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Dudley energy programs announce new rates

DUDLEY — The town of Dudley has signed a 13-month contract with its current aggregate supplier, First Point Power.

Beginning with the October 2026 meter reads, the Dudley Community Choice Power Supply Program, designed to meet the specific needs of the town’s electricity ratepayers, will continue to offer the same options but at new rates:

- The standard product which meets the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Requirement of 69.1 percent at a rate of \$0.16345 per kWh.
- An optional product that is 100 percent renewable - meets the MA Req plus an additional 31% National Wind Renewable Energy Certificates - at a rate of \$0.16423 per kWh.
- A second optional product which meets the MA Req plus an additional 5% Massachusetts Class I RECs at a rate of \$0.16545 per kWh.

For Dudley residents and businesses who are enrolled in the town’s standard product, the current rate of \$0.12826 per kWh will expire and the new rate of \$0.16345 per kWh will take effect with the October 2026 meter reads. This represents an increase of \$21 per month on the supply side of the bill given average usage of 600 kWh. However, this new rate is 5 percent lower than National Grid’s Residential Basic Service rate of \$0.17185 per kWh. Residents can expect to see an average savings of \$5 per month for the months of October 2026 through January 2027.

Dudley launched its electricity program in April 2025 in an effort to develop an option for residents that would be stable, affordable and incorporate renewable energy.

Turn To ENERGY page A10

Dudley Woman’s Club to kick off 19th year with Meet & Greet

WEBSTER — The Dudley Woman’s Club will kick off its 19th club year with a Western-themed Meet & Greet on Thursday, Sept. 10, at The Mill @ French River, 9 Frederick St.

The event begins at 6:30

p.m., and is open to women from throughout the region, whether or not they are current members of the club.

Organizers are inviting women to “mosey on down” for an informal evening of fun and an opportunity to learn more about the Dudley Woman’s Club, its

activities and its community service projects.

The club has grown to more than 70 members from communities throughout Southern Worcester County and Northern Connecticut. Despite its name, membership and club events are not limited to Dudley residents. Women from all towns are welcome.

The Meet & Greet will give prospective members an opportunity to meet current members, make new connections and learn about the club’s plans for the coming year. Attendees are encouraged to bring a friend or several.

In keeping with the evening’s theme, guests are welcome to wear their “cowgirl glam,” although Western attire is not required.

Community service will also be part of the opening gathering. The club’s voluntary Giving Project for September will collect school supplies for the Boys & Girls Club of Webster-Dudley. Attendees who would like to participate may bring school supplies to donate.

The Dudley Woman’s Club has made charitable giving and volunteerism a central part of its activities while also providing opportunities for members to socialize and become more involved in their communities. Last year, the organization similarly opened its club year with a gathering at The Mill @ French River and emphasized that its membership extends well beyond Dudley.

The Sept. 10 Meet & Greet is open to members and nonmembers alike.

Dolly’s Imagination Library thrives in Webster

WEBSTER — Since launching in 1995, Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library has become the preeminent early childhood book gifting program in the world. The flagship program of The Dollywood Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, has gifted over 300 million free books in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and The Republic of Ireland. The Imagination Library mails more than 3 million high-quality, age-appropriate books each month to enrolled children from birth to age five. Dolly envisioned creating a lifelong love of reading and inspiring children to “Dream More, Learn More, Care More, Be More.”

The Friends of the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library are proud to have been Local Program Partners with the Dollywood Foundation since 2024. There are currently 351 children enrolled in the local pro-



gram, with 141 ‘graduates’ who have reached the age of five. Local partners who work with the Imagination Library are asked to enroll children in the coverage area and pay an average of \$2.60 per child per month toward wholesale books and mailing costs. The Dollywood Foundation has he program will continue despite Dolly Parton’s passing. Representatives for the foundation stated that the program “was never meant to last for Parton’s lifetime but for the lifetime of the children it serves.”

To enroll your child or grandchild in the Imagination Library program, please visit www.imaginationlibrary.org and search for Webster under «Check Availability.» Right now, this program is only open to residents of Webster.

Booklovers’ Gourmet plans full slate of September arts, music and literary events

WEBSTER — Art, music, literature and an evening exploring the paranormal are among the offerings coming to Booklovers’ Gourmet during September.

The independent bookstore and cafe at 72 East Main St. will begin the month with “Green Rapture,” an exhibit featuring the work of Debra Horan, owner of Booklovers’ Gourmet.

Horan’s work focuses on connections with nature and the experiences that can come from walking through the woods, spending time in a garden or observing the natural world. The exhibit explores how time outdoors can provide opportunities to slow down, reduce the distractions of everyday life and reconnect with one’s surroundings.

A meet-and-greet with Horan will be held Saturday, Sept. 12, from 2 to 4 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. The exhibit will remain on display in the cafe gallery throughout September.

The month’s programming continues Wednesday, Sept. 16, with “Whispers from Spirit,” featuring psychic medium Leo McCarthy from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

McCarthy will lead an evening centered on spiritual connections and messages, followed by time for questions and answers. Organizers note that because of the nature of the program, there is no guarantee that every attendee will receive an individual connection.

Tickets are \$45 per person, and attendance is limited to 12 people. Reservations may be made at the store or through Eventbrite, where

additional ticket fees apply.

Music takes center stage Saturday, Sept. 19, when longtime friends and collaborators Eddie Barnett and Bob Jordan present a concert from 6 to 8 p.m.

The pair will perform rock, folk, country and other musical styles, with the evening including short solo sets from each musician on vocals and guitar before they join forces for the bulk of the performance.

Barnett and Jordan’s musical connection stretches back decades. Barnett was 11 when he moved to Shrewsbury and began visiting Mac Duff’s Music, located next to the former Spag’s store, where Jordan worked. They have since performed together in numerous live and studio sessions, but the Booklovers’ Gourmet appearance will mark their first concert featuring only the two musicians.

Jordan, a Winchendon resident, performs at farmers markets, elder care facilities and occasional concerts, including an annual appearance at the Webster Senior Center.

Barnett has lived in Webster for 20 years and performs an annual summer concert in town. A guitarist and drummer, he has performed with several bands, including Bees Knees and Cosby Sweaters.

Admission to the Sept. 19 concert is \$20 per person or \$30 per couple.

The month’s schedule concludes Saturday, Sept. 26, with a program for young readers and families featuring local author and illustrator J. Roach-Evans from 1 to 3 p.m.

Roach-Evans will read from her latest children’s book, “Beach Rocks: Treasures from the Northeast Coast,” and lead participants in a craft activity in which they can paint their own beach rock creature.

The book introduces young readers to common rocks and pebbles found along the Northeast coast, ranging from Maine’s “wishing stones” to New Jersey’s Cape May “diamonds.” It also includes information to help readers identify minerals and rocks including quartz, feldspar, basalt, granite, jasper, gneiss, slate and quartzite.

Roach-Evans grew up in Auburn and studied art, English and graphic design at the School of the Worcester Art Museum, Worcester State University and Quinsigamond Community College. She also earned a master’s degree in education from Worcester State.

She is the author and illustrator of six children’s beginner guidebooks exploring seashore life and the natural world. Her previous titles include “Seashells: Treasures from the Northeast Coast,” “Seaweed: Marine Algae from the Northeast Coast,” “Marine Animals from the Northeast Coast,” “Marine Birds from the Northeast Coast,” “Little Piping Plover” and “Wildflowers from the Northeast Coast.”

Booklovers’ Gourmet is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with extended hours until 6 p.m. Wednesdays. For additional information about the September programs, call 508-949-6232.



Courtesy

Ava of Dudley has successfully completed the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program at the Pearle L. Crawford Memorial Library. Ava found that books about Paw Patrol made reading so many books, so much fun. The Pigeon books by Mo Willems are also some of her favorites and make her laugh out loud! Congratulations, Ava, on this wonderful accomplishment! We are incredibly proud of your dedication to reading and learning! The Pearle L. Crawford Memorial Library’s 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program is generously funded by the Friends of the Pearle L. Crawford Memorial Library. Families with children from birth through age five are encouraged to stop by the library to register for this free early literacy program and begin their own reading adventure.

Help shape Oxford’s future by taking Master Plan survey

OXFORD — What should Oxford look like 10, 20, or even 30 years from now? That question is at the heart of the Town of Oxford’s Master Plan process—and residents are being asked to help provide the answer.

The town is encouraging residents, business owners, property owners, and anyone who has a connection to Oxford to participate in the Master Plan survey. The survey provides an opportunity for the community to share its thoughts about the future of the town, particularly how Oxford should approach land use and development.

A Master Plan is more than a planning document. It establishes a long-term vision for the community and provides a framework to help guide future decisions about growth, development, infrastructure, housing, open space, transportation, and other issues that affect the character and quality of life in Oxford.

One of the most important components of developing a successful Master Plan is understanding what residents value about their community—and what they would like to see change.

Oxford has experienced significant growth and change over the years, and additional changes are likely in the future. Decisions about where and how development occurs can have lasting impacts on neighborhoods, businesses, natural resources, municipal services, and the overall character of the community.

The Master Plan survey gives residents a chance to weigh in on these issues.

Do you think Oxford has the right balance of residential, commercial, and industrial development? Are there areas where additional development would make sense? Are there places where development should be limited or carefully managed? What characteristics of Oxford are important to preserve as the community grows?

These are the types of questions that community members can help address through the Master Plan process.

Importantly, residents do not need to be experts in planning, zoning, or development to participate. The survey is designed to gather the opinions and experiences of the people who live, work, own property, operate businesses, and spend time in Oxford every day.

Every response helps provide a clearer picture of the community’s priorities. While the survey is only one part of the Master Plan process, broad participation will help ensure that the plan reflects the community rather than the views of only a small group of residents.

The Master Plan will ultimately serve as a roadmap for Oxford’s future. It can help the Town identify priorities, establish policies, and make informed decisions about how land is used and how future development should occur.

Your participation matters. Whether you have lived in Oxford for decades or recently made the community your home, you have a perspective that can contribute to the conversation.

Take a few minutes to complete the Master Plan survey and help shape the future of Oxford.

Oxford’s future is a community decision. Make sure your voice is part of it.

To take the survey, visit <https://cmrpc.typeform.com/oxfordmp>.

Paper copies are available at Town Hall, the Public Library, and the Senior Center.

Strategic Master Plan Committee seeks public’s input

WEBSTER — The Webster Strategic Master Plan Committee (SMPC) wants to hear from Webster residents.

In June, the Board of Selectmen appointed the committee to develop a Strategic Plan that will guide Webster over the next decade. The Committee is in the information gathering phase of the project. It is reaching out via the town’s NotifyMe system to ask residents to answer some questions about Webster. The answers will provide a better understanding of the community’s thoughts about a future Webster. It will help lay a basis for the development of strategic goals and objectives.

The SMPC is not starting from scratch. Webster is fortunate to have a wealth of information available to assist the Committee in developing the strategic plan. Key is the prior Master Plan which will be updated in this effort. More recent plans cover demographics, economic development, land use, hazard mitigation, community development, and town services. These plans have been generated to allow the town to apply for resources in specific areas. They will be very useful in building a strategic plan. One example is the Community Wide Preservation Plan issued last year. It summarizes Webster’s history as a mill town and explains its unique relationship to Samuel Slater—Father of the American Industrial Revolution. But it also provides solid approaches to revitalize key areas of Webster, while preserving and learning from its history. In addition to the call to the community for their ideas, the SMPC is updating statistics; conducting focus groups for business, community, and government; and doing interviews.

The SMPC recognizes that a plan is only useful if it is used. One key task is to lay out an approach for turning the plan from goals to actions. While it is too soon to say what this process will be, it could include such things as town annual action plans and progress reviews by the Board of Selectmen. It is the intention of the Webster Board of Selectmen to make this a living plan.

Once the information gathering phase is done and the Committee has evaluated all the information, it will begin to draft long term strategic goals and objectives. The drafting phase will begin in October. A completed plan is scheduled for February 2027. You can follow the progress of the SMPC on the Webster town Web site (www.webster-ma.gov) by going to the Strategic Master Plan page. You can also sign up for NotifyMe on www.webster-ma.gov.

DUDLEY POLICE LOG

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

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Aug. 3 for Assault & Battery on a Family or Household Member.

Edward J. Wright, age 66, of Southbridge was arrested on Aug. 6 in connection with an out of agency warrant.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Aug. 8 for Intimidation of a Witness, Juror, Police Officer, or Court Official, Assault with a Dangerous Weapon, and Assault & Battery on a Family or Household Member.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Aug. 8 for Assault & Battery on a Family or Household Member and Intimidation of a Witness, Juror, Police Officer, or Court Official.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Aug. 8 for Assault & Battery on a Family or Household Member, Assault & Battery with a Dangerous Weapon, and Violation of an Abuse Prevention Order.

Paul Eric Bilodeau, age 56, of Webster was arrested on Aug. 20 for Possession of a Class E Drug (subsequent offense) and multiple counts of Distribution of a Class B Drug (subsequent offense).

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Aug. 22 for Assault & Battery on a Family or Household Member and Intimidation of a Witness, Juror, Police Officer, or Court Official.

John Francisco Crosbie, age 49, of Boca Raton, Fla. Was arrested on Aug. 22 for a Motor Vehicle Lights Violation, Operating Under the Influence (Liquor), and Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle.

Michael Francis White, age 30, of Dudley was arrested on Aug. 25 for Assault & Battery with a Dangerous Weapon, Assault & Battery on a Person with an Intellectual Disability, Wanton Destruction of Property, and Possession of a Firearm (Taser) Without FID Card.

Jadbiel B. Rivera, age 29, of Dudley was arrested on Aug. 28 for Malicious Destruction of Property and in connection with a warrant.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Aug. 31 for Violation of an Abuse Prevention Order.

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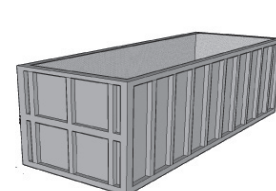


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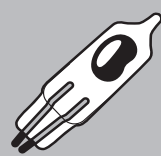
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BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

A small investment in books can pay dividends for years

There are few gifts simpler than a book. There are also few that can continue giving long after the wrapping paper is gone.

For 351 young children in Webster, a new book arriving in the mail has become a regular part of growing up. Through the Friends of the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library’s partnership with Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, children from birth to age five can receive age-appropriate books at home at no cost to their families.

That is the kind of program whose value can be easy to underestimate.

A book delivered to a toddler is not merely another object for the bookshelf. It can become part of a bedtime routine. It can introduce a new word, spark a question or inspire an imaginative game the next morning. It can give a parent and child 15 quiet minutes together at the end of a busy day.

Most importantly, it helps establish the idea that books belong in a child’s everyday life.

Dolly Parton launched the Imagination Library in 1995 with a remarkably straightforward goal: Encourage children to develop a lifelong love of reading. Since then, the program has distributed more than 300 million books and now mails more than three million books each month to children in several countries.

Those numbers are impressive, but the numbers that matter most locally are much smaller.

There are 351 Webster children currently participating, and another 141 have already “graduated” after reaching age five.

That means hundreds of Webster families have already experienced a program that did not exist locally until the Friends of the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library became a program partner in 2024.

It is also important to recognize that the books are free to families, but they are not free to provide. Local partners are responsible for enrolling eligible children and contributing an average of \$2.60 per child each month toward the wholesale cost of books and mailing.

That is a modest amount for one child. Multiply it across hundreds of children and an entire year, however, and it represents a meaningful community commitment.

It is a commitment worth making.

Communities spend considerable time discussing education after children enter the classroom. School budgets, curriculum, test scores and facilities naturally receive attention because they are important. Yet learning begins years before a child walks through a Kindergarten classroom door.

Reading aloud introduces children to language. Turning pages teaches them how books work. Talking about pictures encourages observation. Hearing the same favorite story for what may seem like the hundredth time helps build familiarity with words and ideas.

The Imagination Library also has an important quality that makes it particularly well suited to a community program: It is available without regard to a family’s income. A child does not have to demonstrate financial need to deserve books. The goal is simply to put books into the homes of young children and encourage reading.

Webster should be proud that its library community has embraced that mission.

Public libraries have always been places where people can encounter ideas regardless of the size of their bank account. Helping a child build a home library before reaching school age is a natural extension of that principle.

The best measure of the program’s success may eventually be found not in statistics but in memories.

Years from now, some Webster children may remember waiting for an envelope containing their next book. They may remember a particular story their parents read again and again. Some may eventually read those same books to younger siblings or even their own children.

For now, there are still more Webster children who can become part of that story.

Families with eligible children should learn about the program, and the broader community should recognize the work required to keep it going.

At roughly the price of a cup of coffee each month, helping put a book into the hands of a child seems like a remarkably good investment in Webster’s future.

Viewpoint

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Labor Day goes hand in hand with democracy

To the Editor:

Labor Day and democracy, for me, go hand in hand. Democracy, a system of government for the people by the people based on the rule of law. Labor Day, a day observed nationally and acknowledge by law in 1894 to honor the men and women in our nation who provide the propulsion for our economy through their work and innovation. Both Labor Day and democracy are long term commitments to our independence, freedoms and enjoyable way of life.

Democracy is where we the people elect qualified representatives and leaders that support the notion of universal human good, benefit for all, fairness, tranquility and the rule of law. Labor is where participants are eligible for their fair share of the common good and the dignity of an earned livelihood. Both democracy and labor support the norms of democracy and adherence to the US constitution. Additionally, democracy and labor support public education, research to solve our common problems, invites committed intellectuals to our shores to invent, innovate, start new needed enterprise’s. It also is a system where doctors and patients decide on their care, not the government.

Both democracy and labor are under ferocious attack from our elected and unelected government leadership ... full stop. When our elected representatives ignore the US constitution, seek to limit our ability to vote, seek to harm our workers from organizing, fail to make a living wage a priority for workers, seek to attack and deport our neighbors because they do not look or talk like us, seek to kill citizens in the streets by exercising their right to question authority, seek to eliminate our healthcare and food assistance and vaccinations against life threatening disease ... That’s a problem.

In a functioning democracy, problems get fixed at the ballot box and by public response and voice, absent of the fear that is being imposed on us. Fear is cheap and easy to use to distract from the common good. Becoming fully informed with truthful information is important. The ballot box provides an active performance evaluation for people elected to work for us nationwide. I would encourage everyone to start that evaluation and necessary course correction this November and beyond.

BILL MAY
DUDLEY

Sept. 29: The choice before Dudley

To the Editor:

I understand why some residents are frustrated that another Proposition 2½ override is on the ballot. Dudley voters rejected an override in June, and less than four months later they are being asked again. It is fair to ask whether the Town heard the first vote.

We did.

The June request was \$1,985,187. The September request is \$717,630 — approximately \$1.27 million less. Most of the June proposal is gone. What remains is limited to maintaining two police officers, two firefighter/paramedics and Highway staffing and operations that support road maintenance, snow removal, tree work and other basic services.

These are not new programs or an expansion of the Town government. They are existing employees and services. A majority of the Board of Selectmen believes they should be maintained. I agree.

The June vote mattered. The September request is nearly two-thirds smaller because of it. Rather than simply make the remaining reductions, the Board substantially narrowed the request and decided residents should make the final decision about whether these services are worth maintaining.

Some will say we have heard warnings about public-safety reductions before and they never happened. The history is important. Dudley went to the voters three times during the 2023 budget crisis. The first two override attempts failed. In August 2023, voters were presented with five separate questions and approved three — public safety, the library and the increased school assessment. The public-safety positions at risk were maintained because voters ultimately provided the revenue to maintain them.

Something else has changed since 2023. Three of our five Selectmen have changed, and we have a different Town Accountant. Different elected officials and a different financial professional have reviewed the numbers and asked their own questions. Yet a majority of today’s Board has reached essentially the same conclusion: eventually further reductions stop being efficiencies and begin reducing basic services.

That doesn’t mean residents have to agree, but I think it matters. This isn’t simply the same group of people repeating the same recommendation three years later. Different people, with responsibility for balancing the budget today, have looked at the numbers and arrived at much the same place.

There is no popularity to be gained by asking residents to increase their own taxes. There is no joy in doing it. Under Proposition 2½, we cannot make that decision for you. Only the voters can. Our responsibility is to tell you when we believe the revenue is necessary and what happens if it isn’t available.

The override itself is estimated to add approximately 39 cents per \$1,000 of

assessed value to whatever the FY2027 tax rate would otherwise be. Using the FY2026 average single-family assessment of \$449,928, that is about \$175 per year, or \$14.62 per month. That is real money, particularly when families are dealing with many of the same rising costs affecting the Town, and I don’t minimize it.

There is another issue on Sept. 29 that is equally important. Dudley and Charlton voters will decide whether to authorize \$11.18 million in school capital borrowing, while Dudley voters will separately decide whether our approximately \$5 million share should be paid through a debt exclusion.

The distinction matters because rejecting the debt exclusion does not necessarily reject the debt.

If the district borrowing passes, Dudley owes its share. Without the debt exclusion, those payments would come from the Town’s existing operating budget — the same budget that funds Police, Fire, Highway and every other municipal department. The current financing projection shows Dudley’s annual payment reaching approximately \$739,000 at its peak, roughly the size of the entire public-safety and Highway override.

That isn’t a scare tactic or an argument for or against the school projects. It is how the financing works. A vote against borrowing and a vote against the proposed way of paying for borrowing that has already been authorized can have very different consequences. Residents should understand that distinction before voting.

On Sept. 14 at 6:30 p.m. at the Dudley Municipal Complex, the board will hold a public information session. Our Town Accountant, Principal Assessor, Treasurer/Collector and I will be there. If you think there are other places to cut, ask us. If you question the tax calculation, ask us to show you. If the debt exclusion is confusing, we will walk through it.

You don’t have to agree with our recommendation, but you should expect us to explain it, defend the numbers and answer the difficult questions.

The June vote was clear, and the board responded. What remains is what a majority of a substantially different Board believes is necessary to maintain Police, Fire/EMS and Highway services. I believe it is necessary too.

We will make our case, show our work and answer the questions. Then the decision is yours.

On Sept. 29, that is exactly where it belongs.

Sincerely,

JONATHAN RUDA
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
DUDLEY

The windows are open again

There is a particular day every September when I realize the windows are open. Nobody announces it.

There is no family meeting where we agree that summer humidity has officially ended and authorize the reopening of the house. One day, the air conditioner is humming away, doing its best to keep the living room from feeling like the inside of a baked potato, and a few days later there is a breeze coming through the kitchen window. That first open-window day is one of my favorite days of the year.

I noticed it the other morning when I came downstairs. The house was quiet, and somewhere outside I could hear a truck backing up. Farther away, somebody was running a lawn mower. There were birds making whatever announcements birds feel compelled to make at 6:30 in the morning. And I could hear all of it because the windows were open.

Summer tends to seal us inside. When it gets hot enough, we close the windows, turn on the air conditioning and create our own little climate-controlled worlds. The houses along the street might be only 30 feet apart, but everybody is tucked inside behind closed windows.

September changes that. Suddenly, the neighborhood comes back. You hear someone calling the dog. You hear a screen door slam. You hear a kid bouncing a basketball in a driveway.

Somebody is doing something involving a power tool that apparently needs to begin before breakfast. You smell somebody’s coffee in the morning and somebody else’s dinner at night. And every once in a while, you hear a conversation you weren’t supposed to hear.

That is when you quietly move away from the window and remind yourself that good neighbors occasionally need to pretend they are deaf.

Open windows were simply part of life when I was growing up. We didn’t think of fresh air as an amenity. It was the cooling system.

You opened every window you could, and if the house was still hot, you found a fan. The fan was usually about 40 years old, weighed as much as a lawn mower and had metal blades capable of propelling a small aircraft.

Safety standards were apparently more of a suggestion back then.

At night, an open bedroom window brought in all the sounds of the neighborhood. Cars passing. Crickets. A dog barking three streets over. Sometimes, you could hear a radio playing somewhere. Eventually, those sounds faded into the background and you fell asleep. I hadn’t thought much about that until recently.

Modern life has become remarkably good at separating us from our surroundings. Cars have climate control. Houses have climate control. Offices have climate control. We put earbuds in when we walk. We can travel from our garage to a parking lot to a building and barely experience the outdoors at all.

Then September arrives in Massachusetts and gives us a brief stretch when the best temperature-control system is a wooden frame, a screen and a little cooperation from Mother Nature. It doesn’t last long.

Soon enough, one of those chilly mornings will arrive when somebody says, “Why is it freezing in here?” The windows will come down. Then the heat will go on.

And before long we’ll be standing beside the thermostat having the annual household debate over what temperature constitutes “perfectly comfortable” and what temperature constitutes “Do you think we’re made of money?”

For now, though, the windows are open. The curtains move a little when the breeze comes through. The house smells different. The neighborhood sounds closer. It is a small thing, certainly. But the older I get, the more convinced I become that the calendar doesn’t really tell us when the seasons change.

The little things do. The first morning, you need a sweatshirt. The first leaf you notice in the driveway. The first time you see apples stacked outside a farm stand.

And that September morning when you walk into the kitchen, hear the neighborhood outside and realize somebody has opened the windows again.

That is when you know fall is on its way.

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.

PEARLE L. CRAWFORD LIBRARY

40 Schofield Ave.,
Dudley
508-949-8021

To register for events or sign up for the newsletter, go to www.crawfordlibrary.org or call 508-949-8021.

The Library will be closed on September 7th in observance of Labor Day.

The September featured artist is Jim Socki. A variety of his pieces will be on display for you to enjoy in the Fels Room whenever the Library is open.

Gentle Yoga
Every Monday-NO SESSION Monday, September 7th 10:00-11:00

Join yoga instructor Patricia for a traditional “on the mat” yoga class with chair yoga modifications. This truly is a one-size-fits-all class. Bring your own mat. Wear layers, do not eat heavily 1.5-2 hours before class. Registration is required.

Mahjong at the Pearle
Every Wednesday 10:00-12:30 Fels Community Room

The game consists of players competing to form distinct sets or pairs of tiles, similar to gin rummy. Everyone is welcome; registration is not required.

Quilting Group
Every Wednesday 1:30-3:30

All quilters and would-be quilters are invited to join our new group. Bring your projects!

Knit & Crochet Group
Every Thursday 5:30-7:45 and Friday 10:00-12:00.

All stitchers are welcome to this informal group. Bring your project and enjoy the company!

Yoga with Buffy
Every Friday 10:00-11:00

Join Buffy for Friday Yoga! Take time to relax, stretch, and recharge at this weekly Friday session. Registration is required: wideopenyoga@gmail.com. A co-payment is required to attend.

Birding Tours: A Tool for Conservation

Thursday, September 10th 6:00-7:00

Join us for a talk exploring the primary drivers of decline in birds, the threats they face as our climate changes and human-induced habitat loss continues and how individuals can make a difference in their own backyards and through ecotourism.

The Office of State Representative John Marsi
Monday, September 14th 10:00-11:00

A representative from the Office of John Marsi will be here to answer questions.

Pearle’s Genealogy Group

Monday, September 14th 4:00-5:30

Let’s regrow our genealogy group! Facilitated by Patricia M. St. Marie, Professional Genealogist.

Violin Voyages
Monday, September 14th 6:00-7:00

Violin Voyages: Music from Around the World with Abigail Epplert. Let the music transport you around the world, inspire your imagination, and create a warm, memorable experience. Come relax, listen, and enjoy the timeless beauty of violin music.

Create a Button Heart

Sign
Thursday, September 17th 6:00-7:00

Get creative with this fun and easy craft! Paint colorful wooden buttons and arrange them into a beautiful heart design on a wooden sign. Perfect for all skill levels, this charming handmade decoration is a wonderful way to enjoy some creative time and make something special to take home. Registration is required. Ages 17+

Facial Scrub Workshop
Monday, September 21st 6:00-7:00

Enroll in this hands-on workshop where you’ll learn to craft two different scrubs using simple pantry staples like sugars, oatmeal, a delightful array of carrier oils, and aromatic essential oils. We’ll dive into the properties, benefits, and proper usage of each ingredient, emphasizing a 100% natural approach with no added preservatives. This workshop is absolutely perfect for both beginners and anyone seeking to venture into the world of homemade exfoliants. Each participant will take home two beautifully packaged 2 oz. jars of scrubs alongside comprehensive information that will empower them to create countless batches in the future.

Registration is required. Ages 17+

Crawford Library Book Group

Thursday, September 24th 1776 by David McCullough 6:00-7:30

Books are available at the circulation desk for check-out one month before the discussion.

No Registration Required

The Missing Piece Puzzle Race

Thursday, September 24th 6:00-7:30

Teams will compete against each other, with the ultimate goal of completing a puzzle faster than their opponents. Registration is required- ONLY ONE PERSON FROM EACH TEAM SHOULD REGISTER. Teams can have up to six members. The first team to assemble the puzzle wins!

Dudley Board of Selectmen Office Hours

Saturday, September 26th 10:00-12:00

Have a question, concern, or idea to share? Stop by the Pearle L. Crawford Memorial Library during Board of Selectmen Office Hours. This is an informal opportunity to meet with members of the Board, ask questions, discuss town issues, and learn more about what’s happening in the community. No appointment is necessary—residents are welcome to drop in during the scheduled office hours. There might even be refreshments!

“Cook the Book” Book Club-Today Loves Food; Recipes from America’s Favorite Kitchen

Monday, September 28th 6:00-7:00

“Cook The Book” Book Club will meet on the 4th Monday of every month at 6:00

You will pick one recipe from the book selected for the month-the dishes don’t have to be complicated or fancy, any recipe from the book is fair game, except alcoholic beverages-sorry! Prepare the recipe at home and share it at the library.

We cannot reheat or keep food warm, so consider this when choosing your recipe.

You are responsible for bringing serving utensils. We will provide paper goods and utensils for eating.

Children’s & Family Programming

Storytime with Polly
Every Monday at 10:00-10:45

For ages 2.5-5 and their caregiver (but babies and toddlers are welcome to join as well!)

Join us for stories, songs, fingerplays, scarves, shaker eggs, moving our bodies to music, activities, bubbles, a craft, and free play!

Wiggles & Giggles for Littles

Sept. 17, 24, and Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

10:15 - 10:45 am

YFCP is pleased to offer a FREE 7-week music series for children, ages 6-24 months, with a parent/caregiver. Ms. Laine will introduce music, movement, instruments and stories to your little ones. Registration is required. Please note, you are registering for a 7-week series.

This series is sponsored by the YMCA Family & Community Partnership (YFCP) and hosted by the Pearle L. Crawford Memorial Library. YFCP is a Massachusetts Coordinated Family & Community Engagement (CFCE) grant funded by the Department of Early Education & Care and awarded to the YMCA of Central Massachusetts. **REGISTRATION REQUIRED**

Wiggles & Giggles

Sept. 17, 24, and Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

11:00 - 12:00

Join YFCP and Ms. Laine for a FREE 7-week music series held here at the Pearle L. Crawford Library. Children (ages 2-5) with a parent/caregiver, will sing, move, play musical instruments, learn rhythm, and listen to stories. Siblings are welcome. Please note, you are registering for a 7-week series.

This series is sponsored by the YMCA Family & Community Partnership (YFCP) and hosted by the Pearle L. Crawford Memorial Library. YFCP is a Massachusetts Coordinated Family & Community Engagement (CFCE) grant funded by the Department of Early Education & Care and awarded to the YMCA of Central Massachusetts. **REGISTRATION REQUIRED**

Pokemon Club

Thursday, September 17th 6:00-6:45

Do you love everything Pokemon? Join us for Pokemon Club where you can meet other Pokemon fans and trade cards if you want to! Best for ages 6 and up. No registration required. This is not a drop off program.

Make Your Own Stuffie-Spots the Pigles

Friday, September 25th 2:00-2:45

Join us to make an adorable NO SEW stuffed piglet to call your very own! We’ll supply all the materials, including a rainbow wishing star to place inside your stuffie, and a take-home bag with a birth certificate! This program is for ages 6-12 and registration is required. (Please note that there is another program in a few weeks to make a different stuffie - please only choose ONE session.)

2 Lake St., Webster
508-949-3880

Library Hours: Monday-Thursday 9 a.m.-8 p.m.; Friday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

JOIN OUR MAILING LIST!

Want to receive updates about our upcoming events? Sign up for email alerts by visiting our website or contacting our Adult Services Librarian Jessica Fontaine at jfontaine@cwmmars.org

Special Events
Friends of the Library Annual Meeting—Thursday, September 17th at 6:00pm

The Library staff will present statistics and accomplishments from the previous fiscal year. The Friends will also update members regarding the state of the organization. All Friends of the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library are invited to attend.

Elephant and Piggie Party!
— Saturday, September 19th 10:30-11:30am

It’s time for an Elephant and Piggie Party! Drop by for silly activities, themed snacks, and the chance to meet Elephant and Piggie themselves.

Bites, Books, and Blooms: Friends of the Library Annual Fundraiser
— Wednesday, September 23rd at 6:00pm

Enjoy local hors d’oeuvres, beverages, music, and books in bloom. A magical night of stunning floral displays inspired by books, plus local food and live music! Proceeds benefit the Friends of the library. This is a ticketed event. You must purchase a ticket to participate.

Goose Returns!!
— Saturday, September 26th at 11:00am

Join us in welcoming back our dear friend Goose, the Water Monitor Lizard. Our pals from Rainforest Reptile Shows will be here with Goose to welcome him back to where his lore began.

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. For more information, email us at info@lvscm.org.

Grief Support Group
— 2nd Monday and 4th Saturday of the Month (6:30pm on Mondays; 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 cop-

GLADYS E. KELLY PUBLIC LIBRARY

ing strategies, and begin to heal.

Yoga — Saturdays at 9:15am

Join Meg 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.

Afternoon Tea Party for Adults — Thursday, September 10th at 3:00pm

Join us in celebrating our chamomile harvest! Our Garden Committee has been hard at work this summer tending to our beautiful garden, and it’s time to celebrate with afternoon tea! Don your finest tea party attire (if you want to!) and join us for a spot of tea and some sweets. This program is for adults and requires registration.

Grow Your Local Business in the Era of AI-Monday, September 14th at 6:30—7:30 PM

Join Himan for a workshop designed to help local business owners understand how to use AI in practical ways to grow their business, reduce costs, and improve customer engagement—without requiring technical experience.

Adult Book Group — Wednesday, September 16th at 6:30pm

Join the adult book group for their monthly book discussion! This group meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. September’s title is Atmosphere by Taylor Jenkins Reid.

Programming for All Ages

Library for All: Crafts —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! September-February, the crafts will rotate between coloring and painting. We’ll provide the space and supplies, you bring the creativity!

Puzz Fest — Thursday, September 17th at 6:00pm

Assemble your team (up to 5 people!) and join us to see which team can complete their puzzle first. We’ll have snacks to keep you fueled as you tackle your 500 piece jigsaw. Registration is required.

Children’s and Young Adult Programming

NEW Toddler Storytime — Mondays, 10:30am **STARTS** on September 14th

Join us every Monday from 10:30–11:30am for a storytime designed for toddlers and their caregivers! We’ll read stories, sing songs, and enjoy fingerplays together

before diving into hands-on sensory free play. Together we’ll build early literacy skills, spark curiosity, and discover the joy of learning through play!

Creators Club — Mondays at 4:00pm

Come explore our Creators Club, where each month features a new theme highlighting a different art supply for kids to experiment with and turn into their own masterpieces! September’s Theme: Library Card Holders! Celebrate Library Card sign-up Month with your very own card holder. All creations left behind will be displayed in the Children’s program room for the rest of the month.

Tiny Groovers —Tuesdays at 10:30am Returns on September 8th!

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

Mighty Builders — Tuesdays at 4:00pm Returns on September 8th!

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

Kim the LEGO Lady — Tuesday, September 15th and 22nd at 4:00pm

Do you love building, creating, and having fun with LEGO? Look no further! Kim the LEGO Lady is here and we want YOU to be part of our LEGO CLUB adventure. Join us for interactive building challenges, new skills and create fabulous imaginative builds. For ages 5 to 11. Registration is required.

Storytime and Apples at Lapsley Orchard — Friday, September 18th at 4:00pm

It’s apple picking season! Join us for a special storytime at the Lapsley Orchard in Pomfret, CT as families join in for a story, a small craft, and then pick some apples to bring home. Families who register should meet Miss Paige and Jess at Lapsley Orchard 10 minutes prior to the program to check in. Free parking is available on premise. Registration is required. You only need to register for one member as a follow up question will confirm how many are in your group. Rain Date: Saturday, September 25th at 4:00 PM
Snack Club: Apple Treats, Monday, September 21st at 5:30pm

Snack Club is back! Each month, kids ages 7-12 will get to make their own tasty treats or try out fun new flavors with friends. This month’s snack: Apple Treats! Due to limited supplies, this program requires registration. Please only sign up your child if they fall within the required age range

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Samuel Slater Experience hosting author talk with Chloe Chapin

WEBSTER — Samuel Slater Experience will host an historical talk, A Perfect Fit: Samuel Slater’s Mills, Daniel Webster’s Wardrobe, and the Fashioning of a Republic by author Chloe Chapin. The program will be held on Saturday, Sept. 12 at 11 a.m. at the museum, 31 Ray St., Webster.

Samuel Slater and Daniel Webster were towering figures in nineteenth-century America, united by friendship, a Massachusetts town, and a textile revolution. While Slater is famous for his cotton mill in Rhode Island, he also helped establish America’s first woolen mills in Webster, Massachusetts. Slater’s friend Daniel Webster was not a handsome man, but boy did he love to have his portrait painted. Images of Webster show he was a very fashionable dresser, dressing in the most current fashions for suits. In this talk, dress historian and former Broadway costumer Chloe Chapin uses these two men to tell the story of American industry and men’s fashion. She will explore how the rise of factory-produced cottons and woolens allowed American statesmen to project power, civility, and republican equality through the dark, tailored suit. Drawing from her new book, Suitable, Chapin reveals how the mills of New England wove the fabric of the modern man.

This talk is free hosted at the Samuel Slater Experience in Webster. The talk will be approximately one hour, followed by a short Q&A session and opportunity for book signing. Copies of Chapin’s newly published book, Suitable, will be available for purchase at the Samuel Slater Experience shop. Attendees will receive a small discount card to use toward museum admission. Register for this talk by calling 508-461-2955, or emailing admin@samuelslaterexperience.org.

Auburn resident sets out to raise awareness for Frontotemporal Degeneration

REGION — The Jim Tobin Memorial is inviting the community to support two upcoming events dedicated to raising awareness of Frontotemporal Degeneration (FTD), advancing research, and advocating for families affected by the disease.

The Third Annual Jim Tobin Memorial Golf Tournament will be held on Saturday, Sept. 26 at Holden Hills Country Club. Registration is now open for foursomes at \$500 per team, and individuals who do not golf are welcome to attend the Italian buffet lunch for \$40 with advance registration. The event will also feature raffles, contests, and sponsorship opportunities. Net proceeds will benefit the Frontotemporal Disorders Research Center at UMass Chan Medical School and The Association for Frontotemporal Degeneration (AFTD).

On Sunday, Sept. 6, Auburn resident and David Prouty High School graduate Devyn Tobin will take on the “From Lab to Legislator” Walk, a 40-mile one-man journey from UMass Chan Medical School in Worcester to the Massachusetts State House in Boston. Wearing a 40-pound weighted vest to symbolize the weight FTD places on families, he hopes to increase public awareness, support research, and encourage legislative action for those living with Frontotemporal Degeneration.

Both events honor the memory of Jim Tobin, a longtime Spencer resident, Air Force veteran, husband, father, and grandfather who lived with FTD. Many members of the Tobin family, including Jim’s wife, continue to call Spencer home and hope the community will join them in honoring Jim’s legacy and supporting efforts to improve the lives of families affected by FTD.

For golf registration, sponsorship information, or to learn more about the awareness walk, contact jimtobinmemorial@gmail.com or visit the Jim Tobin Memorial social media pages.

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University of Rhode Island celebrates new graduates during 2026 Commencement

KINGSTON, R.I. — The University of Rhode Island celebrated more 4,000 of its newest alumni during the University’s 2026 Commencement. Approximately 3,800 undergraduate degrees and 900 graduate degrees were conveyed to students during the ceremonies which took place May 15-17, 2026.

Among the graduates were:

Nathan Jette of Auburn graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering

Jasmyn Gates of Auburn graduated with a Bachelor of Science, Kinesiology

Alexa Reheuser of Auburn graduated with a Bachelor of Science, Textile Fash Merch & Design

Austin Giarnese of Dudley graduated with a Bachelor of Arts, Criminology & Criminal Justice

Tori Masiello of Oxford graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Animal and Veterinary Science

Keirsten Doud of Dudley graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nutrition

About the University of Rhode Island

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

Dudley sets public information meeting on Sept. 29 Special Election

DUDLEY — The Dudley Board of Selectmen has called a special election seeking voter approval for two ballot questions.

The Board has set a Public Information Meeting for 6:30 p.m. Sept. 14 at the Dudley Municipal Complex, 71 West Main St., where Dudley residents are invited to learn more about the Town’s Special Election comprising two ballot questions.

Question 1 seeks voter approval to override the limits of Proposition 2½ for \$717,630 to protect Police, Fire, and Highway services from budget cuts.

Question 2 seeks voter approval to debt exclude from the limits of Proposition 2½ a sum of \$5,018,583 over 14 years to fund the town’s share of Dudley-Charlton Regional School District’s proposed capital borrowing.

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee has called a district-wide special election in both Dudley and Charlton seeking voter approval to borrow \$11,183,734 for capital improvements across all seven district schools.

The School District and Town special elections will be held concurrently on September 29. Voters in Dudley will receive two separate ballots. For more information, visit <https://www.dudleyma.gov/m/newsflash/Home/Detail/149>.

Polls will be open for both special elections from noon to 8 p.m. on Sept. 29 at the Dudley Municipal Complex.

Girl Scout troops welcome new members

AUBURN — Girls entering grades K and 1 in the fall are invited to join Troop 65600, which meets in Auburn every other Tuesday 5:30-6:30 p.m., and Troop 655999, which meets every other Thursday in Dudley from 6-7:15 p.m. Girl membership registration fee is \$111, and is active until September 30, 2027. Financial Assistance is available.

Girl Scouts is the premier organization for girls to learn about leadership, financial literacy, life skills, the outdoors, community service, science and technology.

Girl Scout programming is customizable for all types of learners!

Previous Girl Scout experience is not necessary.

You can register for a spot in the troop at <https://go.gscwm.org/troop65600>

Questions? Email info@gscwm.org or call 508-365-0115.

About Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts

Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts serves nearly 6,000 girls in grades K through 12 with the strong support of over 2,500 adult volunteers in 186 towns and cities in central and western Massachusetts. The Girl Scout program allows girls to discover the fun, friendship, and power of girls together while building their personal leadership qualities. GSCWM supports girls by giving them extraordinary opportunities to explore, experience, and learn about their world and helps girls recognize that they are vital members of their communities.

Friday's Child



Elijah
Age 10
Registration #9241

Elijah (“Eli”) is a sweet, kind, resilient, and lovable young boy who brings warmth and positivity wherever he goes. Eli has a bright and cheerful personality, and his smile and enthusiasm can quickly make those around him feel comfortable and welcomed. He loves being active and enjoys playing basketball, going for a swim, and spending time at the park. He especially enjoys opportunities to get outside, explore, and stay busy.

When it’s time to slow down, Eli enjoys reading and getting creative through arts and crafts. He appreciates spending time with others and is naturally social, making connections with the people around him. Eli has a wonderful ability to bring people together and enjoys participating in activities where he can interact, laugh, and share experiences with others. He approaches new experiences with a positive attitude and continues to show resilience when faced with challenges. Eli’s kindness, warmth, and infectious positivity make him a joy to be around, and his caring personality shines through in the way he interacts with others.

<https://www.mareinc.org/child/27712856128>

Can I Adopt?

If you’re at least 18 years old, have a stable source of income, and room in your heart, you may be a perfect match to adopt a waiting child. Adoptive parents can be single, married, or partnered; experienced or not; renters or homeowners; LGBTQ+ singles and couples. As an adoptive parent, you won’t have to pay any fees, adoption from foster care is completely free in Massachusetts.

The process to adopt a child from foster care includes training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you. These steps will help match you with a child or sibling group that your family will fit well with. To learn more about adoption from foster care visit www.mareinc.org. Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) can give you guidance and information on the adoption process. Reach out today to find out all the ways you can help children and teens in foster care.



Bites, Books & Blooms

Ticket Sales begin Aug. 24



A Book in Bloom from Flower Garden Florist & Gifts of Webster.

WEBSTER — Don't miss out! The fourth annual gala event, "Bites, Books and Blooms" is coming to the Gladys E. Kelly (Webster) Library on Wednesday, Sept. 23, from 6 to 8 p.m. The Friends of the Library invite you to an evening of live music, food, a beer and wine cash bar, and, of course, Books in Bloom. Local florists, clubs, churches and some crafty individuals are busy designing displays made from flowers and whatever props spring to their imaginations to represent their chosen book or poem.

For example, Flower Garden of Webster created this take on Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets featuring Hedwig in some mood-setting vegetation.

Owner Lisa Grzyb hints that her submission this year might require a power source-? We can't wait to see what it will be!

As in past years, Bistro Eighty Ates will provide delicious hors d'oeuvres, and the Latin jazz and instrumental trio RioFlow (led by Peruvian-born guitarist Dr. Carlos Odría) will lend a smooth vibe to the evening.

Tickets, \$50 each, will go on sale on Aug. 24 on the library Web site, gladyskellylibrary.org, and in-person at the library. Proceeds from ticket sales help to keep all programs free to the public. Stop by the library to hear what's available to our community: yoga classes, book clubs, historical walks and talks,

trivia nights, Dungeons & Dragons events, children's book character appearances, music programs, Lego building, and many more! While you're there, we hope you'll want to sign up as a Friend of the Library, too, to add your support and stay informed about all the events and opportunities.

Generous supporting individuals and businesses have donated more than 20 gift baskets and gift certificates to the fundraiser as well. These and a 50-50 raffle prize will be awarded to some lucky winners at the BB&B. Come as you are or "dress to the nines" and make this a great night out while supporting the community!

Poets at Large

presents Knowles and Aeroelastic Flutter

POMFRET — Poets at Large will continue its seventh season on Saturday night, September 26th with two disparate types of poetry. The show begins at 7 p.m. at The Vanilla Bean Café, 450 Deerfield Rd. in Pomfret, and featured that night will be Frederick-Douglass Knowles II and performance artist duo Aeroelastic Flutter. Suggested donation is \$10.

Knowles is a Hartford Poet Laureate Emeritus, an English Professor at CT State Community College and author of "BlackRoseCity" (Author House 2011). He is the recipient of The Nutmeg Poetry Award, a Connecticut of the Arts Fellow in Artistic Excellence in Poetry/Creative Non-Fiction, and a two-time Pushcart Prize nominee. He will be showcasing work from his newest book, "Sinking in Moonlight Alone."

Aeroelastic Flutter is a spoken word and sound collaboration, combining the often-absurdist poetry of Jim Whitten with the guitar work and sound exploration of Nicholas Pecsok. Their project experiments with lo-fi audio and borderline performance art, challenging audiences to reevaluate how poetry can be performed and defined.

Poets at Large has brought over 150 published and awarded poets to the area since 2020 and dozens of people have participated in the open mic portions during that time. Poets at Large is a project of Windham Arts. All events are ADA compliant and are recommended for ages 16 and up. Readings for the rest of the season are sponsored in part by donations from bankHometown, Charter Oak FCU, WHZ Financial and The Putnam Area Foundation. Contact karen.warinsky@gmail.com to sign up for the open mic; five-minute max as time allows.

Oxford's biggest

Fall treasure hunt returns

Sept. 19!

OXFORD — As the leaves begin to change, it's the perfect time to clear out the clutter and uncover hidden treasures! On Saturday, Sept. 19, Oxford residents are invited to take part in the Fall Town-Wide Yard Sale, a community favorite that turns neighborhoods into one giant bargain-hunting destination.

Whether you're looking to downsize, make a little extra cash, or simply connect with neighbors, this is the perfect opportunity to give your gently used items a second life. Residents can host their own yard sales at home or reserve a space at Joslin Park near the Oxford Bandstand, where shoppers

can browse multiple sellers in one convenient location. To be included on the official yard sale map or to reserve a space at Joslin Park, register through the Community Center at www.oxfordma.myrec.com. Registration closes Sept. 15 to allow time for maps to be prepared. Maps will be available online, at the September Oxford Farmers' Market, and at the Community Center beginning at 1 p.m. Friday, Sept. 18.

The cleanup doesn't stop there! Also on Sept. 19, the Oxford Department of Public Works will host a Community Shredding

Day from 9 to 11 a.m. at the DPW Administrative Office, 450 Main St. This free service is available exclusively to Oxford residents and provides a safe, secure way to dispose of sensitive documents and unwanted paperwork.

For more information about Shredding Day, contact the DPW at 508-987-6006.

So, mark your calendars, gather your treasures, and get ready for a day of deals, decluttering, and community fun. After all, your unwanted items could become someone else's perfect find!

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LEGALS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
The Worcester Community Action Council, Inc.'s Heating Emergency Assistance Retrofit Task Weatherization Assistance Program is currently accepting proposals for the following activities:
HEATING SYSTEM SERVICE CONTRACTORS: for new installations, cleaning and repair of natural gas and propane furnace/boilers, oil furnaces/boilers, electric baseboard heating systems, solid fuel heating systems, air source heat pumps and heat pump water heaters.
ASBESTOS ABATEMENT CONTRACTORS: for asbestos removal from pipes and boilers, and boiler removal.
CHIMNEY SERVICE CONTRACTORS: for inspections, liner installations/replacements and potential cleanings in conjunction with heating system installations.
RFP packages with complete specifications may be obtained on or after Wednesday, August 26, 2026, between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm at: Worcester Community Action Council, Inc. 18 Chestnut St, Suite 500, Worcester, MA 01608
Inquiries may be made by calling (508) 754-1176 Ext. 158. Completed packages must be received at WCAC, Inc., 18 Chestnut St, Suite 500, Worcester MA 01608-1810 no later than 4:30 pm on Friday September 11, 2026.
This advertisement is subject in all respects to the terms and conditions of the Request for Proposals. Small, women and minority owned businesses and individuals are encouraged to apply.
WCAC is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.
Marybeth Campbell, Chief Executive Officer, Worcester Community Action Council
August 28, 2026
September 4, 2026
September 11, 2026

PUBLIC NOTICE
Department of Environmental Protection Wetlands Program
Notice of 401 WQC Application and Variance
Notice is hereby given that New England Power Company (NEP), 170 Data Drive, Waltham, MA 02451, seeks a 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC) and Variance for the Central to Western Massachusetts Energy Improvement Project/E5/F6 Asset Condition Refurbishment Project located within Millbury, Auburn, Leicester, Spencer, East Brookfield, North Brookfield, West Brookfield, Ware, Belchertown, Pelham, Shutesbury, Leverett, Sunderland, Deerfield, Conway, Shelburne, and Buckland, MA.
NEP plans to replace existing structures, improve access to structures, reconductor the lines, replace existing shieldwires with optical groundwire, and perform vegetation management activities within the existing transmission corridor. A Variance is requested for temporary construction matting and permanent structure foundations within wetlands located within 400 feet of the high water mark of the Quabbin Reservoir.
Additional information may be obtained from Theresa Portante, BSC Group, Inc., 1 Mercantile Street, Suite 610, Worcester, MA 01608, (617) 896-4509, tportante@bscgroup.com.
Written comments on the 401 WQC and Variance should be sent within twenty-one (21) days of this notice to: **MassDEP Wetlands Program – Major Projects and Policy Unit** 100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900 Boston, MA 02114 christina.y.wu@mass.gov
Any group of ten persons, any aggrieved person, or any governmental body or private organization with a mandate to protect the environment who submits written comments may appeal the Department's Certification. Failure to submit written comments before the end of the public comment period may result in the waiver of any right to an adjudicatory hearing.
September 11, 2026

Public Notice
MARICOPA COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
Petitioner's Name: Christopher Ngari
Mailing Address:
30117 W Weldon Ave
City, State, Zip: Buckeye, AZ 85396

Phone Number: 774-242-6781
Petitioner's Name: Christopher Ngari
Case Number: FN2026-070585
SUMMONS
Respondent's Name: Nancy Frandsen
THE STATE OF ARIZONA TO :
Nancy Frandsen
YOU ARE SUMMONED and required to appear and defend within the time applicable in this action in this court. If served in Arizona, you shall appear and defend within 20 days of service on you of the Summons and Petition, excluding the day of service. If served outside of Arizona, you shall appear and defend within 30 days of service on you of the Summons and Petition, excluding the day of service. Direct service is complete when made. Service by publication is complete 30 days after the first publication.
If you fail to appear and defend within the time applicable, judgment by default may be rendered against you for the relief demanded in the Petition.
In order to appear and defend, you must file a Response in writing with the clerk of this court, accompanied by the necessary filing fee, within the time required, and you must serve a copy of any Response on the Petitioner.
A copy of the pleading being served may be obtained from the Clerk of Superior Court, Maricopa County Courthouse, 201 W Jefferson St, Phoenix, AZ 85003.
Requests for reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities must be made to the court by parties at least three (3) working days in advance of a scheduled court proceeding.
If this is an annulment, divorce, or legal separation, either party can ask the court for counseling or mediation to try to reconcile or to come to agreements about the case outside of court. You can find a form at the Law Library.
Leave this blank. This is for the court to fill in.
SIGNED AND SEALED this date: May 11, 2026
Clerk of Superior Court
Revised May 2024
Clerk of Superior Court
By Deputy Clerk: /s/
September 11, 2026
September 18, 2026
September 25, 2026

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
Town of Dudley Planning Board
In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L., Chapter 40A, Section 9 and 11, the Town of Dudley Planning Board will hold a public hearing for a modification of a subdivision at 28 Budd Drive on Wednesday, September 23, 2026 at 7:15p.m. in the Dudley Municipal Complex, Room 321-A (DMC, Veterans Memorial Hall), 71 West Main Street, Dudley, Ma 01571. A copy of the proposed modification plans may be viewed in the office of the Planning Board 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
September 11, 2026
September 18, 2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
Docket No. W024P4254GD
CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR RESIGNATION OF A GUARDIAN OF A INCAPACITATED PERSON
In the Interests of:
Daniel Fagan Of: Webster, MA
RESPONDENT

ncapacitated Person/Protected Person To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by
Sara Spooner of Auburn, MA
in the above captioned matter alleging requesting that the court: Accept the Resignation of the Guardian
The petition asks the court to make a determination that the Guardian and/or Conservator should be allowed to resign; or should be removed for good cause; or that the Guardianship and/or Conservatorship is no longer necessary and therefore should be terminated. The original petition is on file with

the 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 **09/29/2026**. 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: August 28, 2026
Stephanie K. Fattman
Register of Probate
September 11, 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 September 25, 2026 at 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: 2025 OTH MC Moped
VIN# L2BB6BCH1SB126065
Owner: Mark A Williame, 47 Orchard Hill Dr Bldg C, Oxford, MA 01540
This notice has been given under the provisions of G.L. c.225, Section 39 A
September 4, 2026
September 11, 2026
September 18, 2026

Notice is hereby given by School Street Towing 17-31 School St., Webster, MA 01570 pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c.255, Section 39A, that on 12 September 2026 @ 9:00 AM at: 17-31 School St., Webster, MA 01570 by Private Sale
The following motor vehicles 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.

Vehicle Description:
Year:2016 Make: Jeep Model: Wrangler
Registration#/State: UnReg.
VIN# 1C4BJWDGXGL191791
Name and address of vehicle owner:
Brian J Lehtola, 7 N Sturbridge Rd., Charlton MA 01507
by: Frank A Czechowski Jr.
Dated: 15Aug2026

Vehicle Description:
Year:2023 Make: VW Model: Jetta
Registration#/State: 6FEG67
VIN# 3VW7M7BU9PM057331
Name and address of vehicle owner:
Matthew Whalen, 3 Boyden St Ext Apt 1, Webster, MA 01570
by: Frank A Czechowski Jr.
Dated: 15Aug2026
This notice has been given under the provisions of G.L. c.255, Section 39A
August 28, 2026
September 4, 2026
September 11, 2026

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE
Premises: 10 French River Circle, Oxford, MA 01540
By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Robert M Krawetz and Sarah E Krawetz to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Evolve Bank & Trust, and now held by **Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC**, said mortgage dated February 8, 2016 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 54921, Page 251, said mortgage was assigned from Mortgage

Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Evolve Bank & Trust, its successors and assigns to First Guaranty Mortgage Corporation by assignment dated November 19, 2018 and recorded with said Registry of Deeds in Book 59736, Page 287; said mortgage was assigned from First Guaranty Mortgage Corporation to Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC by assignment dated June 24, 2024 and recorded with said Registry of Deeds in Book 70670, Page 240; for breach of the conditions in said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at **Public Auction on** September 30, 2026 at 10:00 AM Local Time upon the premises, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:
The land in Oxford, Worcester County, Massachusetts, on the westerly side of French River Circle, shown as Lot 12 on a plan entitled "Definitive Plan of French River Estates, Oxford, Massachusetts owned by French River Realty Trust", dated February 8, 1989, as revised, drawn by A. F. Paige Associates, Registered Engineers and Surveyors, Auburn, Massachusetts, recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 627, Plan 73, and bounded and described as follows: BEGINNING at a point on the westerly side of French River Circle at the north-easterly corner of the herein described premises and at the southeasterly corner of Lot 13 as shown on said plan; THENCE North 83 degrees 55' 09" West by said Lot 13, a distance of 244.24 feet to a point; THENCE South 73 degrees 21' 16" East as shown on said plan, 99.00 feet to a point; THENCE South 08 degrees 08' 44" West as shown on said plan, 115.00 feet to a point at Lot 11; THENCE North 86 degrees 20' 34" East by said Lot 11, a distance of 231.30 feet to a point on the westerly side of French River Circle; THENCE Northwesterly by said French River Circle and by a curve to the left, the radius of whose arc is 150.00 feet, a distance of 125.00 feet to the point of beginning. CONTAINING 21,787 square feet of land, according to said plan. SUBJECT to twenty foot wide drainage and walking easement of which ten feet approximately affects said premises along the northerly boundary of said premises; and SUBJECT to twenty foot wide walking easement along westerly boundary of said premises, all as shown on said plan. SPECIFICALLY reserving all of the Grantor's right, title and interest in the street and ways as shown on said plan but granting to the Grantees, their heirs, successors and assigns the right to pass and repass over said ways as may be consistent with town ways in the Town of Oxford together with those others legally entitled thereto.
The description of the property contained in the mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.
For Mortgagor's Title see deed dated January 12, 2016 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 54921, Page 248.
TERMS OF SALE: Said premises will be sold and conveyed subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens and assessments, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described.
FIVE THOUSAND (\$5,000.00)
Dollars of the purchase price must be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check at the time and place of the sale by the purchaser. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check within thirty (30) days after the date of sale.
Other terms to be announced at the sale.
Brock & Scott, PLLC
23 Messenger Street
2nd Floor
Plainville, MA 02762
Attorney for Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC
Present Holder of the Mortgage (401) 217-8701
August 28, 2026
September 4, 2026
September 11, 2026

For Legal Advertising Information, Call 508-909-4127
email: legals@stonebridgepress.news

LEGALS

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE’S SALE
OF REAL ESTATE

Premises: 26 Perryville Road, Webster, MA 01570-3073

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Virginia D. Gogolinski to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Genworth Financial Home Equity Access, Inc., and now held by **Longbridge Financial, LLC**, said mortgage dated September 28, 2011 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 47914, Page 339, said mortgage was assigned from Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Genworth Financial Home Equity Access, Inc. to Reverse Mortgage Solutions, Inc. by assignment dated January 25, 2016 and recorded with said Registry of Deeds in Book 54873, Page 209; said mortgage was assigned from Reverse Mortgage Solutions, Inc. to Broad Street Funding Trust I by assignment dated August 16, 2018 and recorded with said Registry of Deeds in Book 59398, Page 330; said mortgage was assigned from Broad Street Funding Trust I to Wilmington Savings Fund Society, FSB, not in its individual capacity, but solely as Trustee of RMF Buyout Acquisition Trust 2018-1 by assignment dated June 4, 2019 and recorded with said Registry of Deeds in Book 60582, Page 143; said mortgage was assigned from Wilmington Savings Fund Society, FSB, not in its individual capacity, but solely as Trustee of RMF Buyout Acquisition Trust 2018-1 to Reverse Mortgage Funding, LLC by assignment dated November 19, 2021 and recorded with said Registry of Deeds in Book 66665, Page 378; said mortgage was assigned from Reverse Mortgage Funding, LLC to Longbridge Financial, LLC by assignment dated October 30, 2023 and recorded with said Registry of Deeds in Book 69944,

Page 161; for breach of the conditions in said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at **Public Auction on October 6, 2026 at 11:00 AM Local Time** upon the premises, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit: *Acertain parcel of land with the buildings thereon of every nature and description and all the privileges and appurtenances thereto belonging, situated in the Town of Webster, County of Worcester, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, bounded and described as follows: Beginning at an iron pin at the northerly line of Perryville Road fifty three and twenty one hundredths (53.21) feet westerly from a proposed W. C. H. bound point and at land of William H. Sherwood;*

Thence N. 18° 16’ 28” W. by land of said William H. Sherwood one hundred fifty seven and fifty eight hundredths (157.58) feet to an iron pin; Thence S. 67° 44’ 20” W. seventy nine and forty nine hundredths (79.49) feet to an iron pipe; Thence southwesterly one hundred seventy and forty one hundredths (170.41) feet on Goodwin Street, so called, to the northerly line of said Perryville Road; Thence easterly by the northerly line of said Perryville Road one hundred eighty one and sixty five hundredths (181.65) feet to an iron pin and the point of beginning. Less and excepting that parcel that was conveyed to William H. Sherwood in Book 4402 at Page 478 of the Worcester County Registry of Deeds. For Title reference see deed as set forth in Book 6071 at Page 304 of the Worcester County Registry of Deeds.

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

For Mortgagor’s Title see deed dated November 18, 1976 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester

District) Registry of Deeds in Book 6071, Page 304.

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

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

Other terms to be announced at the sale.

Brock & Scott, PLLC
23 Messenger Street
2nd Floor
Plainville, MA 02762
Attorney for Longbridge Financial, LLC

Present Holder of the Mortgage (401) 217-8701
September 4, 2026
September 11, 2026
September 18, 2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
Docket No. WO25P0508GD
CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR RESIGNATION OF A GUARDIAN OF A INCAPACITATED PERSON**

**In the Interests of:
Stephen Barsky
Of: Worcester, MA
RESPONDENT**

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

Sara Spooner of Auburn, MA in the above captioned matter alleging requesting that the court: Accept the Resignation of the Guardian

The petition asks the court to make a determination that the Guardian and/or Conservator should be allowed to resign; or should be removed for good cause; or that the Guardianship and/or Conservatorship is no longer necessary and therefore should be terminated. The original petition is on file with the 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 **09/29/2026**. 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: August 28, 2026
Stephanie K. Fattman
Register of Probate
September 11, 2026



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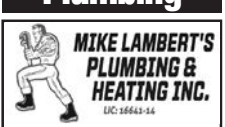


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ENERGY

continued from page A1

From inception through March 2026, the program has saved residents and small businesses more than \$499,000 in electricity costs as compared to National Grid Basic Service.

“While energy costs remain high given current market conditions, we are pleased that the town has been able to secure a reduced rate that will provide some relief to our residents. We intentionally chose a shorter-term agreement rather than locking the community into a long-term rate in a volatile energy market,” Town Administrator Jonathan Ruda said. “This approach gives us the flexibility to regularly reevaluate market conditions, test available pricing, and make sure we continue pursuing the best possible value for Dudley residents. Our

goal is to provide savings where we can today while maintaining the flexibility to take advantage of better opportunities as the market changes.”

It is important to note that no action is required by current participants. All accounts currently enrolled in the program will remain with their current product selection and see the new rate and First Point Power printed under the “Supply Services” section of their monthly bill. This change will be seen on the November 2026 bills.

The Dudley Community Choice Power Supply Program has no fees or charges. However, anyone switching from a contract with a third-party supplier may be subject to penalties or early termination fees charged by that supplier. Ratepayers should verify

terms before switching.

Basic Service rates change twice a year or more. As a result, the aggregation rate may not always be lower than the Basic Service rate. The goal of the aggregation is to deliver savings over the life of the program against National Grid Basic Service. However, future savings cannot be guaranteed.

National Grid has several programs to help income-eligible families and customers needing special assistance meet their energy needs. To learn more, visit national-gridus.com/MA-Home/Bill-Help/Payment-Assistance-Programs. Residents may also visit colonialpowergroup.com/dudley or call (866) 485-5858, ext. 1 to learn more about

Dudley’s Community Choice Power Supply Program, to opt in or opt out, or to change product selection.

Dudley’s First AgriFest & Family Fun Day set for Sept. 12

DUDLEY — The Dudley Agricultural Advisory Commission and the Dudley Recreation Commission are excited to announce a AgriFest & Family Fun Day, on Saturday, Sept. 12 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Dudley Municipal Building, 71 West Main St. Rain or Shine!

This exciting community event will give local residents and visitors an opportunity to engage with local farmers and vendors. It’s a great way to support local

agriculture while bringing the community together for a fun-filled day.

Event features include:

- Heaviest Tomato Contest - Think you’ve grown a prize-winning tomato? Enter our Heaviest Tomato Contest for a chance to win a gift card prize! Contest entries must be brought to the event in person—photos will not be accepted.

Free family fun for everyone

In addition to shopping

from local farms:

- Food vendors
- Live music
- Access to Dudley’s new Fun Zone Playground
- Family-friendly activities

Local farm vendors wanted

Local farms are invited to participate by selling farm products or promoting agricultural-related services.

Whether you offer farm-raised meats, riding lessons, fresh produce, flowers, or other agricultural services, we’d be happy to include you in this event.

Oxford Democratic Town Committee hosting candidate forum

OXFORD — The public is invited to a community conversation with Democratic candidates on Sept. 12 from noon to 2:45 p.m. at the Oxford Free Public Library.

Come hear from and ask questions of state representative candidates Nick Lazzaro (7th Worcester district), Jen Heck (18th Worcester district), and possibly others prior to the Nov. 3 state election. Refreshments will be available.

This event is being hosted by the Oxford Democratic Town Committee. For more information, contact Rick Hanauer at 508-344-7018.

Dudley’s First AgriFest & Family Fun Day set for Sept. 12

CHARLTON — We are excited to announce that the Fall 2026 catalog is now available at www.baypath.net/bpce. There is something for everyone, featuring offerings in trades exam preparations, continuing education, professional development, health & wellness, art, food & entertaining, financial wellness, and much more.

Here are some of the new classes available:

- Basket Weaving
- Breadmaking and more
- Gluten-Free Pasta Making
- Japanese Ikebana Flower Design
- Professional Writing
- Tai Chi
- and more

Additionally, we have returning favorites including:

- Line Dancing
- Ballroom Dancing
- Stained Glass Making
- Bob Ross Art Classes
- Yoga for All
- Classes for Two People to Take Together

Registration Opens on July 20 – Make sure to sign up early for the classes that catch your interest so you don’t miss this opportunity! You can reach us at www.baypath.net/bpce or call 508-248-5971, ext. 1715. Bay Path has been providing engaging adult continuing education classes for the past 30 years, conveniently located at 57 Old Muggett Hill Rd., Charlton.

OBITUARIES

Alice Gail Davern, 80

Alice Gail Davern, age 80, of Dudley died peacefully Friday, August 28, 2026 at her home in Dudley. With Cloe and Danny by her side.

Gail owned and operated the Beginning Salon for over 30 years. A dedicated stylist and friend to many customers in the local area.

She is survived by her husband of 45 years Michael P. Davern of Dudley , a

daughter Denna Maisto . Granddaughters Amanda Pesare and Angelina Cosentino . Great granddaughter Viannea Santiago, Great grandson Vincent Pesare all of Oxford Florida.

There are no calling hours services are private . Bartel Funeral Home 33 Schofield Ave. Dudley is assisting the family www.bartelfuneralhome.com

Edward C. Starczewski, Jr., 77



DUDLEY – Edward C. Starczewski, Jr., 77, passed away peacefully at home on Sunday, August 30, 2026. He leaves his devoted wife of 55 years, Patricia J. (Quinn) Starczewski; a son, Christopher E. Starczewski and his wife Kathleen of Dudley; Laura S. Scott and her husband Dana of Boylston; three grandchildren, Molly, Sarah, and Colin Starczewski; two brothers-in-law, James P. Quinn and his wife Karen of Paxton, and William T. Quinn, Jr. of Dudley; a sister-in-law, Donna DeChiaro and her husband Matthew of Falmouth; and several nieces and nephews. His brother, Dr. Joseph “Al” Starczewski, passed away in 1989. Ed was born in Webster on July 28, 1949, the oldest son of the late Edward C. Starczewski, Sr. and Adella T. (Nowosadko) and lived in Dudley his whole life. He graduated from Bartlett High School in 1967 and later earned a Bachelor’s of Arts Degree in Business from Clark University in Worcester and served in the Army National Guard during the Vietnam Conflict. Ed worked as a civil engineer for Worcester County Engineering and later as a corrections officer for Worcester County Sheriff’s Department until his retirement in 2004. Ed worked hard, obtaining his real estate license while working full time. He was a real estate agent with Centerwood Realty in Oxford for 20 years. In the early part of retirement, he kept busy as a customer

service representative and later as an environmental services department shift manager at Foxwoods—roles he loved because he could talk to many people and be his gregarious self. While raising his family, Ed served on multiple boards and commissions for the Town of Dudley including the Board of Selectmen and volunteered his time with Troop 273 BSA Dudley and as equipment manager for a local youth football organization. Ed valued education, was a big animal lover who truly treated pets as family, enjoyed dining out, going on cruises and bus trips, weightlifting, reading, and scuba diving/snorkeling, as well as the finer things in life, especially being with his family. He will be truly missed for his way of joking around and his animated knack for storytelling. The family would especially like to thank Mindy, Ed’s home health aide, who provided caring support to him and to Patty in navigating the challenges of being Ed’s full-time caregiver for the last few years of his life. Memorial calling hours will be held from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 13, at Sitkowski, Malboeuf & Hickey Funeral Home, 340 School Street, Webster with a prayer service beginning at 4:30 p.m. In lieu of flowers, donations in Ed’s name may be made to Be Better, Friends of John Paire, Inc., PO Box 1505, Dudley, MA 01571.

Bernard J. Bednarz, 86



In dawn’s early light, on a cool August 15, 2026 morning, at Harrington Memorial Hospital in Southbridge, Bernard J. Bednarz, age 86, passed from this world peacefully to meet his Lord and Maker.

Benny, also known as Cheyenne in his earlier years, always felt that he had lived a wonderful life. His ‘five-acre’ farm — which included a pair of long-haired Scottish Highlanders and later, two Brahmans, as well as goats, chickens, and Homer, his mule — kept him busy after he came home from long days working as a tractor trailer driver at Sakrete (now Bonsal American) in Oxford for over 30 years.

He also served as Dudley’s Animal Inspector, as well as Dog Officer and Constable for several years in the 1978-1981 timeframe.

A hard-working man, Ben delivered tons and tons of bagged cement on a flat-bed trailer throughout New England and New York, as well as Baltimore, MD. While at Sakrete, he was the first driver to be awarded special recognition for driving over one million consecutive miles without a preventable accident.

“Bernard Bednarz Honored for 1 Million

Miles Without an Accident

Bernard Bednarz, a long-time driver with Sakrete, has been recognized for achieving a rare and impressive milestone: driving over one million consecutive miles without a preventable accident cplogistics.com. This accomplishment places him among the elite group of “Million Mile Safe Drivers” honored by CPC Logistics, a company that celebrates drivers who maintain exceptional safety records over extended periods.”

In later years, some of you may have seen Benny riding his mule buddy, Homer, all over the back roads of Dudley and Charlton, where children would run to see and pet Homer.

From an early age, Benny’s other passions were hunting small game, deer and bear in Mass. and Vermont. An avid hunter, in later years, he especially enjoyed an expedition to the Rockies to hunt large game. Traveling on his Harley throughout New England with his buddies. Taking road trip vacations all across the U.S. of A., including visiting Old West towns like Tombstone, Deadwood and Dodge City. Those were the days!

The first son of Stanley A. and Veronica Bednarz of Dudley, Benny was born on 10/24/1939. His siblings include Julia Irene Gallant of Dudley, Stanley Bednarz, Jr. (deceased) and Paul Bednarz (deceased).

Benny leaves the love of his life and devoted wife, Natalie (Gatzke) Bednarz, as well as his loving daughter, Lynne Marie Bednarz of Missouri, and his dedicated son, Ricky J. Bednarz of Dudley. He also leaves two grandchildren and seven great-children in Missouri.

He will be truly missed by his family, especially his infectious laughter, and hard work ethic, which will remain in their memories forever.

There will be no calling hours. Funeral arrangements are private.

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Featured New Listing!
Webster Lake Waterfront - 86 Bates Point Rd

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Webster ~ 33 Slater Street

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