

# STURBRIDGE VILLAGER

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Thursday-Friday, February 6-7, 2025

## Council votes no confidence in Villar

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — After seeing the Jan. 27 agenda, it probably surprised nobody that the Town Council voted to

send Boston a letter of no confidence in Receiver Jeffrey Villar.

The 6-3 vote came after nearly two hours of public comments, the vast majority of which urged the council-

ors not to take that vote. Some noted it wouldn't actually promote the end of receivership, and others described it as "personal" and "political."

Instead, many advocated letting

the process of training and cooperation the School Committee began in June 2024 to play out. Some urged the council to visit the schools and see the

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Courtesy

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

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

## Sturbridge selectmen scrutinize issues at Curboy's junkyard

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — The issue that drew public attention at the Jan. 21 Select Board meeting wasn't one of those things on the agenda. It was one that's been lingering for months now.

Near the end, Chair Jamie Goodwin noted that the Conservation Commission (ConCom) had reached a settlement over long-standing issues at Curboy Auto on Mashapaug Road.

"There are fair concerns about that settlement agreement, and it was executed by [town] counsel," he said. Among the issues he had with it was how it identified parts of the property as being "not in use" when "there's clearly activity on that site."

Noting it will likely need a future executive session, he asked about getting special counsel for this, saying, "We're not sure what's going on there, and we should."

Resident and former Conservation Agent Becky Gendreau spoke on that at citizens' forum, saying she wants to make sure "the correct questions get asked" if the town does pursue special counsel. Among the issues she's concerned about are that if

a property's "non-conforming," there's a two-year limit to not using it before it reverts to the existing zoning and she believes the section the owner wants to move cars to hasn't been used since at least 2008. Also,

she said, the other side of that hill is Southbridge watershed land, yet a junkyard is an industrial use (it's zoned residential), and it needs several kinds of permits.

"There's been activi-

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## Dementia Friendly Charlton continues push for community partnerships

BY JASON BLEAU  
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — While the Charlton Board of Selectmen's final meeting of January 2025 proved to be one of its shortest in recent memory, it was not without its significance as it offered the opportunity from Dementia Friendly Charlton to provide an update on its mission to provide resources and create partnership within the local community.

Dementia Friendly Charlton is part of the larger Dementia Friendly

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## Eagle Scout completes mountain bike trails service project

STURBRIDGE — Scouting America Eagle Scout Jonah Scherer recently completed his Eagle rank required service project of updating and improving the mountain bike trails behind the Tantasqua Regional Junior High School.

The mountain bike trails were initially installed several years ago and have been used by the Tantasqua mountain bike club as practice trails. The trails also serve as an outdoor classroom for several of the science class studies in forestry and outdoor environments.

Scherer's project included cleaning up the trails, paint marking, formally naming and signing the trails along

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Jonah Scherer standing next to the recently completed Kiosk for the Tantasqua Trail system.

Courtesy

# Sturbridge officials weigh changes to measuring costs

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

STURBRIDGE — Most people pay very little attention to weights and measures until they have to.

That's true of the Select Board, which has had the state handle certifying weights and measures (such things as making sure gas pumps and registers are accurate) for years.

Town Administrator Robin Grimm said Sturbridge used to pay \$5,000 a year for the state to do that. Two years ago, it jumped to \$13,000, and now the state's asking \$21,000. To recoup that cost, she suggested starting to charge businesses a fee to such certification. As an example, she said the state bills the town \$54 for two gas pumps.

"Now it's becoming a significant amount of money in the budget," she said. "... The business is making money off each extra gas pump or cash register."

Chair Jamie Goodwin

agreed, noting the fee would be "a relatively de minimis cost for the business," but asked for more specific figures of the cost for the coming year before postponing a decision until later.

(Many towns, including Southbridge, have part-time town staff do this job.)

The board also approved minor corrections to the fire chief's contract, which they'd approved at the previous meeting. Afterward, Chief John Grasso brought forth a new policy regarding training and uniforms for the recently recreated call fire department.

Back in 2017, he said, there were several people on the part-time roster "but I never saw them." The policy required attendance at calls and trainings because the state requires call firefighters to have the same training as full-timers, but it wasn't enforced and they left. The contract said they should have 200 hours of scheduled training, but call people

can't do that. They aren't regularly scheduled by definition, so he changed the hours "to make more sense."

"That was one of my big sticking points when speaking to the union about expanding the department," he said, noting he got their agreement to a new system of recordkeeping, certification and related oversight. That will be offered as a stipend "to any of the current employees."

For the rest of this fiscal year (while starting up the process), the stipend is \$5000; from then on, it'll be \$3,000 per year, paid quarterly.

The board also decided to stop depositing landfill fees into the Landfill Closure account after Grimm said the Health and Finance department determined closure will cost \$750,000 to \$1 million, and there's about \$950,000 in it now. As Mary

Blanchard noted, if costs rise, they could tap free cash for extra money. It has about seven years of capacity remaining and will take about three years to go through the permitting and capping process, Grimm said.

Grimm also noted this year's work on the Grand Trunk Trail will need an easement from National Grid, both to do it and to use the trail later. The company wants Sturbridge to pay for extra insurance, but Grimm said she believes state law exempts recreational use from such a requirement. Both Sturbridge and the company intend to check with their lawyers.

Coincidentally, National Grid is holding an outreach meeting at the library March 13 from 3-7 p.m. People can bring any questions they have. There's also a Grid-related public tree removal hearing for the

Podunk Road project at the Feb. 10 Planning Board meeting.

In other business, Grimm's seeking three people for the Disabilities Commission with disabilities of various types; state law also says such a board should have one non-disabled person, and one person with a disabled family member. This came up as part of her reference to the town's recent ADA access self-evaluation. She also said she's going to seek \$2 million from free cash to "get a jump" on buying electric vehicles to meet a state deadline.

The board appointed several people to a new 250th Anniversary Committee to plan events celebrating the nation's 250th year in 2026.

Gus Steeves can be reached at [gus.steeves2@gmail.com](mailto:gus.steeves2@gmail.com).

# Local firefighters graduate from Firefighting Academy

STOW — State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine and Massachusetts Firefighting Academy leadership have announced the graduation of 29 firefighters from the 50-day Career Recruit Firefighting Training Program.

"Massachusetts firefighters are on the frontlines protecting their communities every day, and today's graduates are needed now more than ever," said Davine. "The hundreds of hours of foundational training they've received will provide them with the physical, mental, and technical skills to perform their jobs effectively and safely."

"Massachusetts Firefighting Academy instructors draw on decades of experience in the fire service to train new recruits," said Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Deputy Director Dennis A. Ball. "Through consistent classroom instruction and practical exercises, today's graduates have developed the tools they'll need to work seamlessly with veteran firefighters in their home departments and in neighboring communities as mutual aid."

The graduating firefighters of Class #327 included Kyle

Gotham and Renee Patient of Charlton.

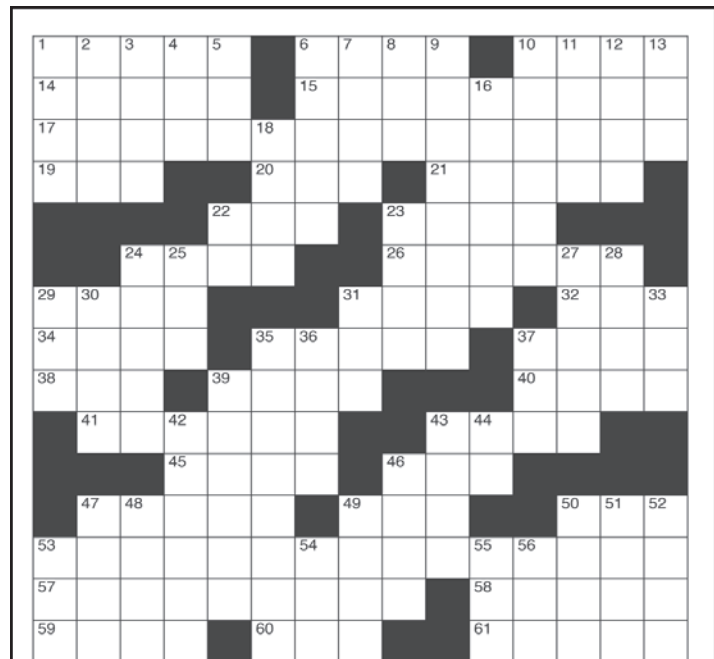
Students receive classroom training in all basic firefighter skills. They practice first under non-fire conditions and then during controlled fire conditions. To graduate, students must demonstrate proficiency in life safety, search and rescue, ladder operations, water supply, pump operation, and fire attack. Fire attack operations range from mailbox fires to multiple-floor or multiple-room structural fires. Upon successful completion of the Career Recruit Program, all students have met the national standards of NFPA 1001, Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications, and are certified to the levels of Firefighter I/II and Hazardous Materials First Responder Operations by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council, which is accredited by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications.

Modern firefighters train for and respond to all types of hazards and emergencies. They are the first ones called to respond to chemical and environmental emergencies, ranging from the suspected presence of carbon

monoxide to gas leaks to industrial chemical spills. They may be called to rescue a child who has fallen through the ice, an office worker stuck in an elevator, or a motorist trapped in a crashed vehicle. They test and maintain their equipment, including self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), hydrants, hoses, power tools, and apparatus.

At the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, recruits learn all these skills and more, including the latest science of fire behavior and suppression tactics, from certified fire instructors. They also receive training in public fire education, hazardous material incident mitigation, flammable liquids, stress management, and self-rescue techniques. The intensive, 10-week program involves classroom instruction, physical fitness training, firefighter skills training, and live firefighting practice.

The MFA provides recruit and in-service training for career, call, and volunteer firefighters at every level of experience, from recruit to chief officer, at campuses in Stow, Springfield, and Bridgewater.



### CLUES ACROSS

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

### CLUES DOWN

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



# Charlton Library seeks pajama drive donations

CHARLTON — The Charlton Public Library is collecting new pajamas for children and teens from Feb. 1 through

March 1 for the Annual Boston Bruins PJ Drive, and we need your help!

The Boston Bruins PJ Drive benefits the Won-

derfund of Massachusetts and Cradles to Crayons. The drive aims to collect 5,000 pairs of new pajamas. Many of the donated pajamas go to local Department of Children and Families (DCF) offices connected through the Wonderfund to benefit babies, children, and teens. Pajamas will also be given to the organization Cradles to Crayons, a longtime partner of the Bruins and the PJ Drive. Bruins forward P.J. Axelsson and his wife, Siw, started the PJ Drive during the Boston Bruins 2007-2008 season to give back to their community. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners works with the Boston Bruins to coordinate library participation in the Drive.

Donation boxes are available on the Adult and Children's levels of the Charlton Library. To view the Boston Bruins PJ Drive donation guidelines and more information about library hours, please visit the Charlton Library Web site at [www.charltonlibrary.org](http://www.charltonlibrary.org).

The Charlton Library is located at 40 Main St., Charlton.

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# QCC nursing students achieve high success rate on licensure exam

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

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

QCC alum Pamela Lara,

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

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

Chair of the Practical Nursing Program Margaret Yoder praised QCC’s faculty for their investment in the students.

She also noted that professors’ lived experiences and backgrounds can create an inclusive setting that enhances learning.

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

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

“These are highly motivated students who are actively seeking to improve their lives by entering this profession,” said

Chair of Nurse Education Patricia Creelman. “Additionally, the clinical agency partners who collaborate with the program provide comprehensive clinical learning opportunities for students at all levels of our educational program.”

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

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

Graduates who become LPNs can now work in

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

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

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

## PeoplesBank, Cornerstone Bank complete merger of holding companies

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

PeoplesBank and Cornerstone Bank have announced that they have completed the merger of their holding companies and will now operate under PeoplesBancorp, MHC, as of Jan. 31. The holding company will have over \$6 billion in assets. However, PeoplesBank and Cornerstone Bank will continue to operate independently under their own names and brands, and there will be no changes from a customer perspective. Both banks are adding new branches. Cornerstone Bank added a new branch in 2024 and expects to add another in the second quarter of 2025. PeoplesBank is opening two

new banking centers in February.

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

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

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

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

## SOUTHBRIDGE POLICE LOG

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of Jan. 27 to Feb. 3.

Angel D. Pitre, age 54, of Southbridge was arrested on Jan. 27 for Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of license (subsequent offense) and Domestic Assault and Battery.

A 40-year-old male from East Hartford, Conn. received a summons in lieu of arrest on Jan. 28 for driving at a rate of speed exceeding the posted limit and operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle.

Jonathan Concepcion, age 36, of Southbridge was arrested on Jan. 28 in connection with a warrant for operating a motor vehicle after suspension of license.

Darci Mae Baniukiewicz, age 41, of Southbridge was arrested on Jan. 29 for operating a motor vehicle after suspension of license.

A 55-year-old female from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on Feb. 1 for Operating Under the Influence (liquor; fourth or greater offense), a Marked Lanes Violation, and Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle.

Cristhian Carchi Tacuri, age 33, of Milford was arrested on Feb. 3 for Felony Nighttime Breaking & Entering into a Building.

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## Southbridge Lions Club hosting annual Cartoon Character Breakfast

SOUTHBRIDGE — Mark your calendars! The Southbridge Lions Club will host its Annual Cartoon Character Breakfast on Super Bowl Sunday, Feb. 9, at the Southbridge Community Center, 153 Chestnut St., from 7 a.m. to noon.

Bring the kids to meet their favorite cartoon characters while enjoying an all-you-can-eat breakfast featuring pancakes, French toast, and ham. Proceeds from the event will benefit the Lions’ Charity Account, supporting families, individuals, and groups in need within the community.

Ticket information:  
Adults: \$10  
Children (under 10): \$5  
Tickets can be purchased in

advance from any Southbridge Lions Club member or at the door. Payment options: Cash, credit, and debit cards accepted at the door. Don’t miss this fun-filled family event—see you there!



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# Charlton Public Library presents Chocolate & Charcuterie programs

CHARLTON — On Saturday, Feb. 8, from 11 a.m.-noon, join Alex from Therapy Gardens for “Chocolate 101: A Tasting and Talk.”

Did you know that eating chocolate releases endorphins that make you happy? Come try samples of craft and small batch chocolate totally unlike the industrial, mass-produced chocolate you’ve had before. Also learn

about the ingredients, processing, and where cocoa pods are grown from our own resident chocolate expert. We will also review the latest nutritional and health information. Registration is required by visiting our event calendar at [charltonlibrary.org](http://charltonlibrary.org)

On Tuesday, Feb. 11, from 6:30-7:30 p.m., join Cherise from Charcuterie by Cherise to learn all the tips and

tricks for creating personal sized Valentine charcuterie boards. This class is for adults and teens ages 13 and up. Class size is limited to 30 participants and requires a non-refundable copy of \$15. Participants will leave with their very own (nut-free) Charcuterie Board! Please visit the adult circulation desk to register and pay.

Charlton Public Library is located

at 40 Main St. in Charlton. Additional parking available across Main Street at Town Hall.

## Gateway Players launch 50th anniversary season with “Plaza Suite”

SOUTHBRIDGE — Gateway Players Theatre in Southbridge presents “Plaza Suite,” the first show of our 50th Anniversary Season.

This comedy is written by Neil Simon. Performance dates are Feb. 21, 22, 23 and March 1 at 7:30 p.m. and March 2 at 2 p.m. The performances are held at Fellowship Hall of Elm Street Congregational Church, 61 Elm St. in Southbridge. Entrance is on Park Street (around the corner). Directed by Mike Dupuis, Produced by Jeanne Dupuis. Presented by permission through special arrangement with Concord Theatricals. This program is supported by a grant from the Southbridge Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Tickets are \$18 for adults and \$15

for seniors and youth under 18. Tickets may be reserved by calling Gateway at 508-764-4531. Online credit card ticket sales are available at <https://www.ticketleap.events/tickets/gateway-players/plaza-suite-1845664734>.

The cast includes John Golden (Jesse Kiplinger), William Bolster (Waiter), Kevin McGee (Roy Hubley and Sam Nash), Hillary Robertson (Jean McCormick and Muriel Tate), Deborah Ostiguy (Karen Nash), Asher McCoy (Borden Eisler), Cynthia Claudio (Norma Hubley), and Chamira Santiago Flores (Bell Hop and Mimsie Hubley).

Hilarity abounds in this portrait of three couples successively occupying a suite at The Plaza. A suburban cou-

ple take the suite while their house is being painted and it turns out to be the one in which they honeymooned 23 (or was it 24?) years before and was yesterday the anniversary, or is it today? This wry tale of marriage in tatters is followed by the exploits of a Hollywood producer who, after three marriages, is looking for fresh fields. He calls a childhood sweetheart, now a suburban housewife, for a little sexual diversion. Over the years, she has idolized him from afar and is now more than the match he bargained for. The last couple is a mother and father fighting about the best way to get their daughter out of the bathroom and down to the ballroom where guests await her or as Mother yells, “I want you to come out of that bathroom and get married!”

## Troop 338 holding pancake breakfast

CHARLTON — Boy Scout Troop 338 of Charlton will hold its annual pancake breakfast Sunday, Feb. 9 from 9 a.m.-noon at St. Joseph’s Church, 10 H Putnam Rd. Ext.

While enjoying breakfast, be sure to take part in the

50/50 raffle. A live auction will also be held in person and online.

For more information, please e-mail [BSAtroop338charlton@gmail.com](mailto:BSAtroop338charlton@gmail.com).

## Endicott College announces local Dean's List students

BEVERLY — Endicott College, the first college in the U.S. to require internships of its students, is pleased to announce its Fall 2024 Dean's List students. In order to qualify for the Dean's List, a student must obtain a minimum grade point average of 3.5,

receive no letter grade below “C,” have no withdrawal grades, and be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits for the semester.

The following students have met these requirements:

Brimfield  
Nicholas Cameron, Biology/Biotechnology

Charlton  
Bailey Creeron, Political Science  
Emily Grammer, Marketing  
Jillian Tucker, Nursing

Sturbridge  
Taylor Winkler, Biology/Biotechnology

Endicott College offers doctorate, Master's, Bachelor's, and associate degree programs at its campus on the scenic coast of Beverly, with additional sites online and at U.S. and international locations. Endicott remains true to its founding principle of integrating professional and liberal arts education with internship opportunities across disciplines. Through the Endicott Experiential Edge, students gain unparalleled hands-on learning experiences that prepare them for career success and lifelong personal growth. For more, visit [endicott.edu](http://endicott.edu).

### REAL ESTATE

#### CHARLTON

\$725,000, 82 Pumpkin Ln, Jadin, Kevin L, and Jadin, Melissa A, to Flynn, Matthew.

\$580,000, 142 Brookfield Rd, Imtchell, Mark E, to Pascarelli, Jon.

#### HOLLAND

None

#### SOUTHBRIDGE

\$458,000, 637 Charlton St, Rodriguez, Chabely, to Hortolomei, Victor.

\$420,000, 673 N Woodstock Rd, Arrondo, Jorge, and Castillo, Isaura, to Crandall, Kristin.

#### STURBRIDGE

\$600,000, 175 Cedar St, Baker, Kyle D, and Baker, Geovanna, to Proulx, Steven.

\$390,000, 101 Shore Rd, Aylsworth, John, to Paul, Jeffrey, and Paul, Lailani.

\$390,000, 37 Ridge Way, Aylsworth, John, to Paul, Jeffrey, and Paul, Lailani.

## VILLAGER ALMANAC

### OPEN TO CLOSE

**SOUTHBRIDGE TOWN HALL**  
Monday-Wednesday:  
8 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Thursday: 8 a.m.-8 p.m.  
Friday: 8 a.m.-12 p.m.

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## CHURCH LISTINGS

• **Central Baptist Church**  
256 Main St., Southbridge, MA 01550  
Tel 508/764-6365; Worship 10:00 A.M.

• **Charlton Federated Church**, 64 Main St., 508-248-5550, Sunday worship 10:30 a.m. Summer worship is 9:30 a.m.

[www.charltonfedchurch.org](http://www.charltonfedchurch.org)

• **Charlton Baptist Church**, 50 Hammond Hill Road, 248-4488, [www.charltonbaptist.org](http://www.charltonbaptist.org), Sunday worship 10 a.m.

• **Charlton City United Methodist**, 74 Stafford St. 248-7379, web site: [CharltonCityUMC.org](http://CharltonCityUMC.org)

Sunday worship and Children's church 10am

• **St. Anne St. Patrick Church**, 16 Church St., Fiskdale (508) 347-7338

[www.stannestpatparish.com](http://www.stannestpatparish.com)

Saturday Vigil Mass at 4 pm, Sunday 8 am, 10 am, 12 noon, Youth Mass (September to May) 5 pm. Daily Mass Mon - Thurs 7:30 and 10 am, Fri and Sat 7:30 am

• **St. Joseph's Church**, 10 H. Putnam Ext, 248-7862, [www.stjosephscharlton.com](http://www.stjosephscharlton.com), Saturday Vigil Mass 4:30 p.m., Sunday Mass 8 a.m., Sunday Family Mass 10 a.m., Sunday Life/TEEN Mass 5 p.m., Weekday Mass Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 a.m.

• **Wayside Church**, 6 Haggerty Road, 248-5144

• **Assemblies of God Southern New England District Headquarters**, Route 20, 248-3771, [snedag.org](http://snedag.org), Office hours Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

• **Living Word Church of Charlton**, 10 Main Street - Grange building 1st Floor, Charlton, MA 01507, Pastor Craig Bellisario, (508) 233-8349

Sunday Service 10:00am. [www.livingwordcharlton.com](http://www.livingwordcharlton.com)

• **New Life Fellowship A/G, SNED Chapel**, 307 Sturbridge Road, Rt. 20, Charlton, MA, Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.

• **Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale** - 8 Maple St. Sturbridge, 774-304-1021

[www.sturfed.org](http://www.sturfed.org)

Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.

• **Bethlehem Lutheran Church** - 345 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566

Phone 508-347-7297

Web: [www.bethlehemsturbridge.org](http://www.bethlehemsturbridge.org)

Services - Sunday 9:00 am

Pastor Dan Purtell

• **Holland Congregation Church** “Where the Bible is preached.”

11 Sturbridge Road, Holland, 413-245-9926

[Hollandchurch.org](http://Hollandchurch.org)

Sunday Service @ 10:00 am

Pastor Dan Maketansky


• **Holy Trinity Episcopal Church** 446 Hamilton St., Southbridge, MA 01550

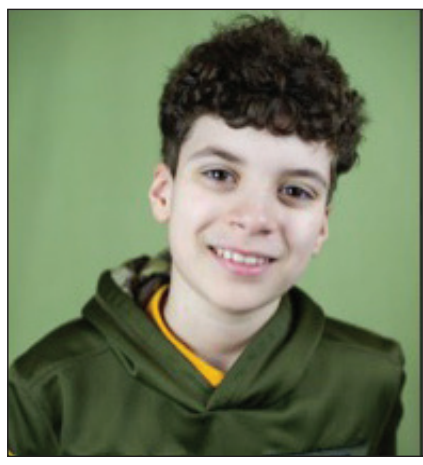
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The process to adopt a child from foster care includes training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you. These steps will help match you with a child or sibling group that your family will fit well with.

To learn more about adoption from foster care visit [www.mareinc.org](http://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.



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

BY KEVIN FLANDERS  
STAFF WRITER

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

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

Bill HD.4221, An Act

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

Specifically, the bill addresses a loophole in state public safety laws that arose from the 2017 Lunn v. Commonwealth ruling, officials said. This loophole prevents law enforcement officials from holding non-citizens with ICE detainees beyond certain timeframes, allowing these individuals to walk free after com-

mitting serious crimes, supporters of the bill said.

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

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

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

“With the Massachusetts SJC ruling almost eight years ago that the legislature should create guidelines, it is beyond time for us to enact laws that allow local and state agencies to detain those here illegally and charged with additional crimes,” said State Sen. Peter

Durant (R-Spencer). “These new laws will improve public safety by allowing time for ICE to remove people who are increasingly victimizing others, including children, while illegally in the United States.”

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

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

tect the safety of Massachusetts residents.”

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

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

Supporters of the bill encourage Massachusetts residents to request that their legislators advocate for the passage of the bill. Residents can find their legislators’ contact information by visiting [www.MALegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator](http://www.MALegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator).

## Springfield College recognizes Dean's List students

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

Springfield College has named Andrew Sweet from Charlton to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Sweet has a primary major of Physical Education.

Springfield College has named Maya Belog from Sturbridge to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Belog has

a primary major of Psychology.

Springfield College has named Matthew Cooper from Sturbridge to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Cooper has a primary major of Sports Biology.

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

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

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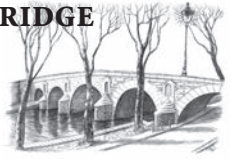
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**BRENDAN BERUBE**  
EDITOR

## Slow down— technology is stealing your time

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Letter submission policy

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

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

# OPINION

## Control yourself

Life doesn't always give us the outcomes we hope for. In those moments, it's easy to let your emotions take control. But as history shows us, cooler heads prevail. Let these stories

remind you of the power of keeping your composure, even in the most trying times.

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

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

POSITIVELY  
SPEAKING  
TOBY MOORE

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

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

But pride isn't the only emotion that can cloud judgment—despair can be just as destructive.

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

After Antony's forces were defeated at the Battle of Actium, he received false news that Cleopatra had died. Overcome with despair, Antony took

Turn To **POSITIVELY** page 13

## Annual Cold/Flu (& More) Guide

This time of year seasonal cold and flu outbreaks are common. In fact, up to one in five Americans are expected to experience the flu this season. While most recover within a week, some symptoms linger

on. With this in mind, this column's Annual Cold and Flu guide is offered — along with timely updates, additions, and natural and proactive methods you can employ to increase your odds of staying healthy this season.

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

\*\*

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

\*\*

Most common this time of year are colds and flu: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a cold is a milder respiratory ailment that has symptoms that last a few days; the flu can last weeks and re-



TAKE  
THE  
HINT  
KAREN  
TRAINOR

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

\*\*

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

\*\*

Flu Symptoms: Flu symptoms usually come on quicker than cold symptoms are typically more severe. They can include a sore throat, (sometimes hacking) cough, congestion, accompanied by headache, fatigue, chills and fever 102 to 104 degrees. Most symptoms improve in about five days, but fatigue can linger on for a week or more. The flu virus can be contagious from the day before the onset of the virus up to a week after.

\*\*

Turn To **HINT** page 13

## TO THE EDITOR

### It's been an incredible journey

To the Editor:

I write to you today with a deep sense of gratitude and reflection as I formally announce my decision not to seek re-election to the Charlton Select Board.

When I first ran six years ago, I made a promise not to seek more than two consecutive terms, and while I have many faults, I always try to keep my word. Serving on the Select Board has been a great honor, and over the years, we have worked together to achieve meaningful progress on fiscal conservatism and planning, economic development, open government, and community outreach. I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished as a community, but none of this would have been possible without the support, engagement, and trust of the residents I have had the privilege to represent.

While I will not be seeking another term, my commitment to the well-being and prosperity of our town remains unwavering. I look forward to the upcoming budget season and will serve diligently until May, ensuring a smooth transition to my successor and continuing to advocate for the issues that matter most to us. Said another way, while I may be stepping down, I am not stepping away. I eagerly await

being in the audience once again at Town Meeting voicing my opinions not as an official, but as a member of our communal legislative body.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to my Selectboard colleagues (past and present), Town Administrator Andrew Golas, Mary Devlin, Chelsea Belk, and all the town hall staff for their support and faith in me. Your voices, concerns, and aspirations have been my guiding force, and I am deeply appreciative of the opportunity you have provided me with. As we look to the future, I remain confident that Charlton will continue to thrive under new leadership and encourage everyone to stay engaged, participate in the democratic process, and continue working toward a brighter future.

Thank you once again for the trust and faith you have shown me. It has been an incredible journey, and I look forward to our collective next chapter. In closing, to echo President Kennedy's words, "So let us begin anew — remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof."

Regards,  
Bill Borowski  
Charlton

## Put your tax refund to work



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Most of us probably don't enjoy preparing our taxes, but there's often a reward at the end — a tax refund. If you get a refund this year, how can you make the best use of it?

Of course, the answer depends somewhat on the size of your refund. Last year, the average tax refund was \$3,050, according to the Internal Revenue Service.

Whatever the size of your refund, though, you'll want to maximize its benefit. Here are a few suggestions:

Contribute to your IRA. If you were to receive about \$3,000, it would go a long way toward funding your IRA for the year — but any amount would help. You still have until April 15, 2025, to contribute to your IRA for the 2024 tax year, but if you've already "maxed out" on it, you could use your refund for 2025. The annual contribution limit for a traditional and Roth IRA remains \$7,000, or \$8,000 if you're age 50 or older. And by getting an early start toward fully funding your IRA, you can reduce the pressure of having to come up with large amounts later in the year.

Build an emergency fund. Your tax refund could help you start or expand an emergency fund. It's a good idea to keep up to six months' worth of living expenses in such a fund, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account, separate from the funds you use for your daily expenses. You might need to draw on this fund for unexpected expenses, such as a major home or car repair or a medical bill that's not fully covered by your health insurance. Without such an emergency fund in place, you might be forced to dip into your IRA or other retirement accounts to pay for these types of costs, and such a move could be expensive, resulting in taxes, penalties and lost opportunities for growth.

Contribute to a 529 plan. If you have children or grandchildren and you'd like to help them further their education someday, you might consider investing in a 529 education savings plan. With a 529 plan, earnings and withdrawals are federally tax free, provided the money is used for qualified education expenses. Based on where you live, your 529 plan may provide state tax benefits, too. (It is possible, though, that 529 withdrawals could affect financial aid packages, depending on who owns the account.) A 529 plan can be used to help pay for college, accredited trade school programs, some K-12 expenses and even to help repay some student loans.

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

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

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

# Dahlia combinations for gardens and bouquets

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

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

Grow dahlias with flowers of different shapes and sizes to create more interesting arrangements. Dahlias offer many options and it's one of the reasons they are such a popular cut



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flower. Longfield Gardens provides help and inspiration in Types of Dahlias: 8 Great Looks.

You'll find the widest range of colors and styles with new varieties in the decorative dahlia group continually being released. Add a bit of elegance to the garden and bouquets with Mondriaan's soft pink petals tinged with pastel yellow, apricot, and lavender. Decorative dahlias make great cut flowers, and their sturdy stems make them easy to grow with other flowers in gardens and containers.

Add interesting texture



Courtesy — Longfield-Gardens.com

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

to your gardens and bouquets with anemone-flowered and collarette dahlias. The anemone-flowered dahlias have a cluster of tubular florets in the center surrounded by more

traditional petals. The two different lengths of petals in the collarette varieties add to their charm.

Enjoy an abundant harvest of cut flowers when growing ball and

pompon dahlias. These perfectly round flowers are packed with tightly rolled petals and are long-lived in arrangements. Their size makes them excellent additions to mixed bouquets helping to connect the various flowers for an impressive display.

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

Grow a few single dahlias for you and the pollinators to enjoy. The daisy-like flowers have a prominent center surrounded by a single row of petals. Their airy appearance complements a variety of late-season perennials in the garden and bouquets. Mix

in a few peony-flowered varieties for a showier display. These also have a prominent center but are surrounded by two or more layers of petals.

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

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

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

Take pictures of your favorite combinations and notes of what you want to try next year, and most importantly, enjoy the fantastic blooms. Fortunately, any flower combination is sure to brighten your day.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the recently released *Midwest Gardener's Handbook*, 2nd Edition and *Small Space Gardening*. She hosts *The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything"* DVD instant video series and the nationally syndicated *Melinda's Garden Moment TV* & radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine and was commissioned by Longfield Gardens for her expertise to write this article. Her Web site is [www.MelindaMyers.com](http://www.MelindaMyers.com).

## Auction news 375

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

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

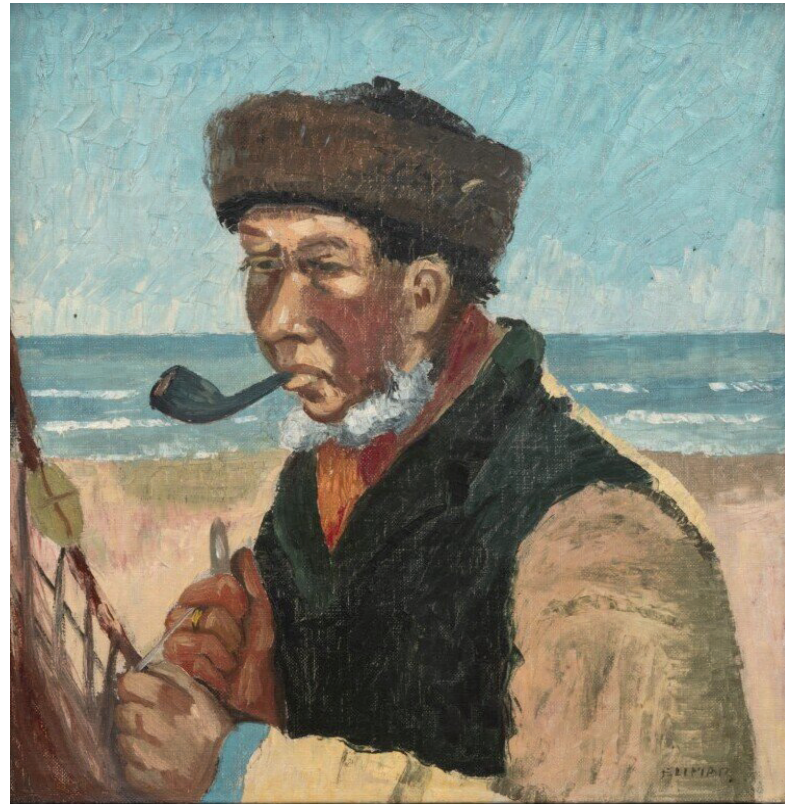
Late last year, another valuable Goodwill find was uncovered. Baseball cards were mass produced during the 1980s and 1990s, and most produced during that time have little value now. A collector, Beau Thompson, bought pallets of cards from his local Goodwill store in his



ANTIQUES,  
COLLECTIBLES  
& ESTATES  
.....  
WAYNE TUISKULA

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

There is debate as to whether a Minnesota garage sale purchase is an original work by Vincent Van Gogh or just worth the \$50 the buyer paid for it. After purchasing the painting, the buyer submitted information to the Van Gogh Museum asking them to verify the authenticity, according to ArtNet. The portrait of a man smoking a pipe with the sea in the background titled "Elimar" is said to be Van Gogh's version of a painting originally done by Michael Ancher. However, the Van Gogh Museum couldn't confirm that it was Van Gogh's work "based on stylistic features." The estate sale buyer sold the painting to a New York based science company called the LMI Group for an undisclosed figure. LMI



claims that their new analysis proves that it was painted by Van Gogh in 1889 while he was at the Saint-Paul asylum in the south of France. LMI's approach is described as one "which considers formal analysis, provenance, and historical context—with newer scientific methods." If real, it's estimated value is around \$15 million. The Van Gogh Museum remains unconvinced and stands by their original decision. It will now be up to potential buyers to make their own determination. Purchasing the painting will be like buying a very expensive scratch ticket.

Our single estate Civil War auction is expected to be over 1,000 lots as we continue to catalog. We are also working on a

sports cards, comic book and collectibles auction, a Beacon Hill online estate auction and are beginning to catalog a collection of Laurel and Hardy memorabilia this month. We are always accepting consignments of estate jewelry, sterling silver, art, coins, and other items in our top 10 list. Please visit our website <https://centralmassauctions.com> for links to upcoming events.

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

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# Creating teachable moments at Bay Path

CHARLTON — Nurse educators identify teachable moments in practice as an effective way to increase learning. Teachable moments are linked directly to optimal patient care. A positive learning culture both in didactic and clinical settings are key considerations at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy. Everyone plays a role, faculty, staff, students, nurse educators, and especially alumni.

Effective teaching is important in healthcare. The faculty and staff at Bay Path recognize the richness of clinical practice as a learning environment as well as the importance of development and creation of capacities for teaching.

The possibilities for identifying and creating teachable moments extend to former students and now alumni, Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs). Nursing roles at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, such as executive assistant to the Academy Director and Financial Aid Administrator (FAA) are held by alumni Donna Pope, LPN and Heidi Bedard, BSHS, AACJ, LPN, respectively.

Pictured above, from left, are Executive Assistant to the Academy Director Donna Pope, LPN, Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, Academy Director, and Ruth “DeeDee”



Betz, AS, LPN, of the PN Class of 2015 was the former Practical Nursing Secretary.

Pope, of Southbridge, is the first to hold the position of Executive Assistant to the Academy Director. Pope brings a wealth of experience and a proven record of success. Pope is from the PN Class of 2021 with a message of hope in the journey of becoming an LPN. She encouraged graduates to be alert to opportunities – something at which she has excelled. Pope was with the STDH Program at Center of Hope Foundation in Southbridge. She briefly worked as a Flu Clinic Nurse at Maxim Healthcare in Worcester. While a student at Bay Path, Pope was inducted to the National Technical Honor Society. She represented Bay Path Practical Nurs-

ing Academy at SkillsUSA District competition earning a Gold Medal and at State competition earning a Bronze Medal both for Health Knowledge Bowl. Pope is Mental Health First Aid Certified.

Bolandrina believes that engaging LPN graduates at the Academy drives substantial growth and significantly enhances the practical nursing operations. Globally, healthcare is faced with the challenge of educating the workforce of tomorrow while caring for the patients of today. Every nurse is an educator and learning opportunities abound. Embedding education and learning, teaching and alumni engagement is a winning combination at the Academy. Teachable moments or brief opportunities for learning align care delivery and education.

# Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy names SkillsUSA district competitors

CHARLTON — The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy named the 2025 SkillsUSA district competitors for First Aid/CPR, Loise Ngigi of South Grafton, and Grant Peterson of Millbury and for Medical Terminology Natasha Rovon of Worcester and Ashley Rincon of Southbridge.

Dr. Adelina Healy, adjunct faculty at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy who served as the Team Lead for the Volunteer judges in the skills competition for secondary students is delighted. Dr. Healy was the team lead for the past four years. She wishes the practical nursing competitors the absolute best.

Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy Director Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN,



CRRN, stated, “I am excited for our 2025 district competitors! My own mother highly supported healthy competition and emphasized winning builds confidence and not winning builds character. The SkillsUSA experience is beneficial for

both the student competitors and faculty.”

SkillsUSA’s mission is geared to empower members to become world-class workers, leaders, and responsible American citizens and serves as the blueprint for workplace readiness.

# Area residents named to dean's list at Quinnipiac University

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

- Brimfield  
Jordan Smit
- Charlton  
Ashley Wojcicki
- Sturbridge  
Jodie Terry
- Wales  
Tristan Hughes

To qualify for the dean's list, students must earn a grade point average of at least 3.5 with no grade lower than C.

Full-time students must complete at least 14 credits in a semester; with at least 12 credits that have been graded on a letter grade basis to be eligible. Part-time students must complete at least six credits during a semester. Names followed by an asterisk denotes with honors.

Quinnipiac is a private, coeducational, institution located 90 minutes north of New York City and two hours from Boston. The university enrolls 9,400 students in 110 degree programs through its Schools of Business, Communications, Education, Computing and Engineering,

Health Sciences, Law, Medicine, Nursing and the College of Arts and Sciences. Quinnipiac is recognized by U.S. News & World Report's "The Best 388 Colleges." The university is in the midst of program expansion and renewal for both traditional and adult learners, attraction of diverse communities, development of innovative corporate partnerships and construction of an ambitious set of capital projects. For more information, please visit qu.edu. Connect with Quinnipiac on Facebook and follow Quinnipiac on X @QuinnipiacU.

# Ian McGrath of Fiskdale named to dean's list

CHARLESTON, S.C. — Ian McGrath of Fiskdale is among the more than 1,300 cadets and students recognized for their academic achievements during the fall 2024 semester.

The dean's list is a recognition given to cadets and students who are registered for 12 or more semester hours and whose grade point average is 3.20 or higher, with no grade of I (Incomplete) and no grade below C for work in a semester.

Cadets who are named to the dean's list receive a medal, which is worn on their uniform during the semester following their academic achievement. Non-cadet students on the dean's list are presented a certificate.

Academics at The Citadel are divided between five schools: the Tommy and Victoria Baker School of Business, the School of Engineering, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, the Swain Family School of Science and Mathematics and the Zucker Family School of Education.

About The Citadel

The Citadel, with its iconic campus located in Charleston, South Carolina, offers a classic military college education for young men and women focused on leadership excellence and academic distinction. The approximately 2,300 members of the South Carolina Corps of Cadets are not required to serve in the military, but about one-third of each class earn commissions to become officers in every branch of U.S. military service. Citadel alumni have served the nation, their states and their communities as principled leaders since 1842. The Citadel Graduate College offers dozens of graduate degree, graduate certificate and evening undergraduate programs in the evening or online. The Citadel has been named the Best Regional University in the South, the Best Public University in the South by U.S. News & World Report for 14 years and No. 1 Best Public College for Veterans in the South for seven years.

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# OBITUARIES

## Maryann Cunniff

Maryann Cunniff, of Sturbridge, MA, passed away on January 29, 2025 after a brief illness. She was surrounded by her family.

Maryann was born on February 28, 1943 in Taunton, MA, to Janet Shea Griswold (Reese) and Edward Griswold. She grew up in Taunton and attended local schools, and after graduating she completed a certificate course at Miss Farmer's School of Cookery in Boston, MA.

In June of 1964, she married James Cunniff, her high school sweetheart. Together they moved to Keene, NH, where their daughter Catherine was born, and later in 1972 to Sturbridge, MA, where their daughter Elissa was born. Maryann and James continued to live together in the same home in Sturbridge until her death.

Maryann was a caregiver, with true generosity of spirit. She cared for everyone in her life in as many ways as she could think of: her parents, her husband, her extended family, and especially her daughters, who were her pride and joy. She cared for her home and her garden, pouring her creativity and love into making them beautiful, serene spaces for herself and her family.

Her professional work also focused on caregiving. In her younger days she worked as a cook, and later she became a home health aide and care-



giver for the elderly. She cared deeply for her clients and formed close bonds with them.

After retirement, her caregiver instincts continued to drive her, always helping the people in her life. Her family had grown to include grandchildren, who she loved to do crafts and cooking projects with. Her generosity extended to everyone she met, often sharing homemade gifts with people who had touched her life.

Maryann loved dancing, taking weekly lessons for 26 years as an adult. She also loved classic musicals from Broadway and Hollywood, and relaxing by immersing herself in her favorite television shows.

Maryann is survived by her husband James, her daughters Catherine and Elissa, her grandchildren Robert and Ava, her sister Nancy Flynn, and many nieces and nephews.

Visitation hours will be held Friday, February 7th, 2025 from 9:30-10:45 am at Sansoucy Funeral Home in Southbridge, MA, followed by a funeral mass at Notre Dame Church in Southbridge. Interment will follow at St Anne's Cemetery in Sturbridge, MA. Colorful attire is requested for the celebration of Maryann's life. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Community Food Collaborative of Sturbridge.

# Anna Maria College announces Dean's List

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

The following Massachusetts students achieved Dean's List:

Rafael Albino Auburn	Leominster	Becky Ramirez Webster
Ayva Borelli Auburn	Emily Crowther Linwood	
Nathan Cook Auburn	Lia Mucera Milford	Tyler Withers West Brookfield
Aleigha Martinsen Auburn	Angelina Botelho Fritze North Brookfield	James Donnelly Whitinsville
Paige Stewart Auburn	Evan Calderone North Grafton	Sehila Ryerson Worcester
Emily Goodwin Blackstone	Lauren Decoteau Northbridge	Tiffany Salazar Worcester
Donovan Turner Blackstone	Macy Hutchinson Oxford	Karisyua Suarez Worcester
Ivy Ballou Charlton	Erika Melendez Southbridge	Matthew Sullivan Worcester
Megan Burdett Charlton	Manuel Abraham Toribio Spencer	Justin Taylor Worcester
Jenna Johnson Charlton	Joseph Barbato Spencer	Patrick Tineo Ruiz Worcester
Chloe Lanier Charlton	Marissa Randall Spencer	Melannie Valdes Worcester
Sarah Happy Douglas	Patricia Rwandarugari Asiimwe Spencer	Seth Williams Worcester
Lucas Miglionico Dudley	Drew Gage Sterling	
Ethan McInerney Grafton	Jenelle Remy Sterling	About Anna Maria College
Megan Wajer Grafton	Brooke Macey Sturbridge	Founded in 1946 and located in Paxton, Mas- sachusetts, Anna Ma- ria College is a private, co-educational institu- tion inspired by the ide- als of the Sisters of Saint Anne. We prepare our students to become eth- ical leaders by combin- ing a values-based, ser- vice-focused education with strong functional knowledge and the skills necessary to address the rapidly changing needs of their world. Anna Ma- ria delivers undergradu- ate and graduate degrees along with certificate programs on campus and online. For more in- formation, visit www.an- namaria.edu.
Mae McGowan Leicester	Heather Monroe Sturbridge	
Sage Charpentier Leominster	Naomi Moura Sturbridge	
Tyler Godin Leominster	Thomas Vanasse Sturbridge	
Julianna Lavoie	Michael Mosher Templeton	
	Sophia Mone Uxbridge	
	Madison Tousignant Uxbridge	
	Kayla Berthiaume Webster	
	Kayla Brown Webster	
	Nyia Gonzalez Webster	
	Carly Impey Webster	

# Assumption students named to Dean's List

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

Kelsy Brown of Charlton, Class of 2028

Jianna Clouthier of Charlton, Class of 2028

Lillian Dolan of Charlton, Class of 2026

Aryana Santo of Charlton, Class of 2026

Haley Courtney of

Sturbridge, Class of 2027

Sara Flayhan of Sturbridge, Class of 2025

Kole St. Laurent, of Southbridge, Class of 2027

Assumption University, founded in 1904 by the Augustinians of the Assumption, is a premier New England University for high-quality education, integrating career preparation and education of the whole person, drawing upon the best in the rich and centuries-long tradition of Catholic higher education. Assumption's graduates are known for their intellectual seriousness, thoughtful citizenship, and

dedication to the common good. Located in Worcester, Assumption has undergone a series of major advancements since transitioning to a university, including new academic buildings, degree programs, and athletic facilities for our NCAA Division II student athlete population. The University offers 37 majors and 50 minors in the liberal arts, sciences, business, nursing, and professional studies, and other areas, as well as graduate degrees and professional credentials. For more information about Assumption University, please visit [www.assumption.edu](http://www.assumption.edu).

# LEGALS

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**Household & Misc, Items**

Unit No 643 Janine Ewings  
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**Household & Misc, Items**

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**Household & Misc, Items**

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## TOWN COUNCIL

### PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with the Votes Act of 2022 and effective as of June 2022, section 25B, the Southbridge Town Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, February 24, 2025, at 6:30 PM in the MacKinnon Council Chambers, upper level, Town Hall, 41 Elm St, Southbridge, MA.

The purpose of the public hearing is to consider the Votes Act of 2022, and effective as of June 2022, section 25B, the Southbridge Town Council will vote to opt out of Early Voting by mail for the annual Southbridge Town Election

to be held in June 2025.

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

John D. Jovan, Jr.  
Town Manager  
February 6, 2025

(SEAL)

## COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT Docket Number: 25 SM 000146 ORDER OF NOTICE

TO:

Fatoumata Kaba; Youssef Kaba  
And to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act: 50 U.S.C. c. 50 § 3901 (et seq):  
New American Funding, LLC f/k/a Broker Solutions, Inc. d/b/a New American Funding  
claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Southbridge, numbered 46 Tillyer Avenue, given by Youssef Kaba and Fatoumata Kaba to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Mortgagee, as nominee for Broker Solutions, Inc., dba New American Funding, dated October

28, 2022, recorded at Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 68420, Page 161, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before March 10, 2025 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the grounds of noncompliance with the Act.

Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of said Court on January 24, 2025.

Attest:  
Deborah J. Patterson  
Recorder  
February 6, 2025

# Worcester Polytechnic Institute announces Dean's List

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

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

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

David Cranney of Charlton, class of 2028, majoring in Actuarial Mathematics

Kenerson Cronin of Charlton, class of 2027, majoring in Robotics Engineering

Connor Daniel of Charlton, class of 2027, majoring in Computer Science

Aidan Dugan of Charlton, class of 2027, majoring in Civil Engineering

Arlo Dzik of Charlton, class of 2028, majoring in Data Science

Adam Faucher of Charlton, class of 2027, majoring in Society, Technology and Policy

Joshua Martin of Southbridge, class of 2026, majoring in Civil Engineering

Jeremy Peters of Southbridge, class of 2025, majoring in Mechanical Engineering

Neo Phommachanh of Southbridge, class of 2028, majoring in Aerospace Engineering

Ethan Shanbaum of Southbridge, class of 2026, majoring in Computer Science and Data Science

About Worcester Polytechnic Institute  
WPI is a top-tier STEM-focused research university and a recognized pioneer and global leader

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



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### Math Blocks

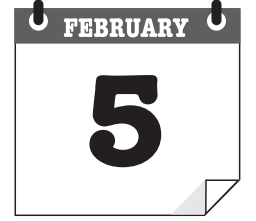
Fill in the missing blocks with numbers between 0-20.  
The numbers in each row add up to the totals on the right.  
The numbers in each column add up to the totals on the bottom.

14			23
1		5	15
	12	2	22
23	24	13	

2	12	8
5	6	1
6	3	14

Solution

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY



**62:** An earthquake strikes in Pompeii, Italy.

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

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

### Animal FACT:



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

Answer: Bird feeding

### Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.

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

Answer: Nibbles on seeds

### NEW WORD

#### FLEDGLING

a young bird that is learning to fly

### How they say that in...

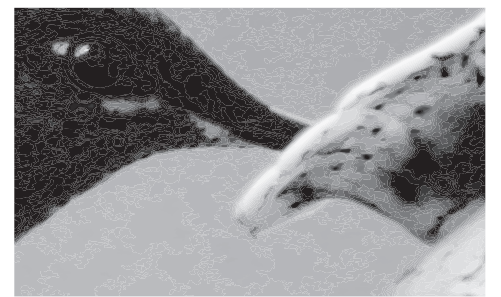
- English:** Seed
- Spanish:** Semilla
- Italian:** Seme
- French:** Graine
- German:** Samen

### Did You Know?

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



### Get the PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Hummingbird

⊙ \*\* ☒ ☺ ☘ ~ ⓪ ☙ ✧ \* ☼ ✕ ✖ ✚ ✛ ✜ ✝ ✞ ✟ ✠ ✡ ✢ ✣ ✤ ✥ ✦ ✧ ✨ ✩ ✪ ✫ ✬ ✭ ✮ ✯ ✰ ✱ ✲ ✳ ✴ ✵ ✶ ✷ ✸ ✹ ✺ ✻ ✼ ✽ ✾ ✿ Ⓜ Ⓝ Ⓞ Ⓟ Ⓠ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ

### CRYPTO FUN

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

**A. 7 19 6 20 26 20 25 5 5**

Clue: Not being able to see

**B. 25 3 25 5**

Clue: Enable sight

**C. 16 6 5 6 2 20**

Clue: State of being able to see

**D. 4 19 8 5 5 25 5**

Clue: Help with sight

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

### SUDOKU

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

Level: Advanced

#### Here's How It Works:

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

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

ANSWER:

# Seniors named to Bay Path honor roll

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical School congratulates the following grade 12 students on being named to the honor roll for the first quarter of the 2024-2025 school year:

## High Honors

Kaelen James Anderson, Minos Anifantis, Yheraldine Mercedes Baez, Claire Elizabeth Beaudreau, Amberlyn Avon Brindle, Jameson Patrick Burke, Joshua Michael Chumsae, Catherine Anne Comeau, Mikayla Lynn Crocker, Philippe Mote Santiago Dasilva, Madison Rose Dolan, Jaden James Fall, Keegan Gary Pike Hall, Valerie Ana Hilner, McKayla Rae Hoel, Ave Lillie Iozzo, Kayah Jadczak, Samantha Marlene Landgren, Nathan William Lashua, Logan Charles Letourneau, Eva Noel Lombardi, James Danlan MacConnell, Lillian Virginia Maglich, Joseph Charles Mancini, Ayla Milagros McGrail, Emma Grace McLaughlin, Calle Jean Merchant, Jacob John Joseph Morello, Julian Ryan Mucci, Ashlyn Joy Olejniczak, Maya Selena Ortiz, Alaina Maria Pafume, Dominic Antonio Paldino, Bruna Fagundes Freitas Paula, Willis James Perreault, Dylan Michael Polinski, Eva Amara Powers, Melany Rose Rebeiro, Kaylie Anna Richard, Lilianna Cassandra Rockwood, Savannah Rose Steiner, Cassandra Alyson Tinsley, Manaali Durgesh Vaidya, Vincent William Van Dam, Amelia Claire White

## Honors

Kortnie Frances Adams, Nicholas Raymond Adler, Rima Ahmed Qays Al-Dulamimi, Werique Gabriel Da Silva Alves, Connor Michael Belanger, Jessica Claire Benoit, Cherise Elaine Berthiaume, Joshua William Ricardo Blackwell, Briea Annmarie Bogar, Kendall Lynn Bond, Lake Sayge Boucher, Camden Christian Bousquet, Kaiden Conner Brochu, Kendra Nicole Brooks, Jason Robert Brum, Brea Adriane

Brunelle-Jacoby, Gianna Mary Burbank, Adrianna Marie Burdick, Julia Loralie Burgos, Alivia Tiara Marie Cannon, Aidan Patrick Carpenter, Robert Edward Casati, Matthew Robert Chatterton, Nathan Richmond Clemence, Makayla Therese Collazo, Olivia Rose Collins, Noah Jonathon Cournoyer, Isabelle Ann Crump, Mariah Lynne Cutroni, Adison Lenna Daoust, Ryan Charles Dawson, Jenna Marie Defosse, Angelina Sophia Degon, Jasai Manuel Diaz, Rori Jean Rockwell Donohoe, Carly James Donohue, Jared Peter Dubovick, Braelyn Elizabeth Dunn, Emma Faith Marie Dwyer, Logan Shawn Edwards, Ari Joseph Erkoc, Kayla Marie Evans, Sophia Anna Falconer, Claire Patricia Farrar, Midrose Davilena Freeman, Conor Fergal Gadbois, Erin Elizabeth Gallant, Corey Michael Gaulin, Hailee Lynne Gelinas, Reyna Dianelys Gonzalez, John Waring Gordon, Noah Zachary Goulet, Alicia Marie Graveson, Devan Ryan Grensavitch, Matthew David Guerin, Lexie Rose Harris, Savannah Lee Harrison, Charlotte Elizabeth Hast, Joshua Drew Hemingway, Bryce James Hutchinson, Molly Ruth Isaacs, Elena Gabriela Jerrez, Jacob Matthew Johnson, Jacob Jaiden Jurado, Dylan Edward Kasprzycki, Shane Kempeskie, Emma Rose Knott, Austin Devin Kravitz, Samuel Keith Lamont, Katherine Ruth Landgren, Hayden Sivert Larson, Emma Olivia Leclair, Benjamin Ryan Lombardi, Miranda Rose Magalhaes, Brady Francis Marcoux, Corbin James Marcustre, Kyle Francis Mazur, Troy Clayton McCaffrey, Kailyn Elizabeth McHugh, Isabel Constance McLam, Jed Dean McManus, Paul Joseph McManus, Jersey Alecea Mejias, Ava Patricia Millette, Cheyene Elizabeth Monsen, Zachary Lee Moody, Blayke James Morse, Sullivan Joseph Brave Bear Morse, Elyce Chamberlyn Mort, Camron John Mortell, Robert Lawrence Mousseau, Ava Reese Murray, Yahir Jose Negron Claudio, Andy Manuel Nieves, Kaylieh Elizabeth Norris, Matthew

Christopher Nowak, Dale William Nussey, Morgan Elizabeth O'Malley, Julia Carolyn Osche, Dakota Mathew Ouellette, Jocelyn Amylia Patterson, Catherine Emily Pavone, Raegan Lydia Perreault, Naomi Rose Peterson, Brad Francis Guy Piekarczyk, Ryan Donald Plante, Gabriel Souza Prado, Nicholas Scott Reardon, Casey Abigail Renaud, Lexiana Marie Resto-Nichols, Luzmarie Jansel Rodriguez Cirino, Lizmarie Taiz Rodriguez-Soto, Joseph Anthony Roman, Jennalee Alexis Rousseau, Shairy Karielis Ruibal-Rios, John Cameron Rutter, Brayden Roland Ryan, Jeisery Santiago Martinez, Nash Brennan Sicari-Swinimer, Ed Simon, Raymond David St. Francis, Zaydyn John Streeter-Wornham, Zoeybeth Jane Streeter-Wornham, John Gustavo Sullivan, Kathryn Alayna Szretter, Aiden Le Tat, Madison Riley Teal, John Phillip Tighe, Hailie Calais Sampson Tod, Brady Logan Tremblay, Matthew Lee Twombly, Colin Job Vaillancourt, Kevin Yail Vazquez-Rivera, Angelica Vega, Nayelix Marie Vega, Adrian Joseph Vitkos, Alison Elyse Welton, Dayzyah Jahmay Wintzel Neely, Cayden James Young

## Principal's List

Anna Marie Aboe, Peter James Barbale, Noah Troy Brown, Teagan Daniel Carey, Johnathon Cameron Carter, Jason John Checka, Ryan Michael Christiano, Hunter Kevin Davis, Gabriella Ivy Dube, Ian Donald Farber, Anthony Alexander Gonzalez, Evan Paul Gunnard, Ella Jade Houle, Skylar Jeanette Johnson-Mello, Justin Daniel Kelly, Felix Jose Lopez, Evan Jason Lotti, Aiden Michael McCarthy, Isabella Sofia Pabon, Isabella Britni Pettinelli, Wojciech Alexander Plewa, Nevin Vega Rivera, Alyssa Marie Santos, Dominic Bradley Schoff, Benjamin Lucas Scobie, Aysel Silva Nieves, Mackenzie Marie Widen, Brady Charles Wisniewski

## Hint

continued from page 6

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

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

Emergency treatment should be sought for the following symptoms:

Inability to wake or stay awake; Lips, skin, and nail beds that appear pale, blue, or gray; New confusion; Persistent pain or pressure in the chest; Trouble breathing.

Free rapid COVID tests (four per household) are still available at COVIDtests.gov

\*\*

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

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

\*\*

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

\*\*

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

\*According to sev-

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

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

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

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

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

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

\*Giving colds a two-step punch with a double dose of ginger and lemon can relieve cold and flu symptoms. Adding ginger and lemon to a hot cup of tea not only soothes the throat, but ginger's antimicrobial properties and lemon's

vitamin C help fight the bug. To break up mucus, add a pinch of cayenne pepper to the hot tea.

\*It's true that chicken broth can offer cold and flu sufferers relief, but did you know it's the bone broth from the homemade brew that provides much of the healing power? Broth made from boiling bones (for about 12 hours for maximum benefit) offers magnesium, sulfur, phosphorus and other trace minerals that are easily absorbable not always readily available.

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

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

But it is only effective if it's started early, at the very first signs of illness.

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

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

\*Coughs and congestion is uncomfortable, but relief can be as close as your water bottle. Keep hydrated by drinking at least 64 ounces of water a day. Water is the best expectorant, and will help thin the mucus and loosen the cough.

\*\*

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

more.

\*\*

Win a Three Course Dinner for Two at the Publick House

Your tips can win you a great dinner for two at the historic Publick House Historic Inn in Sturbridge! Simply send in a hint to be entered into a random drawing. One winner per month (or whenever I receive enough tips for a column) will win a fabulous three course dinner for two at the renowned restaurant, located on Route 131 across the town common in historic Sturbridge. Because I'm in the business of dispensing tips, not inventing them (although I can take credit for some), I'm counting on you readers out there to share your best helpful hints!

\*\*

Do you have a helpful hint or handy tip that has worked for you? Do you have a question regarding household or garden matters? If so, why not share them with readers of Stonebridge Press newspapers? Send questions and/or hints to: Take the Hint!, C/o the Southbridge Evening News, PO Box 90; Southbridge, MA 01550. Or E-mail KDRR@aol.com. Hints are entered into a drawing for dinner for two at the historic Publick House Inn.

## Positively

continued from page 6

his own life. Cleopatra, stricken with grief and unwilling to be paraded as a trophy in Rome, ended her life soon after.

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

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

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

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

General George Armstrong Custer, who famously led the 7th Cavalry, was known for his boldness but also for his

tendency to overestimate his abilities.

In 1876, tasked with confronting a coalition of Sioux and Cheyenne warriors led by Sitting Bull, Custer dismissed advice to exercise caution. Underestimating the size and coordination of the Native forces, he divided his already small command and advanced with only 200 men. Outnumbered nearly 10 to 1, Custer and his men were overwhelmed at the Battle of the Little Bighorn, known as “Custer's Last Stand.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

Her story shows that unchecked emotions, no matter how justified, can erode even the strongest positions.

Tempered words and actions often yield far greater power than fiery outbursts.

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

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

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

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

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

**Scout**

continued from page 1

with the installation of a Kiosk and trail map. In total, there are four newly marked trails totaling 1.8 miles.

Scherer selected this project because “I really enjoy the outdoors and believe that the opportunity to get outside helps me develop a well-rounded character, makes me a strong athlete, and helps me when it’s time to focus on academics. My Eagle project required me to apply everything I’d learned in Scouting to create meaningful community impact, and was inspired by Mrs. Marcucci’s use and hopes for the trails system. The project involved GPS-mapping two miles of trails, build-

ing and installing signs and a kiosk, and creating a color-coded map. This experience taught me leadership, problem-solving, and perseverance. Becoming an Eagle Scout symbolizes dedication and a commitment to serving others.”

Scherer worked under the supervision of Mrs. Marcucci at the school, who also commented on Jonah’s project: “We applied for a grant last year that included a kiosk at the trail entrance, trail signs but unfortunately did not receive it. I was pleased when Jonah stepped up to take on this project.”

Because of his work, the Sturbridge Trail Committee will now include these trails on its web site and in the future an updated trail guide.

The trails are located at the rear of the Tanta-squa Regional Junior High school at 319 Brookfield Rd., and are open for public use during non-school operating hours. These trails are designed for mt bikers, so hikers should be cautious when using the trails. School property use rules apply.

Jonah is a member of Scouts BSA Troop 161 of Sturbridge sponsored by the Champeau-Vilandre American Legion Post 109. The troop meets on Sunday nights from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Sturbridge Federated Church. For more information on Troop 161, email Scoutmaster Kevin Scherer at kscherer27@aol.com or stop in during a troop meeting.

**Dementia**

continued from page 1

Massachusetts, itself an initiative of the Massachusetts Councils of Aging. As the name implies, their goal is to help provide more resources and support for both people with dementia and their caregivers and partners. Dementia is a term used to describe different brain disorders that cause a progressive decline in cognitive abilities.

Gina Metras, a member of the Dementia Friendly Charlton Committee, provided Selectmen with a brief but important update on Jan. 28 promoting the group’s mission to bring the community at large into their mission.

“We are striving to really create a dementia friendly community, get in with all of the different community sectors in Charlton, and provide information and referral services,” said Metras.

She revealed that over the summer they conducted a survey which helped provide a better understanding of the impact of dementia in their own community. Data was collected from 81 participants through online resources, a Charlton Public Library event, and at Old Home Day.

“Some of the key things that were takeaways from that is we had 55 percent of respondents with a close family member with dementia, and 95 percent had a close family member or relative with dementia. Those

were some pretty big numbers,” Metras said.

She further explained that the data shows a significant need in the community for resources and outreach. The survey helped narrow down some of the biggest needs that the community can help champion to make Charlton more dementia friendly.

“People are looking for socialization for the person with dementia, respite services for the caregiver, getting needed services at home is a big one because we want to keep people at home living full lives in the community, and finding information about available services,” Metras said.

The organization’s big goal for

2025 is to continue their efforts to bring different departments together for their cause. They are also planning to debut a memory cafe and work with local businesses, increasing awareness of support systems, and hosting information sessions throughout the year. Dementia Friendly Charlton is also planning to work with Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School to connect with their health technology students on different initiatives.

Dementia Friendly Charlton provides access to numerous resources on the Town of Charlton Web site. The group’s page can be found through the Council on Aging section.

**Junkyard**

continued from page 1

ty on that property without going through the proper channels for permits,” Gendreau said. “... The business was in town for 10 years with no permits. The only thing they did was come and get the license renewed.”

They were referring to an agreement discussed at some length at conservation’s Jan. 9 meeting, and the rest of this story comes from that hearing’s video. There, Curboy’s attorney, Jennifer Curzon, said the agreement covers an enforcement order from June 2023 that the owner took to court on the grounds it was “arbitrary and capricious, and therefore unenforceable.” The majority of the agreement focused on filing a new notice of intent (NOI; the hearing for which was beginning at that meeting).

Engineer Gary Magnusson described the NOI as “unusual, because we’re not asking for anything,” since it already includes the settlement agreement’s conditions. He said the property began as a junkyard before wetlands laws existed, and the owner now has to remove cars from the 50-foot buffer zone as part of the agreement before resuming business. He said he’d need to work with Conservation Agent Lauren Vivier on “some logistical issues” to do that and delineate the buffer zone for the future.

ConCom Chair Ed Goodwin said he’d like to see “a proper assessment of that property” that includes marking the stream and other wetlands, looking at

groundwater and effect on wells, cleaning the property “to a non-detectable level,” and getting an independent review of the wetland delineations. He also noted he wants the ConCom to inspect the site annually.

Member Eric Gaspar later agreed, but noted doing the latter wouldn’t be valid now because the ground’s frozen and we’re still in a drought.

Curzon said those “should have been in the settlement agreement.”

That sparked some dispute over whether ConCom had seen it, with Vivier noting they’d reviewed it “word by word” in their previous executive session. She said ConCom could include inspection as a condition and it can be part of Curboy’s Class 2 and 3 license renewals.

There was also some dispute over whether the property has been cleaned. Ed Goodwin and several residents said they didn’t feel it had been, but Magnusson said it’s “currently in full compliance with Mass DEP regulations” with a “temporary solution” in effect and undergoing all required testing. He said they were testing the water in 28 homes for MTBE at first, and 13 now, with “only a couple of them that have problems that still require operation of a treatment system.”

Later, he clarified that DEP’s drinking water standard for MTBE is 70 parts per billion. None of the homes hit that level, but some did get to around 35 ppb and are now at about 15, he said.

Owner Sergey Privedenyuk said he’s spent “hundreds of thousands of dollars” on cleanup so far and has sent “hundreds of trucks” of contaminated materials off the property.

“We’ve been doing a good job, ... and every year it’s getting better and better,” he said. “... We’re working on it, improving it, and we’ll continue.”

One of the issues that remain to be resolved is whether Privedenyuk will be allowed to move the 50-100 cars ConCom wants removed from the buffer zone to an area atop the hill, which is where an old airport strip used to be. That’s the area Gendreau, Vivier and some neighbors argue has not been used for years, would violate zoning as an “expanded use,” and might enable contaminants to flow downhill to South Road and the Southbridge watershed.

Magnusson, however, said that section is not near wetlands and “not part of the settlement agreement.” (The agreement specifically covers 71 Mashapaug, but at least one neighboring parcel was also part of the old junkyard.)

Regarding the potential zoning violation, he added, “If what Lauren said is true ... that changes things, because that’s part of [Privedenyuk’s] operational facility.” Privedenyuk intended to move those cars there because cars were stored there years ago, and its contamination has been cleaned, he said.

Vivier said the limitation was accepted by the previous owner, so adding another vehicle crusher, “changing the use, the impact, or the intensity of the existing conditions” would violate the agreement.

One resident said the last owner let many cars sit “in the yard for zillions of years,” so

they decayed and “that’s why the pollution existed.” He said he’s concerned about seeing a repeat of past issues.

Others cited similar concerns, including one who said he saw the previous owner clearing a swath of land in violation of the law years ago.

Nobody named the previous owner. Privedenyuk has owned “Curboy Auto Inc” since it was legally established in Nov 2013, according to the Secretary of State’s Corporate Database. He’s the only company officer listed and owns a few other businesses based in Springfield, one of them a junkyard.

ConCom’s hearing was continued to April 24 on Vivier’s request for time to review the large volume of DEP and other documents the board was requesting.

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

**Villar**

continued from page 1

changes that have happened. While many agreed things are not perfect and much work remains to do, they noted things have improved, especially in the area of student behavior.

“We’re good,” teacher Esther Vargas said. “We don’t need you to do anything but allow Dr Villar to continue his work because that’s the leadership we trust.”

Additionally, Southbridge Educational Association co-chair Kate Stoica proposed the council help “focus on revising the turnaround plan” to include a few things the union feels would help fix things faster. Those include giving more educator input into how to reduce teacher turnover; devising clear “benchmarks” for return of district control, and helping build school councils that include “all stakeholders” as required under MGL Chap 71, Sec 59C.

Union member Jacob Bond urged the council to “table the vote indefinitely.” To him, Villar has “respected our demands and tried to reach a compromise with us,” creating policies that “work well” and has been willing to “work together to strengthen the systems and structures in our school that would allow us to retain local control.”

As read by Councilor Mike Montigny, the letter argues that Southbridge has seen “years of frustration, lack of measurable progress, and increasing discontent” with

receivership. It alleges Villar has shown “no leadership in supporting a transition plan” and is “perpetuating a system of stagnation and mistrust.” It cites issues including low MCAS scores, “bloated administration budgets,” and the lack of a hard copy of Villar’s contract in town as reasons the state should “terminate” Villar and appoint “a leader who will collaborate with town officials, support the School Committee and prioritize the success of our students and community.”

To contradict that, School Committee Chair Andrew Murch said the current plan has been “building a positive working relationship and understanding” between his committee and the receiver and is “the pathway out of receivership.” Even though he admitted he does not like Villar, Murch said he has been able to communicate with Villar “on a daily basis,” as have many of his board members.

He said they’ve been told they could “potentially be out of receivership by the end of this fiscal year.” A no confidence vote should reflect both boards, but his is now opposed to one. Having the Council do this alone “is only going to hinder us,” he added.

“We need to allow the process to work,” he said. “There is progress.”

To Councilor Steve Kelly, “the community can’t move forward as long as we’re in receivership.” As in previous meetings, he said he dislikes the fact there’s no clear “drop-dead

date” by which Southbridge will get the district back. He said he’d support the vote (and did so), but also observed the letter would be for Villar himself, “not the process that was adopted back in June.”

Councilor Jasmin Rivas described the letter as “counter-intuitive and frankly political in nature.” She argued that Villar’s recent apology to the School Committee “speaks to the leadership on the School Committee” to build trust, and this vote won’t do anything to accelerate the end of receivership.

She noted the town should still advocate against the receivership law.

Mike Murray agreed, calling it “a nothingburger,” but warned it could have consequences. The last time the Council took a no confidence vote was against the School Committee in 2015, which “opened the door to receivership,” he said.

To Chair Scott Lazo, “This blueprint’s going forward with or without Mr. Villar,” and he’d rather see DESE advisor Juan Rodriguez in that role.

“I know what a superintendent looks like, and that’s not one that’s ready to transition,” he said shortly before calling for the vote. Regarding the apology, he claimed it wasn’t real. “Mr. Villar has been ordered by the state to change or else, and this [vote] is the ‘or else.’”

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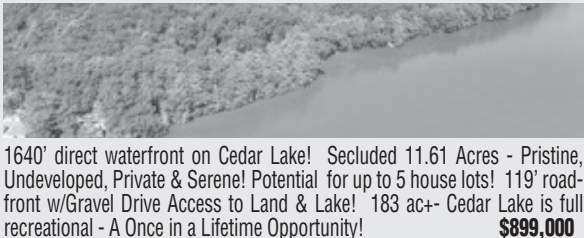
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# Bay Path Nursing students celebrate 100 days of school

CHARLTON — “Thank you for celebrating 100 days in nursing school!” shared Getheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, Academy Director to the PN Class of 2025.

The Nursing Students who are members of Team Fairlawn were on campus with Professor Angela McGrath and celebrated the 100th day of nursing school in their own unique way.

To commemorate the event, Professor McGrath brought healthy snacks, distributed flowers, and all posed with a 100th day sign.

“Celebrating the 100th day is celebrating the learning and growing and incorporating some fun,” said Bolandrina. “Nursing school is busy, life is busy, but our nursing students enjoy the build up to this day, and it is amazing to see their progress over the preceding months.”



Courtesy

Photo shows members of Team Fairlawn from left front row Giselle Rosario of Southbridge, Flory Muleka of Worcester, Katelyn Smith of Charlton, and Donita Bytyqi of Rutland. Standing from left, Nadeige Octavius of Millbury, Ferdinand Lukadi of Framingham, Anakesha Gray of Worcester, Ashley Rincon of Southbridge, and Professor McGrath.


Originally, the academic premise behind the 100th day is to integrate learning to count with fun activities that encour-

age young children to explore their environment while applying what they’ve learned in the classroom. This is the first

time that the Practical Nursing Academy celebrated the 100th day with the adult learners.

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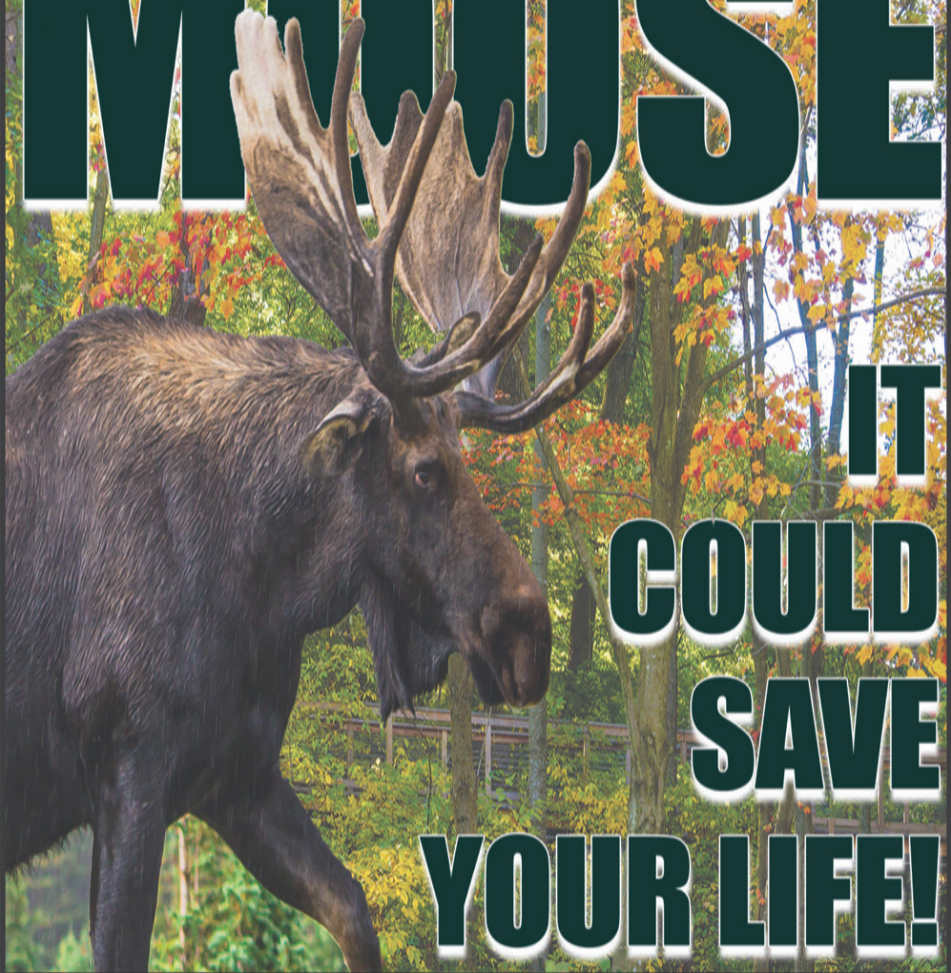
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