts, we still have the advantage of proximity. Our towns are not so large that we disappear entirely into anonymity. The librarian may know what you read last summer. The clerk at Town Hall may recognize your signature. The barber may remember how you like the back trimmed.

These details are not accidents. They are

the result of paying attention.

And attention, these days, feels like a scarce resource.

I understand the pull of the phone. It offers news from around the globe, weather updates down to the minute, photos from family miles away. I am grateful for that. I like knowing my daughter made it home safely. I like being able to check in with my son without waiting for the long-distance

rates to drop after 9 p.m., as we once did. But I sometimes wonder whether we are trading depth for volume. We hear from more people than ever before, yet speak less to the ones sitting across from us.

I remember when conversation had a certain rhythm. You asked a question, and you waited. You listened long enough to hear not only the answer but the tone behind it. If someone paused, you didn't rush to fill the silence. Silence had a purpose. It let thoughts settle.

Now, silence seems to make us nervous. We reach for a device at the first lull, as if quiet were something to be avoided.

My mother, God bless her, had a way of making you feel like the only person in the room. When she asked how you were, she meant it. You could not slip by with a quick "fine." She would tilt her head slightly and wait. That small gesture told you she had time for your answer.

Time is another thing that feels squeezed thin.

Yet I suspect we have more control over it than we admit. We may not be able to slow the news cycle or quiet the endless stream of notifications. But we can choose, in a diner or a market or on a walk down Main Street, to look up.

The father and daughter at the diner left a little while later. As they stood to go, he put his hand briefly on her shoulder. She was talking animatedly now, phone forgotten in her jacket pocket. They stepped out into the cold morning together, still mid-conversation.

The diner returned to its usual soundtrack: dishes, laughter, the scrape of chairs. Nothing dramatic had happened. No speeches were made. No lessons announced.

Just a girl who felt seen. A father who got more than one-word answers. A waitress who took the time to remember a throw from last week.

Sometimes, the sound of a real conversation is the most hopeful thing you can hear.

Financial considerations when changing jobs



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Are you changing jobs soon? If so, you'll obviously be interested in your new salary — but you'll also want to look at other financial considerations.

Here are some of the most important ones:

401(k) — If you had a 401(k) plan through your previous employer, you'll need to decide what to do with it once you've joined a new employer. You could just cash it out, but you'd pay taxes and possible penalties. You could leave your 401(k) with your previous employer, if allowed, and if you have been happy with your plan's performance. Or you could move your 401(k) into your new employer's plan, which might be a good choice if the new plan has lower fees and attractive investment options. You'd also want to ask whether the new employer offers matching contributions. Finally, you could roll over your old 401(k) into a traditional IRA, which would give you more investment choices.

HSA/FSA — If your new employer offers a health savings account (HSA) as part of a high-deductible health plan, you may want to take advantage of it. Your contributions are made with pre-tax dollars, your earnings generally grow tax deferred and your withdrawals are tax free, as long as they're used for qualified medical expenses. Plus, you can carry unused funds through retirement, when you can still use them for qualified medical expenses. Your employer might also offer a flexible spending account (FSA), which can pay for a variety of health care costs, such as deductibles, co-payments and co-insurance. Generally, if you're contributing to an HSA, you can't fund an FSA in the same year, except for a limited purpose FSA.

Waiting period for health benefits — You'll want to ask your new employer if there's a waiting eligibility period to enroll in its benefits plan — health insurance, dental, vision, and so on. If so, you may need to get COBRA coverage for a few months to stay in your old plan, unless you can be added to a spouse's plan. When you go on your new employer's health care plan, make sure you know what it covers. Depending on your situation, you might want to add supplemental health insurance.

Life insurance — When you leave a job, your employer-sponsored life insurance will end, unless you have the option to convert your group term life policy into an individual permanent cash value policy. So, you'll want to be sure your new employer offers at least the same insurance coverage as your old one. But you should also determine whether the group policy offered by your employer is sufficient for your needs. Depending on several factors, such as your income, spouse's income and family size, you may need to supplement your employer's policy with an individual term life insurance policy.

Other benefits — Review your new employer's benefits package carefully to see what's available. Many employers offer tuition reimbursement for their employees, and some even provide college planning assistance for employees' children. For example, your employer might offer matching contributions to a tax-advantaged 529 education saving plan, which can be used for college, some K-12 expenses and some trade/vocational school programs.

Changing jobs can provide you with an opportunity to expand your career, learn new skills and broaden your social network. And it can certainly be financially rewarding, too — so make sure you know all the benefits involved.

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

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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.

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 three business days 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 dessert. This week's menu: Tuesday, 3/10: White bean and chicken chili, brown rice, green beans. Wednesday, 3/11: Chicken picatta, pasta, California blend vegetables. Thursday, 3/12: Salisbury steak with gravy, garlic mashed potatoes, herb carrots. Friday, 3/13: Lemon pepper haddock, red bliss potatoes, mixed vegetables.

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.

Come 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.

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. A new video class will be offered Thursday and Friday mornings, free of charge.

Now introducing Line Dancing with Forty Arroyo! Classes will be held from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm on the last Monday of the month.

Come celebrate with us at our St. Patrick's Day Party on Friday, March 13th! With special guest Dan Fontaine-Elvis Impersonator, you'll be leaving with a smile guaranteed!

Come play Senior Feud with us on Monday, March 23rd at 1:00 pm! This senior themed version of 'Family Feud' is a great way to show off your competitive side.

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!

We now have an official Bridge group! We will be meeting every Friday from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm in the upstairs activity room. All that are interested are welcome to join!

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.

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Laura Wilson, Director

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Weekly Activities:
Mondays and Fridays @ 10:00 am - Cribbage
Tuesdays @ 9:15am - 10:00 am Strength & Balance w/ Donna Freeland - Cost \$3.00 per class
Wednesdays @ 9:15am - 10:15 am Chair Yoga w/ Heidi Gambaccini - Cost \$3.00 per class
Tuesdays and Wednesday @ 10:15 am - Needleworkers (Knitting, Crocheting, Needlepoint)
Bring your favorite project and come join the group for conversation and laughs.
Wednesdays @ 1:00 pm - 2:15 pm Chair Volleyball - Lots of laughs and only two rules (1) stay seated (2) have fun!
Thursdays @ 10:00 am - 12:00 pm Dominoes

Monthly Activities:
Let's Talk Oxford History - 2nd Tuesday of each month @ 1pm - Sponsored by the Oxford Historical Commission
Men's Coffee Group - 2nd Wednesday of each month @ 10:30am - coffee and pastry are served.

Book Club - 1st Friday of each month @ 12:45pm - reserve your book from the Oxford Public Library

Movie Matinee - 2nd Friday of each month @ 12:45pm ~ March movie - " Jerry & Marge Go LARGE"

Senior Safety with Oxford Fire/EMS - 3rd Friday of the month @ 12:30pm

BEANO - 4th Friday of each month @ 12:45pm - arrive by 12:30pm to purchase your BEANO sheets.

March Presentations:
Worcester Superior Court Justice William Ritter will be at the senior center to discuss what a day is like being a judge in judicial system. ~ Tuesday, March 24th @ 12:30pm

Learn how the Registry of Deeds and the Probate Court work together for the Residents of Massachusetts ~ Tuesday, March 31 @ 12:30pm

Bus Trips:
June 18th ~ Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum & lunch at Margaritaville \$ 129 pp

July 30th ~ Bread N' Jam Tour with a Lobster Bake at Foster's \$149 pp

September 17th ~ Mount Washington Luncheon Cruise & Moulton Farm \$ 149 pp

December 3rd ~ Cookies & Carols Cruise w/lunch at the Cheesecake Factory \$ 139 pp

*Stop by the senior center to pick up a flyer with full trip itinerary. No calls accepted for sign-up.

QCC's legislative breakfast shows powerful impact of supporting higher education



Courtesy

From left: Professor of Psychology Jen Arner Welsh, student Fakhria Azimi, student Jazlyn Alas, Academic Advisor Della Burke, Massachusetts Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll, QCC President Dr. Luis Pedraja, Rep. Jim McGovern, student Ryan Heath, Board of Trustees President Dr. Linda Maykel and Vice President of Strategic Enrollment & Student Engagement Michelle Tufau.

WORCESTER - Quinsigamond Community College recently energized the campus with a legislative breakfast that brought together state and community leaders from across the region to spotlight how public investment opens doors for students. The real showstoppers were the students themselves, earning standing ovations as they shared powerful stories of perseverance, ambition, and the success they're already achieving.

The event focused on major statewide initiatives shaping the future of Massachusetts higher education including

the free community college model (MassEducate and MassReconnect), the proposed BRIGHT Act, equitable pay for community college faculty and staff, and the SUCCESS Program, which provides wraparound support to underserved students.

Massachusetts Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll highlighted how these initiatives are vital to our education system, which positions the Commonwealth as a leader in areas such as healthcare, education and innovation.

"Education is our state's competitive advantage. People from across the world come to our institutions of higher education

because they know they are on the cutting edge of innovation and research. It's why we've proposed major investments to modernize our college campuses and why we have prioritized making higher education more affordable, including making community colleges like Quinsigamond free for all," said Driscoll.

Rep. Jim McGovern spoke on the difficulties that educational institutions currently face, such as threats to Pell Grants and Federal Work-Study, and praised QCC for its community impact.

"The opportunities and services that Quinsigamond provides have made our

local economy strong, and none of us in elected office take that for granted. Access to education makes this society better," McGovern said.

QCC student Fakhria Azimi spoke at the breakfast about how grateful she was to receive assistance to attend college and rebuild her life after her world was turned upside down. Azimi is from Afghanistan and was attending college and running a business with her sister when the Taliban took over. She was no longer allowed to work or go to school, so she came to the U.S. to pursue a life with more freedom.

"Without MassReconnect, continuing my education would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible. I could improve my English, gain confidence and truly believe in myself again," said Azimi, who still works two jobs while attending college. "My goal is to complete my education and rebuild the business I once lost. I want to become a positive, educated and supportive member of the community here."

The free community college programs MassReconnect and MassEducate have helped to bring QCC's enrollment to its highest in over a decade. QCC President Dr. Luis Pedraja noted that getting students enrolled is

the first step, but increasing support services, improving faculty and staff compensation, and updating infrastructure are needed to get students to graduation.

"It's important to remember that community colleges serve half of the undergraduate population in the Commonwealth. These are the people who are going to work here and make their homes here. We need to invest more in community colleges," Pedraja said.

Throughout the breakfast, QCC officials emphasized that the state's educational initiatives are reshaping pathways to higher education and helping students from all backgrounds succeed. More than 1,750 students who received free community college funds have graduated since 2023, and students in the SUCCESS Program are being retained at higher rates than their peers.

One such student is Jazlyn Alas, a nursing major who told attendees that the relationship with her SUCCESS advisor has helped her persist towards her goal of making a difference in people's lives through healthcare.

"College is more than just attending classes. It's not easy managing school, work and being a mom, but it's not impossible," Alas said.



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Courtesy



Dudley Middle School congratulates its Students of the Month. Grade 5 - Estelle Brackett, Norah Scott, Mina Morgan, & Mercurius Morgan; Grade 6 - Vincent D'Ambra, Amelia Gago, & Elaria Ibrahim; Grade 7 - Cynthia Kerry, Claire Synal, & James D'Andrea; 8th Grade - Mary MacDonald, Carter Paquin, & Richard Carmignani.



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Local Emmanuel College students make Dean's List

BOSTON — In recognition of their outstanding academic achievement, Emmanuel College has named more than 950 students to the Dean's List for the Fall 2025 semester. The following local students were named to the Dean's List:

- Jenna Katsoulis, of North Oxford. Katsoulis is majoring in Communication and Media Studies.
- Anna Czechowski, of Webster. Czechowski is majoring in Nursing.
- Aidan VanArsdalen, of Oxford. VanArsdalen is majoring in Nursing.
- Ava Brown, of Auburn. Brown is majoring in Psychology - Developmental Psychology.

To earn a spot on the Dean's List, Emmanuel students must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 or higher for a 16-credit semester.

With more than 80 majors and areas of study, Emmanuel College combines outstanding classroom instruction and real-world experience to prepare students for lives of professional achievement, lifelong learning, and purpose. Voted the #1 college location in America in 2025 by Niche.com, Emmanuel offers ready access to world class medical, cultural, and business organizations in the Heart of Boston, all with a tight-knit 17-acre campus and 13:1 student-to-faculty ratio. Learn more at Emmanuel.edu.

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Local students named to Holy Cross' Fall Dean's List

WORCESTER — College of the Holy Cross congratulates the students named to the Fall 2025 Dean's List for outstanding academic achievement during the spring semester of the 2025-26 academic year. The following local students made the list:

- Lily-Ann C'Miel of Auburn
- Nora Foley of Auburn
- Oliana Tego of Auburn
- Maxine Adu-Boahen Jones of Webster
- Dominika Chmielewski of Webster
- Samual Lavallee of Oxford
- Aurora Voas of Oxford

To qualify for the Dean's List, students must pass four or more letter-graded courses with no failing grades during the semester and earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

About Holy Cross:
The College of the Holy Cross, in Worcester is among the nation's leading liberal arts institutions. A highly selective, four-year, exclusively undergraduate college of 3,200 students, Holy Cross is renowned for offering a rigorous, personalized education in the Jesuit, Catholic tradition. Since its founding in 1843, Holy Cross has made a positive impact in society by graduating students who distinguish themselves as thoughtful leaders in business, professional and civic life.

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Masonic Annual Food Drive is back!



Courtesy

Last year's November of 2025 food drive donation from the community, left to right Brother. Chris St. Cyr, Bro. Clay Tull, sitting Bro. Paul Davidson, Bro. Will Proper and Bro. Larry Burbridge. We Master Masons hope to fill again three to four pickup trucks this year for the Southbridge Food Share. Easter is near, please support our food drive if you can.

BY BRO. JIMMY FALZONE
MAJOR GENERAL SALEM TOWNE LODGE
SOUTHBRIDGE

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Major General Salem Towne Lodge (MGSTL) in Southbridge is kicking off its Annual Community Outreach Service Projects. So far this year, our Community Outreach project is a food drive aimed at supporting the Southbridge Food Share in the community.

The Southbridge Food Share is located at 446 Hamilton St. in Southbridge, and has been around for many years. It serves Southbridge,

Sturbridge, Holland, Wales, Brimfield, and Charlton. Easter is just around the corner and times have been very hard for many people in this community and keeping children and families fed has been the top priority for this local food share. Major General Salem Towne Masonic Lodge will be holding a food drive at Big Bunny Market, located at 942 Main St., Southbridge, on Saturday, March 7 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. In addition to food donations, they accept personal items such as toothpaste, deodorant, etc. Thanks to the community's generosity last year, we managed to gather 156 bags of food,

filling up three pick-up trucks. The Master Masons of MGSTL are challenging the community to help them beat last year's donations by gathering more than 156 bags of food—enough to fill at least three, and maybe even four, pickup trucks. Benjamin Franklin, a well-known Master Mason, once asked,

“Is There Greatness In You?” If so, join us to support this community food drive. If you would like additional information about Freemasonry, go to www.massfreemasonry.org and read about this great fraternity and find a lodge nearest you.



DUDLEY SENIOR CENTER'S VALENTINE'S TEA DRAWS FULL HOUSE

DUDLEY — Tea, anyone?

It was a full house for the annual Valentine's Tea at the Dudley Senior Center Thursday, Feb. 26. Spirits were high throughout the large gathering as they enjoyed sandwiches, desserts, lots of good cheer and of course...tea.

Senior Center Director Deb Johnson, members of the Dudley Council on Aging and their team of volunteers made all feel welcomed and celebrated.

Learn more about the Dudley Senior Center at <https://www.dudleyma.gov/senior-center>.

Interactive presentation on the art of respectful dialogue at Booklovers' Gourmet

W E B S T E R — Booklovers' Gourmet, located at 72 East Main St. in Webster, invites the public to a free information session on “Mastering the Art of Respectful Dialogue” with Jessica Butler on Saturday, March 7 at 2 p.m. Please RSVP to 508-949-6232 or deb@bookloversgourmet.com.

This session will help attendees better communicate with others when they disagree. It will focus on strategies, listening skills and prompts that can be used to diffuse stressful situations and even turn them

into opportunities to learn more about others (and ourselves.)

Learning Outcomes:

Understand why we feel threatened and get defensive when our opinions are questioned or challenged

Learn how to replace defensiveness with curiosity

Learn several techniques that can be used to diffuse tense situations, improve relationships, and help you find “common ground”

Prior to retiring this past Spring, Jessica Butler was principal and founder of Attain Consulting Group,

specializing in Business Process Improvement for more than 20 years. Before starting her consulting company, she was a partner in an international accounting and consulting firm. She holds a BS in Psychology and an MBA in Finance. Since her retirement, Jessica is focusing on activities that “feed her soul” as well as give back to the community, including communication skills, joint problem solving, tolerance and finding common ground. Formerly from New Jersey, Butler and her husband moved to Webster in 2023.

TAX PREPARATION

Michael Jarominski

Certified Public Accountant

6 Stratton Road • Worcester, MA 01606

(508)864-3542

jarominskicpa@spectrum.net

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LEGALS

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Grace Boro to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Mega Capital Funding Inc., dated March 17, 2023 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 68940, Page 170, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, by assignment from:

Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Mega Capital Funding Inc., its successors and assigns to Mega Capital Funding, Inc., recorded on August 26, 2024, in Book No. 70937, at Page 59

for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at 3:00 PM on March 23, 2026, on the mortgaged premises located at 15 Glenview Road a/k/a 15 Glen View Road, Auburn, Worcester County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, TO WIT:

The land in Auburn, County of Worcester, bounded and described as follows:

Being all of Lot #14 on a Plan of Highlawn Manor Estates, dated July, 1951, drawn by R.B. Cullinan, Surveyor, recorded in Worcester District Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 186, Plan 61, bounded and described as follows:

BEGINNING at a stone bound on the easterly side of Glenview Road, it being the northerly corner of said Lot # 14 as shown on said plan;

THENCE S. 50 degrees 35' 40" E. 142.81 feet by Lot #13 as shown on said plan to a stake;

THENCE S. 35 degrees 14' 30" W. by lots 9 & 10 as shown on said plan 100 feet to a stake;

THENCE N. 52 degrees 37' W. by lots # 15 as shown on said plan 149.77 feet to a stake;

THENCE by a curve to the right a radius of which is 160 feet, a distance of 40.39 feet to a stone bound;

THENCE N. 37 degrees 23' E. 19.07 feet to a stone bound;

THENCE by a curve to the right the radius of which is 124.29 feet, a distance of 47.05 feet to the point of beginning.

Said last three courses being by Glenview Road.

Containing 15,200 square feet of land, more or less.

For mortgagor's(s)' title see deed recorded with Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 68821, Page 330.

These premises will be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed.

TERMS OF SALE:

A deposit of Fifteen Thousand (\$15,000.00) Dollars by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by certified or bank check at Harmon Law Offices, P.C., 150 California St., Newton, Massachusetts 02458, or by mail to P.O. Box 610389, Newton Highlands, Massachusetts 02461-0389, within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication.

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

MEGA CAPITAL FUNDING, INC.

Present holder of said mortgage

By its Attorneys,

HARMON LAW OFFICES, P.C.

150 California St.

Newton, MA 02458

(617)558-0500

26353

February 27, 2026

March 6, 2026

March 13, 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. WO26P0554EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION
 Estate Of:
Kathryn L Ward
Date of Death: 11/06/2025

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Joseph G. Saad, II of Dudley 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:

Joseph G. Saad, II of Dudley 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 03/24/2026**. 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 25, 2026

Stephanie Fattman,

Register of Probate

March 6, 2026

Town of Dudley Public Hearing Board of Selectmen

The Board of Selectmen will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, March 23, 2026, at 6:35pm in the Dudley Municipal Complex, 71 West Main Street, Dudley, MA in the Veteran's Memorial Hall, Room 321A.

The purpose of this Hearing: To Act on an Application for a Class II License for Pro Automotive located at 191 West Main St., Dudley, MA 01571. Applicant: Jason Rousseau. Anyone wishing to be heard should appear at the date and time specified or submit their concerns in writing.

Jana Deschenes, Chair

Dudley Board of Selectmen

March 6, 2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
Docket No. WO26P0571GD
CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF
PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF
GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED
PERSON PURSUANT TO
G. L.c. 1908, § 5-304 & § 5-405
In the matter of:
Jody Lee Shemeth
Of: Dudley, MA
RESPONDENT

Alleged Incapacitated Person

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by

Carol T Shemeth of Spencer, MA
Carrie A Ferreira of Spencer, MA
Jason R Ferreira of Spencer, MA

in the above captioned matter alleging that **Jody Lee Shemeth** is in need of a Guardian and requesting that

Carol T Shemeth of Spencer, MA
Carrie A Ferreira of Spencer, MA
Jason R Ferreira of Spencer, MA

(or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve **Without Surety** on the bond.

The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **03/24/2026**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.

WITNESS, Hon. Kathryn M. Bailey,

First Justice of this Court.

Date: February 25, 2026

Stephanie K. Fattman

Register of Probate

DMarch 6, 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. WO26P0578EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION
 Estate Of:

Dorothy J. Lavallee

Date of Death: 01/04/2026

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Robin M. Degnan 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:

Robin M. Degnan 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 03/24/2026**. 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 26, 2026

Stephanie Fattman,

Register of Probate

March 6, 2026

Notice is hereby given by: Precision Auto Rebuilders, Inc., 243 W Main St, Dudley, MA 01571 pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c.255, Section 39 A that on March 20, 2025 5PM at: Precision Auto Rebuilders, Inc., 243 W Main St, Dudley, MA 01571, the following motor vehicle will be sold at a private sale to satisfy the garage keeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, care and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicles:

Description of vehicles:

Vehicle: 2015 Ford Focus

VIN# 1FADP3K23FL380803

Owner: Paul Bonczyk 2 Trinity Ave

Worcester MA 01605

This notice has been given under the provisions of G.L. c.225, Section 39 A

March 6, 2026

March 13, 2026

March 20, 2026

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage dated November 10, 2022 given by Daniel Yarnie to Steven A. Ross, Trustee of QS Lending Three Trust u/d/t dated October 25, 2022 (recorded in Book 68416, Page 212), said mortgage recorded with the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 68476, Page 194, and 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 **1:00 p.m. on the 16th day of March, 2026** on the premises at 64 Leicester Street, Oxford, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage.

To wit:

Property Address: **64 Leicester Street, Oxford, Massachusetts 01537**

The following parcels of land in Oxford, Worcester County, Massachusetts:

Lots 26A and 26B as shown on that certain plan recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Plan Book 407, Plan 119.

Lots 27 and 28 as shown on that certain plan recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Plan Book 78, Plan 1.

Lot 2 as shown on that certain plan recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Plan Book 817, Plan 116.

For title see deed recorded herewith [Book 68476, Page 190].

Premises to be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens and rights of any tenants and parties in possession, if there be any, or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed. The successful bidder will pay all costs of recording the foreclosure deed and any other foreclosure documents including, without limitation, all state and county excise stamp fees, and shall also be responsible for any Title V inspection and repair requirements.

Terms of sale: A deposit of Fifty Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$50,000.00) by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by certified or bank check to Mirrione, Shaughnessy & Uitti, LLC, 2 Batterymarch Park, Suite 202, Quincy, MA 02169 within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. In the event of an error in this publication, the description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control.

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

Steven A. Ross, Trustee of QS Lending Three Trust

u/d/t dated October 25, 2022

Present holder of said mortgage

By his Attorneys,

Mirrione, Shaughnessy & Uitti, LLC

2 Batterymarch park, Suite 202

Quincy, MA 02169

February 20, 2026

February 27, 2026

March 6, 2026

(SEAL)

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Land Court Department
Trial Court
WORCESTER, SS.
CASE NO. 25 MISC 000689 (RBF)
CELINK
v.

Estate Kathryn M. Lane, et al.

TO: Kathryn M. Lane, deceased, formerly of North Oxford, Worcester County, Massachusetts, or her heirs, devisees, or legal representatives:

The Plaintiff(s) has/have filed a Complaint with the Land Court in which you are named as an interested party. This Complaint may be examined at said Court or online at www.masscourts.org. The Complaint concerns a certain parcel of land in North Oxford, Worcester County, Massachusetts, being known as and numbered 4 Prospect Street. Kathryn M. Lane acquired an interest in the subject property by deed recorded on February 12, 1982, with the Worcester County

Registry of Deeds in Book 7414, Page 368. Plaintiff CELINK, the holder of a mortgage on the subject property, seeks a judgment reforming the property description in subsequent deeds in the chain of title, validating a mortgage foreclosure sale, and declaring a previous mortgage obsolete.

If you intend to make any defense, you are required to file an answer with the Land Court on or before the return day, April 13, 2026, and serve a copy upon the plaintiff's attorney, Erich J. Hasselbacher, Esq., Marinosci Law Group, P.C., 275 West Natick Road, Warwick, Rhode Island 02771. If you fail to do so, judgment by default may be taken against you for relief demanded in the complaint.

It is ORDERED that notice be given by publishing a copy of this notice once in the Webster Times, a newspaper of general circulation in Oxford, Massachusetts, at least thirty days before the return day, April 13, 2026.

Witness, Gordon H. Piper, Chief Justice of the Land Court, the 26th day of February, 2026.

Attest:

/s/ Deborah J. Patterson

Deborah J. Patterson

Recorder

March 6, 2026

OBITUARIES

Anna Tanca, 96



DUDLEY – Anna (Cutitar) Tanca, 96, died Thursday, February 26, 2026 in the Life Care Center of Auburn after a period of declining health. Her husband of 62 years, Christopher P. Tanca, died in 2014.

She leaves a son, Michael C. Tanca and his wife Heidi of Tariffville, CT; 5 grandchildren, Christopher Tanca and his wife Silvia Fumagalli of Seregno, Italy, Leslie Tanca and her husband Ken Binick of Greenwich, CT, Lauren Peciaro and her husband Dan of Uxbridge, Leigh Vaughn and her husband Ryan of Palm Beach Gardens, FL, and Mark Tanca and his wife Rie of South Windsor, CT; 9 great-grandchildren, Livia, Lawton, Leo, Ava, Jameson, Amelia, Violet, Vittoria and Camelia; many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her other son William Tanca in 2003, by her brother Nicholas Cutitar, and by her sisters Aura

Brubeck and Mary Martucci.

She was born in Providence on April 15, 1929 and raised there, a daughter of George and Ida (Geanacou) Cutitar and completed the course of business studies from Mount Pleasant High School in 1947. She moved to Dudley in 1951.

Mrs. Tanca worked as an inspector at the American Optical Company in Southbridge for over 20 years before retiring.

She was a member of Saint Michael's Orthodox Church in Southbridge and of the Webster Order of the Eastern Star. She loved spending time with her family, especially the grandchildren.

A funeral service will be held at 2:30 PM on Saturday, March 7, in the Sitkowski, Malboeuf & Hickey Funeral Home, 340 School Street, Webster. Visitation will be held on Saturday from 1:00 to 2:30 in the funeral home prior to the service. Burial in West Thompson Cemetery will be held privately.

www.websterfunerals.com

Christine H. "Chris" McKay, 93



WEBSTER – Christine "Chris" Helene (Leclaire) McKay, 93, passed away peacefully on Friday, February 20, 2026, at UMass Memorial University Campus following a

sudden illness. She is now reunited with her beloved husband of 48 years, Richard J. "Dick" McKay, who died in 2005. Together, they lived and worked in multiple states and enjoyed many cherished years at their home on Webster Lake.

Chris leaves behind a large and deeply loving family: nine children — Elizabeth "Lisa" A. Passaggio and her husband Ronald of Palm Beach, FL; Laura M. Parrish of Hollis, NH; Peter C. McKay and his wife Pamela of Weymouth; John M. McKay of Stoughton; Mary M. Angelos and her husband Scott of Stoughton, Richard J. McKay and his wife Audrey of Abington; Andrea C. Becker and her husband Marc of Webster, with whom she made her home; Christopher M. McKay and his wife McLeah of Sparta, TN; and Douglas G. McKay and his wife Jennifer of Cape Neddick, ME.

She was a proud grandmother to 20 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren, and 2 great-great-grandchildren, and she cherished her many cousins, nieces, nephews, and close friends. Chris was predeceased by her dearly beloved older brother, Paul Leclaire, younger sister, Patricia Mitchell, and son-in-law, Brent Parrish.

Born in Worcester on April 24, 1932, Chris was raised in Oxford, the middle child of Dr. Ernest Leclaire and Pauline (Aschenbach) Leclaire. She graduated from Saint Louis High School in 1950, attended Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School in Washington, D.C. for two years, and earned her Bachelor of Nursing degree from Boston College in 1956.

Chris devoted her life to caring for others through her distinguished career as a registered nurse. Of her many roles, she especially treasured her later years before retiring as the school nurse at the Chaffee School in Oxford, where her compassion, steady presence, and gentle humor touched

generations of students and families.

A woman of deep faith, Chris was a longtime member of Saint Louis Church. She expressed her creativity and love through quilting, knitting, primitive rug hooking, and stained-glass work. She was also an exceptional cook, and the cherished family recipes she passed down will remain a lasting legacy of her warmth, generosity, and devotion to family.

Her funeral was held Friday, February 27, from Scanlon Funeral Service, 38 East Main Street, with a Mass at noon at Saint Louis Church, 14 Lake Street. Burial will be private. Calling hours took place from 9:30 to 11:30 AM at the funeral home prior to the Mass. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly asks that donations be made to a charity of one's choice in Chris's memory. www.websterfunerals.com

LEGALS

LEGALS

continued from page A10

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Town of Dudley Planning Board

In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L., Chapter 40A, Sections 9 and 11, the Town of Dudley Planning Board will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, March 11, 2026, at 7:15 p.m. in the Dudley Municipal Complex, Room 321-A (DMC, Veterans Memorial Hall), 71 West Main Street, Dudley, MA 01571, on the proposed bylaw changes regarding Accessory Dwelling Units.

A copy of the proposed bylaw changes may be viewed in the offices of the Planning Board or Town Clerk, located in the Dudley Municipal Complex, 71 West Main Street, Dudley, MA 01571, during regular office hours.

Any person interested or wishing to be heard should appear at the time and place designated.

David Durgin, Chairman
Dudley Planning Board
February 27, 2026
March 6, 2026

David "Red" Rodney Oleszewski, 78,



David "Red" Rodney Oleszewski, age 78, of Quinebaug, CT died unexpectedly, Wednesday, February 18, 2026 at his home in Quinebaug. David was born March 9, 1947 in Webster, MA. He is

the son of the late Walter and the late Emma (Drescher) Oleszewski. He married Nancy Ryznal in September 1970. He was predeceased by his wife, Nancy Ryznal Oleszewski in March of 2022.

He is survived by one brother; Duayne "Rusty" and his wife, Diane Oleszewski of Bushnell, FL; one sister, Donna Reed of Arizona and many nieces and nephews. Red also leaves behind a host of friends he made throughout the years, some dating back to his time at Bartlett High School.

He served in the Marine Corps during the Vietnam war from 7/22/1968 to 7/21/1970.

He was a proud USMC Marine and would march in many local parades. He was a member of Webster Legion Post 128 and active with many events and fundraising for the veterans.

Dave graduated from Bartlett High School and lettered in both baseball and football. He was inducted into the

Bartlett High School Hall of Fame in 2024 for his numerous athletic accomplishments. Following graduation, he attended Quinnipiac University and was awarded the Most Valuable Player in baseball his freshman year.

Dave had an active social life and loved going on vacations with his beloved wife and friends. He enjoyed golf, ice fishing, and as an avid New England sports team fan you could always find him watching a game. He frequently attended the annual Thanksgiving Day football games and he enjoyed relaxing with a good cigar with friends and family.

A graveside service will be held at 10am on Saturday, March 14 at Mt. Zion Cemetery, Worcester Rd, Webster Ma with Military Honors provided by the Webster/Dudley Veterans Honor Guard

Calling hours will be Friday, March 13 from 5 to 7 pm at Bartel Funeral Home, 33 Schofield Avenue, Dudley, MA.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Webster-Dudley Veterans or the American Legion.



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Adult Programming
Literacy Volunteers: ESL Classes – Tuesdays at 6:00pm

The Literacy Cafe is a free weekly English conversation class offered by Literacy Volunteers of South Central Massachusetts (LVSCM). This class is free to attend and is open to all adults. No pre-registration is required. For more information, email us at info@lvscm.org.

Grief Support Group – 2nd Tuesday and 4th Saturday of the Month (6:30pm on Tuesdays; 10:00am on Saturdays) in the Local History Room

Losing a loved one is never easy. Please know that you are not alone. If you need support in trying to navigate the changes in your life, join us in a place of safety and comfort with others who have also experienced loss. This grief support group is a place to find understanding as we explore our grief, share coping strategies, and begin to heal.

Yoga – Saturdays at 9:30am
Join Julie or Lauren at the Gladys E. Kelly Library for a vinyasa yoga class for all levels. 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.

Yoga Nidra with Jess – Fridays at 8:15am
Join Adult Services Librarian Jess for a relaxing yoga nidra practice to start your day. Jess will guide participants through a few simple yoga asanas to release physical tension. Participants will then settle into a reclined position for a guided relaxation (yoga nidra). This program takes place before the library officially opens. Registration is required and Jess will meet you at the program door. If you have your own yoga mat, please bring it and be sure to dress in comfortable clothing.

Trivia Palooza 6 – Monday, March 2nd at 6:00pm
Join Evan and Jess for General Knowledge Trivia. Assemble your team (up to 5 people) and put your thinking caps on! Registration is required. The winning team gets a prize!

The Midnight Society Book Club – Wednesday, March 4th at 6:30pm
Love to read spooky books all year round? Join us for a horror book club where we will meet and discuss a book every month! March's book is How to Sell a Haunted House by Grady Hendrix. Copies of this month's book are available at the circulation desk.

Computer Basics – Thursday, March 5th at 2:30pm
Come learn some computer basics with Assistant Director Evan Hale and Adult Services Librarian Jess Fontaine. Registration is required.

NEW BOOK CLUB: The Final Frontier Sci-Fi Book Group – Thursday, March 5th at 6:00pm
Want to explore outer-space from the comfort of your own home? Want to discuss speculative futures? Join Assistant Director Evan Hale for a Sci-Fi Book group where we will look at classic and modern sci-fi titles. Our first book is Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep by Phillip K. Dick.

Cookbook Club – Wednesday, March 11th at 6:00pm

Join our cookbook club this month as we cook recipes from the same book. We always have a great time eating and discussing our experiences with the book. March's cookbook is Barefoot Contessa Back to Basics by Ina Garten. Extra copies are available at the circulation desk.

Programming for All Ages
Library for All – Mondays and Fridays at 10am

Library for All is an inclusive program for teens and adults of all abilities and their caregivers. Please let us know if you need any special accommodations! Join us every Monday and Friday! The 1st week of the month is coloring, the 2nd week is LEGO, the 3rd week is chair yoga, and the 4th week of the month is painting.

March Miniatures – Thursdays in March at 5:00 and 6:00pm

We're embracing March Miniatures this month! Each Thursday we'll be making miniature-sized crafts for you to take home. March 5th – Zen Gardens, March 12th – Teacup Scenes, March 19th – Mini Bookshelves, and March 26th – Painted Pots. Registration is required.

Friends of the Library Spring Concert Series: TJ and the Campers – Thursday, March 12th at 6:30pm

Hailing from the vibrant music scene of Rhode Island, TJ & The Campers is a band born out of long-standing friendships and a shared passion for creating high-energy music. With a sound deeply inspired by the Ska Punk of the 90s and early 2000s, they fuse nostalgic influences with their own unique energy. Whether it's the upbeat rhythms, catchy hooks, or heartfelt lyrics, TJ & The Campers bring a refreshing and invigorating presence to the ska punk scene.

Family Disney Trivia – Saturday, March 14th at 11:00am

Put on your thinking caps and join Miss Paige and Jess for a Family Disney Trivia event! We will have questions for all ages including our youngest Bluey fans to our Disney adults. Registration is required.

Children's and Young Adult Programming
Play-Doh Storytime – Mondays at 10:30am

Join us for an engaging storytime filled with interactive stories and Play-Doh fun! Kids are invited to explore, squish and make new creations each week. This sensory-friendly program is perfect for young learners and their grown-ups.

Creators Club – Mondays from 4:00-5:30 PM

We will have a variety of craft materials available to put your creativity to the test! Come explore our newly rebranded Monday night program: Creators Club! March's theme is: Pet Rocks!

Kids will decorate their own pet rock to take home.

Tiny Groovers – Tuesdays at 10:30am

Join Miss Paige for a new storytime! Toddlers ages 2-5 and their caregivers will dance to popular kids' tunes using while instruments and playful props, and enjoy an interactive story each week.

Mighty Builders – Tuesdays at 4:00pm

Unleash creativity in our free-build program featuring LEGOs, magnet tiles, wooden blocks, marble runs, and more!

"Mommy and Me" Workout/Mobility Series – Thursdays, February 19th-March 12th

Join us for a postpartum-friendly "Mommy & Me" class designed to help women feel strong, supported, and confident. All activity levels are welcome, with a focus on recovery during the first 12 months postpartum. The series includes one class on breathing and mobility, one on core, one on pelvic floor, and a final class combining everything to give you tools for safe, effective workouts at home. Mommas are welcome to attend with their baby in a carrier, on the mat, or on their own for some self-care. This program requires registration. This postpartum-friendly "Mommy & Me" class is led by Dr. Kellyn Snow, a pelvic floor physical therapist and owner Sól Pelvic Wellness Studio located in Webster, MA.

Twist and Shout Balloon Show – Saturday, March 7th at 11:00am

Come one, come all to the Twist & Shout Balloon Magic Show. There will be exciting games, tricks, and balloon magic! Fun for all ages, but suggested for children 3-8 years old. This program is generously funded by a grant from United Way of South Central MA.

From laundry room to RN

BAY PATH ALUMNA REACHES NEW HEIGHTS IN NURSING CAREER

BRIMFIELD — In the world of healthcare, there are those who study the field, and then there are those who live it from the ground up. Carleen Berthiaume, RN, a 2019 graduate of the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, has officially reached a major milestone in her decade-long climb, successfully passing the NCLEX-RN (take one!) and obtaining her Registered Nurse license this February 2026.

For Berthiaume, the path to "RN" was paved with grit, determination, and a deep-seated commitment to service. Her journey began nearly 18 years ago in 2008, when she first entered the healthcare environment not in a clinical role, but in housekeeping and laundry.

A legacy of excellence at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy

Long before her transition to Registered Nurse, Berthiaume established herself as a standout leader within the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy Class of 2019. Her time at the Academy was defined by a relentless drive for both academic and clinical mastery.

During her tenure at Bay Path, Berthiaume was:

- A decorated scholar: Inducted into the National Technical Honor Society and selected as a recipient of the prestigious Horatio Alger Scholarship.

- A competitive champion: She proved her clinical mettle under pressure, earning Silver Medals as both a District and State Champion in the SkillsUSA First Aid/CPR competitions.

- A specialized practitioner: Even as a student, she sought advanced training, earning certifications in Infusion Therapy/Central Line Care, Mental Health First Aid, and participating in SafeTALK suicide alertness training.



Her commitment to the "holistic nurse" model was evidenced by her nomination for the Clinical Excellence Award and her receipt of the Community Service Award.

A heart for the community

Berthiaume's impact at Bay Path extended far beyond the classroom. As an officer of the UNICEF Club, she championed global causes, but her local volunteerism was equally staggering. From the Charlton Senior Center BP Clinic to the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), Berthiaume was a constant presence at community health events. Her volunteer portfolio included the Paxton Health Fair, FAFSA Day, Safety Fairs, and multiple educational fairs for Mass EdCo and Bay Path RVTHS.

The long climb

Berthiaume's career is a masterclass in professional evolution. After working as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) starting in 2012, she sought to deepen her clinical knowledge by enrolling in Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy. Following her graduation in 2019, she began her career as an LPN at Quaboag Rehabilitation just as the global COVID-19 pandemic began—a "trial by fire" that solidified her resilience.

In 2022, she transitioned to the medical-surgical floor at UMass Memorial Harrington Hospital. There, she became a trained preceptor and resource/charge

nurse, specializing in advanced skills like ultrasound-guided IV insertion.

Determined to learn
In December 2025, Berthiaume completed the accelerated LPN-to-RN Bridge program at Quinsigamond Community College.

"It's been a long climb to be where I am, and I've learned so much along the way," Berthiaume reflected. Quoting Zig Ziglar, she added, "If you are not willing to learn, no one can help you. If you are determined to learn, no one can stop you. I'm determined."

A humbling mission

With her new RN credentials, Berthiaume has accepted a high-stakes Float Pool position at Harrington, cross-training in the Emergency Room and the ICU. Despite her advanced skills, she remains grounded in the philosophy of service.

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others," she said, quoting Gandhi. "It's a humbling field that I'm proud to be a part of."

Berthiaume is already looking toward the next horizon, with plans to enter a BSN program within the year. For the faculty, staff, and alumni at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, her story is a powerful reminder that with a foundation in practical nursing and a heart for service, there is no limit to how high a nurse can climb.

Mike Langlois promoted to VP of Compliance & Internal Audit at Webster First Federal Credit Union



Mike Langlois

WORCESTER — Webster First Federal Credit Union has announced the promotion of Michael Langlois to Vice President of Compliance & Internal Audit, recognizing his dedication and leadership over more than a decade of service to the organization.

Langlois joined Webster First in 2014 as an Internal Auditor. His career trajectory reflects consistent advancement and professional development, having been promoted to Internal Auditing Supervisor in 2017, Assistant Vice President of Internal Auditing in 2022, and Vice President of Internal Audit in 2024. Throughout his tenure, he has earned distinguished certifications including Certified Credit Union Compliance Officer (CUCO) from Americas Credit Unions in 2019 and

Certified Credit Union Internal Auditor (CCUIA) in 2025. He also completed the National Association of Federally Insured Credit Unions Management and Leadership program in 2017.

Since joining the credit union, Langlois has been instrumental in ensuring operational procedures, policies, and regulatory guidelines are upheld and complied with throughout the organization. He reports audit findings to the Supervisory Committee, which are then reviewed directly by the National Credit Union Administration during external examinations.

"In an industry where regulatory guidelines continue to increase year-over-year to satisfy operational safety and soundness oversight, Langlois has maintained the internal auditing program to the highest standards," said President and CEO of Webster First, John Thomasian.

In his expanded role as Vice President of Compliance & Internal Audit, Langlois will serve as the primary authority on the Credit Union's compliance matters, advising on all compliance aspects

throughout operations. His responsibilities will include managing all organizational policies, overseeing vendor relationships and their due diligence processes, and serving as Chairman of the Credit Union's Fair Lending Committee.

About Webster First Federal Credit Union
Webster First Federal Credit Union has been serving members throughout Central and Eastern Massachusetts since 1928. As a trusted local credit union, Webster First offers comprehensive banking services including checking accounts, loans, and mortgages. With a commitment to financial strength, exceptional service, and New England authenticity, Webster First provides members with secure, reliable financial solutions. Deposits are insured up to \$250,000 by NCUA with additional amounts insured by MSIC. For more information, visit websterfirst.com.

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Cornerstone Bank donates \$5,000 to support Youth Financial Education Expo

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank announced a donation of \$5,000 to support the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Children and Families Youth Financial Education Expo, a one day intensive program for youth in foster care focused on building essential financial skills.

Cornerstone Bank will serve as a Platinum Sponsor for the event, which will be held at the Marriott in Marlborough and is expected to welcome up to 100 youth participants. The donation will help cover the cost of food throughout the day and a one hour after party, as well as raffle prizes that encourage full participation in the program.

“This expo gives young people practical tools and confidence around managing money, which can have a lasting impact well beyond the event itself,” said Todd Tallman,

CEO of Cornerstone Bank. “We are proud to support an initiative that helps foster youth take meaningful steps toward financial independence.”

The expo will feature hands on instruction and individualized support as participants learn to use financial apps and set up accounts. Don Mancini will serve as the primary presenter, building on his previous work delivering financial education programs to youth in foster care.

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

vice, 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 cornerstonebank.com or call 800-939-9103.



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



Astounding Panoramic Views across mid-section of Webster Lake! Sun drenched from early morning sunrise till sunset! View the lake from all windows. Located on a peninsula providing 2 Shorelines. Fireplaced Living Room! Recent Kitchen & Bath! Primary Bedroom w/ walk-in closet. Hardwood Floors. 2 Baths. FHW Oil Heat! Central Air. Garage. **\$ 900,000.**

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

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Webster - 24 Cooper Rd
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On the shores of Lake Chargoggagogmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg

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Webster Lake Waterfront - 31 Bayview!!



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Poets At Large to present special International Women's Day reading March 8



Fred Gerhard



Meg Smith



Karen Warinsky

WEBSTER — The public is invited to a spoken word/poetry reading to celebrate International Women's Day on Sunday, March 8 organized by Poets at Large. The free event will be held at The Rose Room, 4 E. Main St., Webster, from 1-3 p.m. Featured readers will be Fred Gerhard, Meg Smith and Karen Warinsky. There will be an open mic as well. Donations are welcome.

Fred Gerhard is the author of *Drifting to "Hello"* (Khotso Publishing, 2023), and *"Lilacs Still Bloom in Ashburnham"* (Local Gems Poetry Press, 2023). His poems have been published in *Amethyst Review*, *BlazeVOX*, *Entropy Magazine*, *Friends Journal*, *Pif Magazine*, *POETICA REVIEW*, and other magazines and anthologies. He

is one of the 2023 winners of Poetry in the Pines in New Hampshire, is the 2024 poetry winner for Art on the Trails in Massachusetts and serves as an editor for *Quabbin Quills* and for *Smoky Quartz*. Gerhard is one of the founders of the New Dawn Writers' Group in Ashburnham where he runs poetry workshops and open mics. Gerhard will also read some poems written by his mother, Rena Gerhard. Mrs. Gerhard was a published poet who wrote for much of her life, composed hymns and counterpoint musical pieces and

taught Logic at the Penn State Campus in Altoona, Pa.

Meg Smith is a first-generation Irish-American poet living in Lowell, Mass. Her poetry has been published widely including in *The Cafe Review*, *Muddy River Review*, and *Lowell Review*. She currently serves as content editor for *Worcester Magazine*, and as science columnist for the *Telegram & Gazette*. She is producer of *Poe in Lowell*, celebrating Edgar Allan Poe's visits to Lowell. She welcomes visits to meg-

smithwriter.com.

Karen Warinsky is the author of: *"Gold in Autumn"* (2020) and *"Sunrise Ruby"* (2022), both from Human Error Publishing, *"Dining with War"* (2023 Alien Buddha Press), and her new release *Beauty & Ashes* (Kelsay Books 2025), and she has published widely in numerous journals and lit magazines. Her poem "Mirage" won first place in the 2024 Ekphrastic Poetry Trust, she is a Best of the Net nominee and a former finalist of the Montreal International

Poetry Contest. Warinsky coordinates spoken word events in MA and CT under the name Poets at Large, in various venues, including The Vanilla Bean Café in Pomfret, Conn. She is retired from careers in media and teaching.

Woodstock based Poets at Large is a project of Windham Arts. All events are ADA compliant and are recommended for ages 16 and up. Contact karen.warinsky@gmail.com to sign up for the open mic; five-minute max as time allows.

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