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Thursday-Friday, October 29-30, 2026

Rotary Club of Sturbridge announces top TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K finishers

Courtesy Photo

Race director Rotarian Klaus Hachfeld with top male finishers in the 5K Trail Race: second-place finisher Trey Doane, 13, of North Brookfield (19:53.8); and third-place finisher Isaac Lakhani, 14, of Fiskdale (20:19.5). Not shown is first-place finisher Craig Fitzgerald, 33, of Sturbridge (17:59.7).

Courtesy Photo

Race director Rotarian Klaus Hachfeld with top female finishers in the 5K Trail Race: third-place finisher Elise Servant, 12, of Brookfield (21:33.2). second-place finisher Lisa Bienia Kenton, 43, of Sturbridge (21:13.3); and were first-place finisher Anabel Melanson, 22, of Warren (20:49.6).

STURBRIDGE — Craig Fitzgerald of Sturbridge and Anabel Melanson of Warren were the top male and female finishers in the sixth annual TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K, held Sunday, October 25, 2026, according to race director Klaus Hachfeld. Participants completing the 5K ranged in age from six to 79.

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Sturbridge, the family-friendly event included a 5K Trail Race, a 1K Road Race and a 5K Trail Fun Walk using the Old Sturbridge Village Education Center on Old Sturbridge Village Road and the Arbutus Park Trail in the Leadmine Mountain Conservation Lands. Student members of the Tantasqua Regional High School Interact Club helped with event setup and organized free games for younger children.

"Seeing participants from age six to 79 complete the 5K captures the community spirit behind this event," Hachfeld said. "We're grateful to the runners, walkers, volunteers and sponsors whose support helps us provide local student scholarships and respond to community needs."

The 5K results were timed and tabulated by Race Roster.

Top male finishers in the 5K Trail Race were first-place finisher Craig Fitzgerald, 33, of Sturbridge (17:59.7); second-place finisher Trey Doane, 13, of North Brookfield (19:53.8); and third-place finisher Isaac Lakhani, 14, of Fiskdale (20:19.5).

Top female finishers were first-place finisher Anabel

Turn To **HALLOWEEN 5K** *page* **A10**

Center of Hope Foundation to host Fall Craft Fair, Sundaes with Santa Nov. 7

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Center of Hope Foundation will welcome the holiday shopping season with two community events Saturday, Nov. 7, offering residents an opportunity to support local artisans, enjoy family activities and celebrate the approaching holidays.

The foundation's annual Indoor Fall Craft Fair will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Center of Hope Foundation Day Habilitation facility, 1 North St. in Southbridge. The event will feature more than 40 local artists and crafters displaying a variety of handmade merchandise.

Shoppers will find an assortment of unique gifts and seasonal items, including handcrafted jewelry, autumn and holiday decorations, pottery, hand-poured candles, knitwear and original artwork.

The fair offers an opportunity for residents to get an early start on their holiday shopping while supporting local artists and small businesses. With more than 40 vendors participating, visitors can browse a wide selection of handcrafted products under one roof.

Admission to the craft fair is free, although donations to the Food Bank will be gratefully accepted.

Visitors should park at 1 North St. and follow signs for "Just the Details" to the rear of the building. The entrance to the fair will be through the doors marked with the Day Habilitation banner.

In conjunction with the craft fair, the foundation will also present "Sundaes with Santa" at Scoops of Hope, 54 Foster St. in Southbridge, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The family-friendly event will offer children an opportunity to visit with Santa Claus and have their pictures taken, providing families with a chance to capture a holiday memory or take a photograph for their Christmas cards.

Visitors can also enjoy lunch and homemade ice cream sundaes at Scoops of Hope, along with festive take-home crafts for children.

The two events are being held at nearby locations, making it convenient for families to combine an afternoon of holiday shopping with seasonal activities and refreshments.

The Center of Hope Foundation encourages area residents to attend both events, whether searching for handmade gifts, spending time with family or getting an early start on holiday celebrations.

Both activities are scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 7, with the craft fair running from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 1 North St. and Sundaes with Santa taking place from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 54 Foster St.

For additional information about either event, visit Scoops of Hope or the Center of Hope Foundation's website at www.thecenterofhope.org.

Library lecture to spotlight "Remarkable Women of the American Renaissance"

STURBRIDGE — The Joshua Hyde Library in Sturbridge will present the final autumn illustrated lecture on "Remarkable Women of the American Renaissance" on Wednesday, Nov. 4 at 2 p.m. in the Library Meeting room.

Lecturer Ellen Duzak will focus on two amazing women who lived at different times in the Old Manse in Concord. Mary Moody Emerson and Sarah Alden Bradford Ripley each had a powerful influence on the Transcendental philosophy of Ralph Waldo Emerson and the education and inspiration for a generation of women and men. The lecture is free and open to the public. Registration is required.

This illustrated lecture concludes a four-part series which provides a detailed picture of women who made great contributions to the American Renaissance of the 1800's. The series is supported in part by a grant from the Sturbridge Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. The project shines a light on the little-known stories of inspiring women of the American Renaissance. This was a time when the unique voice of America developed and, with it, our national culture, ethics, literature, and philosophy. Transcendentalism, the rights of women, the anti-slavery movement, the desire for education and enlightenment for all citizens pulsed strongest in New England, especially in nearby Concord. The men at the forefront of this time are well-known to all. Less familiar, but equally important are the remarkable women whose voices and lives the lectures explore.

Duzak is a retired Professor of Psychology at Becker College, where she taught for 20 years. Once retired, Ms. Duzak taught a wide variety of courses for the Worcester Institute for Senior Education (WISE) at Assumption University for 10 years. In recent years, she has given talks at local libraries and other organizations.

Troop 163's Lydia Metcalf earns Eagle Scout rank

CHARLTON — Lydia Metcalf of Charlton, a member of Scouting America Troop 163 of Sturbridge, has earned the rank of Eagle Scout. She passed her board of review on Sept. 25. She is the tenth member of the troop to become an Eagle Scout since the troop's founding in 2019.

For her Eagle project, Metcalf led the upgrading of a trail section at Hodges Village Dam, installing rope railings to make the trail accessible for visually impaired people and adding a box with 3D-printed materials used as aids in helping the visually impaired community understand what they hear and experience along the trail.

Courtesy Photo

Lydia Metcalf

Metcalf joined scouts in 2022 and held various positions in Troop 163, including patrol leader and troop guide, and also worked as a junior staff member at Camp Wanocksett in New Hampshire. She earned forty-one merit badges, and honors including the Historic Trails Award and the National Outdoor Achievement Award for Camping,

A recent graduate of the Massachusetts Academy of Math and Science at WPI, Metcalf was the co-leader of the school's community service club, and CEO of her junior year assistive technology school project. She also volunteered as a math tutor and SAT tutor, and as a camp counselor at Starbase, a STEM-based academy, and was an intern at the Charlton Public Library. Metcalf currently attends UMass Lowell, where she is studying engineering and computer science. She is passionate about STEM and improving accessibility, and hopes to work with robotics to design assistive technology, as well as to continue working with scouts as a merit badge counselor.

Troop 163 is a Scouting America troop for girls ages 11–17. The troop is based in Sturbridge but has members across southern Worcester County. To learn more about scouting or Troop 163, email troop163sturbridge@gmail.com.

Community Fridge offers free food at Charlton Federated Church

CHARLTON — The Federated Church of Charlton (FCC) has opened a community fridge or refrigerator and shed to provide food and other household items to anyone in need. The concept is simple: people take what they need and share what they can. The main purpose of community fridges is to reduce food insecurity, while also mitigating food waste. The FCC Community Fridge is in a grey shed next to the church parking lot. It is open 24 hours, seven days a week.

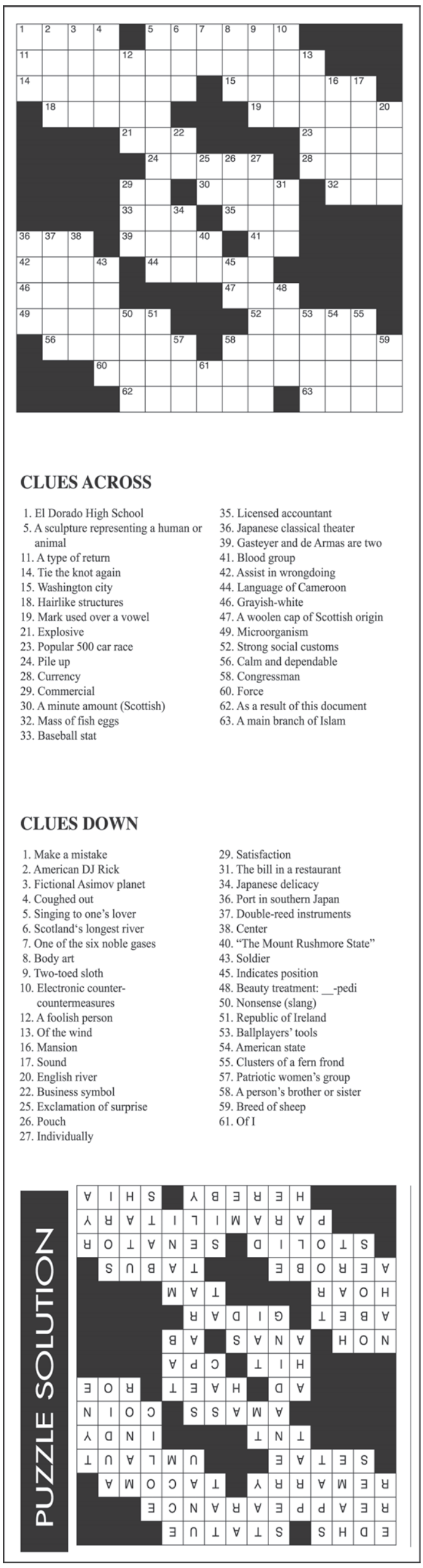
"Our community fridge complements other food programs in our community, such as the Charlton Chip-In Food Pantry. Our program allows people to access free, nutritious fresh foods, and household items at any time," said Elizabeth Moran, chair of the FCC diaconate. "We understand that people can feel embarrassed when they are in need. Our program allows people to acquire resources anonymously. There is no sign-in or registration. Simply come and take what you need, when you need it."

The Federated Church of Charlton hopes to work with organizations, businesses and individuals to fill the community fridge and shelves. Acceptable foods include: all produce, unopened frozen foods, breads and pastries, prepackaged frozen dinners, milk, cheese, eggs, non-perishable goods, home cooked meals. Please label each meal with the ingredients. Clear packaging is preferred. Foods that are unacceptable include: moldy fruits, vegetables, and bread and previously opened foods. The FCC also accepts household items such as canned goods, boxed foods, soap and shampoo, paper supplies, toothpaste, and shaving supplies.

For more information, please call the church at 508-248-5550 or email emoran3@charter.net or office@fed-church.org.

About the Federated Church of Charlton (FCC)

The Federated Church of Charlton is a federation of the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalist Association in Christian worship together. The Church descends from several churches active in the Charlton community over the centuries starting in 1761. Worship services are held on Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. The church also has an active Sunday School and youth program. The church is located at 64 Main St., at the northern end of Charlton's town common.



CLUES ACROSS

1. El Dorado High School
5. A sculpture representing a human or animal
11. A type of return
14. Tie the knot again
15. Washington city
18. Hairlike structures
19. Mark used over a vowel
21. Explosive
23. Popular 500 car race
24. Pile up
28. Currency
29. Commercial
30. A minute amount (Scottish)
32. Mass of fish eggs
33. Baseball stat
35. Licensed accountant
36. Japanese classical theater
39. Gasteyer and de Armas are two
41. Blood group
42. Assist in wrongdoing
44. Language of Cameroon
46. Grayish-white
47. A woolen cap of Scottish origin
49. Microorganism
52. Strong social customs
56. Calm and dependable
58. Congressman
60. Force
62. As a result of this document
63. A main branch of Islam

CLUES DOWN

1. Make a mistake
2. American DJ Rick
3. Fictional Asimov planet
4. Coughed out
5. Singing to one's lover
6. Scotland's longest river
7. One of the six noble gases
8. Body art
9. Two-toed sloth
10. Electronic counter-countermeasures
12. A foolish person
13. Of the wind
16. Mansion
17. Sound
20. English river
22. Business symbol
25. Exclamation of surprise
26. Pouch
27. Individually
29. Satisfaction
31. The bill in a restaurant
34. Japanese delicacy
36. Port in southern Japan
37. Double-reed instruments
38. Center
40. "The Mount Rushmore State"
43. Soldier
45. Indicates position
48. Beauty treatment: __-pedi
50. Nonsense (slang)
51. Republic of Ireland
53. Ballplayers' tools
54. American state
55. Clusters of a fern frond
57. Patriotic women's group
58. A person's brother or sister
59. Breed of sheep
61. Of I

PUZZLE SOLUTION

Dementia Friendly Charlton hosts educational program

CHARLTON — Most of us know someone with dementia. Many of us are living with it every day, either ourselves, or caring for someone with the disease. Dementia Friendly Charlton is hosting a community program about dementia for those who would like to know more, and those living with this illness who are seeking support and answers to questions.

"Dementia Care and Support: A Community Conversation" will be held on Tuesday evening, Nov. 10, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Charlton Public Library, 40 Main St. in Charlton. There will be a presentation on caring, supporting and communicating with someone living with dementia. This will be followed by a question-and-answer period with a panel of community members specializing in financial considerations, clinical management, the role of Adult Protective Services, and day program/ long-term care options.

Registration via the library web page (charltonlibrary.org) is requested but not required. Come and learn about this complex illness and discover supports and resources available to those living with it.

Dementia Friendly Charlton is a non-profit organization which supports individuals with dementia as well as their families and caregivers. We work to raise awareness and understanding of dementia through educational programs, community events and encouragement of dementia-friendly businesses. Visit our site on the town of Charlton Web site (townofcharlton.net) and/or our Facebook page for more information.

Real Estate

CHARLTON

$410,000, 68 Brookfield Rd #102, Labontr, Christopher J, to Healey, James Mathew, and Healey, Patricia Anne.

$127,500, 9 Young Rd, Sleepy Hollow Estate Rt, and Lemieux, Jason R, to Balkie, Jennifer, and Sousa, Joseph P.

HOLLAND

$395,000, 271 Mashapaug Rd, Plante, Paul G, to Moore, Desaree, and Brooks, Daniel Paul.

$134,000, 13 Collette Dr, Wallace, Fred K, and Hsbc Bank Usa Na, to Holdcraft, John David.

SOUTHBRIDGE

$424,900, 246 Torrey Rd, Elliot, Heather R, and Elliot, Joshua, to Krol, Patricia, and Daou, Jonathan.

$344,000, 27 Cliff St, Richrdson, Shayaa, to Gilman, Stacy A, and Gilman, Dawn M.

$175,000, 15 Highfield Dr, Geldbaum LLC, to Tb Asset LLC.

STURBRIDGE

$900,000, 104 S Shore Dr, Robert M Verschure Ret, and Verschure, Timothy J, to Haglund, Stephen M, and Talbert, Megan Leigh.

$130,000, 71 Shephard Rd, Broden Alan Est, and Rocco, Dominic, to Comeau, Susan.

$130,000, 71 Shephard Rd, Broden, Angela, to Comeau, Susan.

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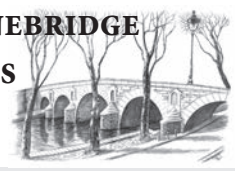

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Villager Almanac

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.

Jacob Edwards Public Library
Monday: 9 a.m.-8 p.m.
Tuesday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Wednesday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Thursday: 9 a.m.-8 p.m.
Friday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Saturday: 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (May 25 will be our last open Saturday until Labor Day) Sunday: Closed

Charlton Town Hall (508) 248-2200
Office Hours:
Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays ..... 7:30 a.m to 5:00 p.m.
Tuesdays .....7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Friday .....Closed
visit www.townofcharlton.net
or more information.
Individual offices may vary

Public Library (248-0452)
For library hours please check
www.charltonlibrary.org

Police Department (248-2250)
Monday to Friday..... 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
For emergencies, dial **911**

Fire Department (248-2299)
Monday to Friday..... 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Post Offices
Charlton Center Post Office ....(800) 275-8777
Charlton City (01508) ..... (800) 275-8777

Schools
Dudley-Charlton Regional School District .....(508) 943-6888
Charlton Elementary School ..... (508) 248-7774 or (508) 248-7435
Heritage School ..... (508) 248-4884
Charlton Middle School.....(508) 248-1423
Shepherd Hill Regional High School .....(508) 943-6700
Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School ..... (508) 248-5971 or (508) 987-0326

HOLLAND: 413-245-7108
Mon – Thurs 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

FISKDALE: 508-347-6486
Weekdays 9:00-4:30 and Sat. 9:00 -12:00

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

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

WALES PUBLIC LIBRARY
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closed Fri & Sun

Church Listings

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

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

• **Charlton Baptist Church,** 50 Hammond Hill Road, 248-4488,www.charltonbaptist.org,
Sunday worship 10 a.m.

• **Charlton City United Methodist,** 74 Stafford St. 248-7379, web site: CharltonCityUMC.org
Sunday worship and Children's church 10am

•**St. Anne St. Patrick Church, 1**6 Church St., Fiskdale (508) 347-7338
www.stannestpatparish.com
Saturday Vigil Mass at 4 pm, Sunday 8 am, 10 am, 12 noon, Youth Mass (September to May) 5 pm. Daily Mass Mon - Thurs 7:30 and 10 am, Fri and Sat 7:30 am

•**Elm Street Congregational Church,**
61 Elm Street, Southbridge, Ma 01550
Phone: 508-764-8085 • Sunday service 10:00 am
Pastor Kathryn Light

•**Faith Baptist Church,**
515 Dennison Drive, Southbridge
Phone number 508-764-6132,
Worship Service: Sunday 10::00 a.m.

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

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

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

• **Living Word Church of Charlton,** 10 Main Street - Grange building 1st Floor, Charlton, Ma 01507, Pastor Craig Bellisario, (508) 233-8349
Sunday Service 10:00am.
www.livingwordhcarlton.com
info@livingwordcharlton.com

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

• **Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale-** 8 Maple St. Sturbridge, 774-304-1021
www.sturfed.org
Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.

• **Bethlehem Lutheran Church-**
345 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566
Phone 508-347-7297
Web: www.bethlehemsturbridge.org
Services - Sunday 9:00 am
Pastor Dan Purtell

• **Holland Congregation Church**
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11 Sturbridge Road, Holland, 413-245-9926
Hollandchurch.org
Sunday Service @ 10:00 am
Pastor Dan Maketansky

•**Holy Trinity Episcopal Church**
446 Hamilton St., Southbridge, MA 01550
Phone: 508-765-9559
Web: www.holytrinitysouthbridge.org
Sunday Service 11:00 am
Pastor Dan Purtell

•**St. John Paul II Parish**
279 Hamilton St., Southbridge
Rev. Carlos Ardila, Pastor
Weekend services Saturday 4 p.m.,
Sunday 8 a.m., 10 a.m., and noon
Weekday masses 8:30 & 8:45 a.m., St. Mary's Church (508) 765-3701

St. Anne – St. Patrick Parish introduces family-friendly schedule for 2026–2027 Faith Formation program

FISKDALE — St. Anne–St. Patrick Parish is making it easier for families to participate in both Faith Formation and Sunday Mass with a newly redesigned class schedule for the 2026–2027 program year. By intentionally centering its Faith Formation schedule around the 10:00 a.m. Sunday Mass, the parish hopes families can more easily worship together while also having more time back in their Sundays.

Courtesy Photo

Faith Formation students with leaders in the Parish Center.

"At St. Anne – St. Patrick Parish, we want to remove obstacles that make it difficult for families to practice their faith together," said Fr. Salvator Musande, Pastor of St. Anne – St. Patrick Parish. "Our new schedule allows children to grow in their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith while making Sunday Mass something families can attend together. We warmly invite both returning and new families to join us."

Registration is now open for Faith Formation for students in Kindergarten through Grade 11. Families are encouraged to register online by September 6, 2026, which will help with class planning, although registration will remain open after that date.

The new class schedule is:

- Grades K–6: Sundays, 8:45–9:45 a.m., before the 10 a.m. Mass.
- Grades 7–11: Sundays, 11:15 a.m.–12:30 p.m., after the 10 a.m. Mass.

Faith Formation provides children and teens with age-appropriate instruction in the Catholic Faith, Sacred Scripture, Prayer, Christian living, and preparation for the Sacraments. Online registration is the preferred registration method and is available on the parish website. A paper registration form is also available for families who need one.

For more information or to register, visit www.StAnneStPatrickParish.com or call 508-347-9353.

St. Anne St. Patrick Parish & Shrine is an active parish community serving the Sturbridge area and beyond, offering daily Masses, religious education, and community ministries. The shrine grounds welcome thousands of visitors each year and feature St. Anne Shrine, Stations of the Cross and Crucifix, Hall of Saints, Russian Icon Exhibit, Generations Statue, Angel of Hope Monument, Memorial for the Unborn, Votive Chapels, weekend Masses celebrated in the outdoor pavilion during the summer, and a religious gift shop open daily from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Gateway Players to hold auditions for "The Lifespan of a Fact"

SOUTHBRIDGE — Gateway Players Theatre in Southbridge is hosting auditions for "The Lifespan of a Fact" written by Jeremy Kareken, David Murrell and Gordon Farrell, based off the non-fiction book by John D'Agata and Jim Fingal.

Auditions will be held on Sunday, Nov. 8 and Thursday, Nov. 12 at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall at Elm Street Congregational Church, 61 Elm St., Southbridge.

Auditions will consist of cold-readings from the script. Show dates are Feb. 5, 6, and 7, 2027. Rehearsals will be on Sundays and Thursdays at 7 pm, starting December 3rd. The initial read-through will be on Thursday, November 19th. Character information is listed below. This is an adult production. Directed by Deb Hollett, and Produced by Patrick Bracken. For more information, please contact Gateway at 508-764-4531, or Patrick Bracken at pmbracken@gmail.com. Presented by permission through special arrangement with Concord Theatricals, A Dramatists Play Service Title.

Jim Fingal is a fact checker for a prominent but sinking New York magazine. John D'Agata is a writer with an essay on a teenage boy's suicide that could save the magazine. When Jim is assigned to fact check the essay, the two come head-to-head.

The production is seeking three actors to fill the following roles:

JIM FINGAL - male, mid 20s - an earnest, rule-bound young intern and fact-checker

EMILY PENROSE - female, 40s-60s - an ambitious, high-pressure magazine editor-in-chief caught in the middle

JOHN D'AGATA - male, 40s-60s - a celebrated, fiercely creative essayist who bends facts for artistic effect.

Southbridge Lions to host Fall Texas Hold 'Em Tournament

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Lions Club will hold its fall No Limit Texas Hold 'Em Poker Tournament on Saturday, Nov. 7, at Maqui's, 61 Chestnut St. in Southbridge.

The tournament is open to players age 18 and older, from regular poker players to those who simply enjoy playing an occasional game with friends. Doors will open at 4 p.m., with play beginning shortly after 5 p.m.

A $100 donation provides each player with $8,000 in tournament chips. First place is guaranteed to receive $2,500, and an additional place will be paid for every 10 players who enter after the first 30. All prizes will be paid by money order.

Appetizers will be served during the evening, and participation is limited to the first 150 players.

The tournament is one of the Southbridge Lions Club's fundraisers, with proceeds helping the club continue its support of local individuals, families, organizations and community programs.

Those interested in playing are encouraged to register in advance. To register or for additional information, contact Russ Labarge at 774-230-1624 or Wayne Boiteau at 774-230-1982.

The Southbridge Lions invite the community to come out for an enjoyable night of cards while supporting the club's continuing service to the Southbridge area.

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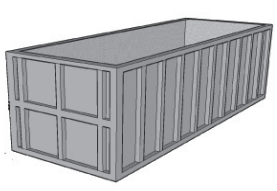

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Fully Insured

Friday's Child

Malayaja
Age 15
Registration # 8111

Malayaja, who goes by Trinity, is a sweet and funny child with a big personality. She loves to entertain others and make them laugh with her expressive facial expressions. Trinity enjoys singing and dancing, especially to K-pop, Hip Hop, and R&B. She also likes creating her own TikTok videos and learning new dance routines.

Recently, Trinity performed in a chorus concert, where she did very well and loved the experience. She also enjoys traveling and recently took her first flight to California.

https://www.mareinc.org/child/21183436551

Can I Adopt?

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

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

OPINION

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Frank G. Chilinski
President/Publisher
Brendan Berube
Editor

Making the trail wider for everyone

Earning the rank of Eagle Scout is an extraordinary accomplishment. It represents years of dedication, leadership, service and perseverance. For Charlton resident Lydia Metcalf, however, the achievement also represents something more: a commitment to making the world a little more accessible to others.

Metcalf, a member of Scouting America Troop 163 of Sturbridge, earned the rank of Eagle Scout after passing her board of review Sept. 25. She became the 10th member of the troop to achieve the distinction since its founding in 2019.

That accomplishment alone deserves recognition. But it is the nature of Metcalf's Eagle Scout project that offers a particularly meaningful lesson about service, inclusion and the difference one young person can make.

At Hodges Village Dam, Metcalf led improvements to a section of trail designed to help people with visual impairments better experience the outdoors. Her project included installing rope railings to assist visitors in navigating the trail and providing a box containing 3D-printed materials that can help visually impaired individuals understand the features of the environment around them.

It is a thoughtful approach to accessibility, one that recognizes that enjoying nature should not depend entirely on the ability to see it.

Too often, accessibility is considered only after a public space has been designed or a recreational opportunity established. Metcalf's project demonstrates what can happen when accessibility becomes part of the planning process itself.

The outdoors belongs to everyone. Our trails, parks and public spaces should reflect that principle.

There is also something encouraging about the connection between Metcalf's scouting experience and her academic interests. A graduate of the Massachusetts Academy of Math and Science at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, she has demonstrated a strong commitment to science, technology, engineering and mathematics. She helped lead her school's community service club, served as CEO of a junior-year assistive technology project and volunteered as a math and SAT tutor. She also contributed her time as a camp counselor at a STEM-based academy and as an intern at the Charlton Public Library.

Now studying engineering and computer science at UMass Lowell, Metcalf hopes to pursue robotics and assistive technology. Her interests point toward an important understanding of what education can accomplish. Technical knowledge is valuable, but its greatest potential is realized when it is applied to improving people's lives.

An engineering solution does not have to involve an enormous invention or a multimillion-dollar research project to be meaningful. Sometimes it begins with recognizing that someone else experiences an ordinary activity differently and asking what could make that experience better. That is precisely the kind of thinking communities should encourage in young people.

Metcalf's scouting record also reflects a willingness to accept responsibility. Since joining in 2022, she has served as a patrol leader and troop guide, earned 41 merit badges and received honors recognizing her outdoor accomplishments.

Her achievement also speaks well of Troop 163 and the adults and fellow scouts who help create opportunities for young people to develop leadership skills. Organizations such as Scouting America provide something that cannot always be replicated in a classroom: the chance to identify a real community need, organize a response and see a project through to completion.

The benefits extend far beyond the individual earning an award. They reach the people who use the improved trail, the younger scouts who see an example worth following and the broader community that gains another dedicated volunteer and future leader.

As communities throughout southern Worcester County consider how to improve recreational spaces and expand opportunities for residents of all abilities, Metcalf's project offers a useful example.

Accessibility is not simply a matter of meeting requirements. It is about recognizing that neighbors have different needs and ensuring that those differences do not unnecessarily limit their opportunities.

Congratulations are certainly in order for Lydia Metcalf on earning the rank of Eagle Scout. More importantly, her accomplishment deserves appreciation for the values it represents.

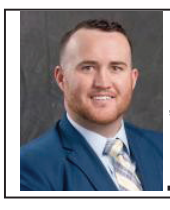
The most meaningful measure of leadership is not always how far someone advances personally. Sometimes it is how much easier they make the path for the people who follow.

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.

Is FIRE right for you? What early retirement really takes



Financial Focus
Trevor Nielsen

The idea has never been more appealing: quit your 9-to-5 decades ahead of schedule and spend your days on your own terms. You may have heard of the FIRE movement, but what is it really and does the hype live up to reality?

FIRE stands for Financial Independence, Retire Early. While some FIRE advocates focus on retiring early, others are more interested in achieving enough financial independence to gain greater flexibility over their career, lifestyle, and future.

Wherever your goal fall on that spectrum, FIRE is typically built around three commitments: high savings, frugal living, and disciplined investing. Proponents generally save from 50-75% of their yearly income, according to CNBC Select, live more frugally, and invest those savings for growth potential over time.

Why FIRE resonates with some people

• It can help you prioritize. While you may want a long and successful career, you may instead prioritize earlier retirement or a path that allows you more time with family, a more meaningful job, or a downshift from your current daily grind.

• It advocates for some sound financial principles. Living within your means, saving for your goals, and investing for long-term growth potential can help build a solid financial foundation.

• It helps you set a strategy for the future. Achieving your retirement goal is easier when you've defined what you want retirement to look like and built a strategy to help achieve it.

What to consider before pursuing FIRE

• Your budget may change. Future expenses may look different than they do today. Family obligations, emergencies, and other life changes can increase the amount you'll need in early retirement.

• You may need to bridge the retirement benefit gap. Medicare covers many healthcare costs for retirees 65+, but if you retire early, you'll need to find and pay for health insurance until you become eligible. You'll also need to rely more heavily on personal savings for longer before claiming Social Security benefits. Because Social Security benefits are generally based on your highest 35 earning years, retiring early may result in a lower benefit than if you'd continued working.

• Your flexibility may be limited. Market declines can be particularly challenging in retirement. One way to help weather a decline is by reducing spending, but a lean budget with more necessary expenses may leave you with fewer options to adjust your spending.

• Your strategy should be personalized. Many FIRE proponents advocate for rules of thumb like the 4% withdrawal rate and saving 25 times your annual expenses. However, retiring earlier than normal means your savings must support a longer retirement, and inflation has a larger impact. Therefore, your withdrawal rate may need to be lower and your planned savings higher than traditional rules of thumb, and those targets should be personalized to you.

Start planning now

Whether your goal is early retirement or a more traditional path, a financial advisor can help you with a plan for your goals and the path ahead.

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

The trouble with being almost ready

Lanterns Along Main Street
By CHARLES

I've come to believe that one of the great mysteries of human existence is the difference between being ready to leave the house and actually leaving it. These are two entirely separate accomplishments.

I can be showered, dressed, wearing my shoes, and standing beside the front door with my keys in hand, fully convinced that departure is imminent. Twenty minutes later, I may still be there.

I don't know exactly when leaving the house became such an elaborate production. When I was younger, I remember being able to decide to go somewhere and simply go. There was very little ceremony involved.

Nowadays, a trip to the hardware store can require the sort of preparation once reserved for an expedition across the Atlantic.

First, I need to find my glasses. This is complicated by the fact that I may already be wearing them, although that possibility rarely occurs to me until I've searched two rooms and accused an innocent family member of moving them.

Then comes the question of my wallet. I have a designated place for my wallet. I know where that place is. Unfortunately, my wallet apparently does not share my commitment to the arrangement.

The keys are another matter entirely. My wife has suggested that I put them in the same place every time I come home. This is excellent advice, and I intend to start following it one of these years.

Once everything has been located, I begin what I call the final inspection. Did I turn off the coffee maker? Is the back door locked? Did I leave a light on upstairs? Where did I put the list of things I was supposed to buy?

That last question is particularly troublesome because I generally remember making the list. I can picture myself writing it. I can even recall being rather pleased with my organizational skills. What I cannot remember is where I put the blasted thing.

My wife, meanwhile, has developed a remarkable ability to recognize the warning signs of a delayed departure.

"Are you actually leaving?" she'll ask.

"Absolutely."

"Because you've been saying that for 15 minutes."

"I'm just checking something."

She doesn't ask what I'm checking anymore. I think she's decided it's better not to know.

And then, of course, comes the weather. Here in New England, the temperature outside can bear little resemblance to what the thermometer suggested when I first looked at it. A pleasant October morning can become a chilly afternoon before a fellow has finished his errands. So I go back for a jacket. Then I decide the jacket is too heavy. Then I wonder whether I ought to bring it anyway. At some point, I find myself standing in the kitchen holding two coats, trying to make a decision that should not require the wisdom of Solomon.

What bothers me most is that none of this seems particularly unreasonable while it's happening. Every individual step makes sense. Naturally, I should have my wallet. Obviously, I need my keys. There's nothing foolish about checking that the doors are locked. It's only when you add everything together that the absurdity becomes apparent. I suspect this is true of a great many things in life.

We complicate perfectly ordinary tasks by adding one more precaution, one more consideration, one more little detail that absolutely must be addressed before we can proceed. We do it with errands, home projects, vacations, and sometimes even conversations.

There's always one more thing to think about. I've noticed that some people seem entirely immune to this condition. They announce they're leaving, pick up their belongings, and walk out the door.

I regard these individuals with a mixture of admiration and suspicion. Surely, they've forgotten something. Yet somehow, they manage to survive. Perhaps there's a lesson there about accepting that not every detail needs to be settled before we get moving.

Life doesn't always require perfect preparation. Sometimes you simply have to put on your shoes, grab your keys, and trust that the rest will work itself out. I've been trying to adopt that philosophy lately.

The other day, I had a few errands to run. I gathered my things, checked the weather, and headed for the door.

My wife looked up from what she was doing.

"Going somewhere?"

"Yep. I'll be back in a little while."

And with that, I walked outside, climbed into the car, and started the engine. It was a beautiful moment of personal triumph. I had finally mastered the art of leaving the house without making a production of it. Then I realized I had forgotten where I was going.

I sat there for a minute, considering my options. Eventually, I went back inside.

My wife didn't even look surprised.

"Forget something?"

"Not exactly," I said. "I'm just making sure I leave for the right reason."

She shook her head and went back to what she was doing.

I suppose there's still room for improvement. But at least I remembered my keys.

To the Editor

Thank you from Charlton's Town Moderator

To the Editor:

Thank you to all who attended our Fall Special Town Meeting on Monday, Oct. 19. It was great to see 386 people in attendance, participating in the legislative body for the Town of Charlton. I hope folks found the meeting to be open, fair, efficient and enjoyable. Thank you all for your kindness and patience as we worked through the meeting together. I am in agreement the sound issues were unacceptable and am immediately working with the town to solve this problem before the Annual Town Meeting next May.

I have heard from many regarding starting on time and I so appreciate the feedback and honesty. In my goal to ensure all voters had opportunity to be checked in, I should have also balanced and respected the folks who were there early enough to check in and be seated on time. I will do better next time. Thank you all for your continued kindness and support.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any comments, questions or concerns: [Kenneth.Laferriere@TownofCharlton.net]. I value the input of the public since Town Meeting is… the people's meeting!

See you on May 17, 2027 at 7 p.m. at Charlton Middle School for our Annual Spring Town Meeting.

Kenny Laferriere
Town Moderator
Charlton

Why I'm voting for Mike Minogue

To the Editor:

I first met Mike and Renee in April 2025, and my first impression was a lasting one. Mike and I shook hands, introduced ourselves, and he sincerely asked me what changes I'd like to see in Massachusetts. As shy as I can be at times, I figured I had nothing to lose, so I rattled off my list. (My passion for health and politics runs deep. Just come to my salon and you'll see!) I felt he truly listened and sincerely cares about We the People. Renee, his smart and beautiful wife, was also so personable and kind to me. As I walked away, I thought and prayed: this is who our state needs.

That night, a friend of theirs, one of the many strong backbones of his team, handed me her business card. We stayed in touch for months, and I've apologized many times for "blowing up" her phone. Again, I figured I had nothing to lose, so I shared the truths I hear from my dear friends and clients.

Then Mike announced his candidacy for Governor. I was elated, and I was asked to be part of his team. I'm humbled and grateful to be a part of this amazing team of positive, hardworking, caring people!

Mike is not a politician. He's a family man, a leader, brilliant, and a gentleman who doesn't need to do this. He and his family are genuine, and he wants to bring us all together for the greater good of Massachusetts. He will lead with accountability. It starts with dialogue, because communication is the foundation of everything. As a small business owner myself, I appreciate his AAOK common-sense theme. Truth is truth.

There is so much division today, and it's refreshing to have a non-politician running for Governor who wants to bring us together. He wants to bring his leadership, integrity, and compassion to Beacon Hill. He's a role model for many and for how our state should be led. He listens to the grassroots of our state, just as he did with me, and he understands that We the People are his boss, not the other way around.

Please vote for Mike, and let's come together for the greater good of our state.

Bonnie Seifert
Charlton

P.S.: Mike, I still can't do anything about your hair!

Joshua Hyde Public Library

306 Main St., Sturbridge
508-347-2512
mayent@cwmars.org

The library will be CLOSED on Wednesday, November 11 for VETERANS DAY.

The library will be CLOSING EARLY at 4:00pm on Wednesday, November 25.

The library will be CLOSED on Thursday, November 26 for THANKSGIVING.

BASIC TECH HELP - Wednesdays from 5:00pm to 7:00pm. Bring your own device or use one of our available computers and get your most basic smartphone, tablet or computer questions answered. Appointments are encouraged.

STORY TIMES

Fall Baby Time - Mondays at 10:45am through November 23. A story time designed specifically for children 2 years and under.

Fall Toddler Time - Tuesdays at 10:45am through November 24. A play-based story time where each week brings something different.

Fall Story Time - Fridays at 10:45am through November 27. Stories, songs, rhymes, and a craft. Designed for children ages 3 to 5 but open to all kids.

BOOK GROUPS - books are available for check out at the library.

AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP - Tuesday, November 10 at 1:00pm. This month's book is "Life: A Love Story" by Elizabeth Berg.

ARMCHAIR TRAVELERS BOOK GROUP - Wednesday, November 18 at 6:30pm. This month's book is "The Overstory" by Richard Powers. Discussion will be led by Francesca DePalma.

WORLD BUILDING BOOK CLUB - Tuesday, November 17 at 6:30pm. This month's book is "Kill the Farm Boy" by Delilah S. Dawson and Kevin Hearne.

EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

ARTHUR'S 30-DAY READING CHALLENGE

November 1 through November 30

Everyone's favorite aardvark, Arthur, is turning 30 this year! To celebrate, the JHPL will be taking part in Arthur's 30-Day Reading Challenge. Kids ages 4 to 12 are invited to stop by the Children's Room anytime after October 26 to sign up. The objective is to see if they can read for 30 minutes each day in November. We will be providing reading trackers, suggested reading lists, and fun Arthur-themed bonuses throughout the month. Registration is required.

MARVELOUS MOTHS SCAVENGER HUNT

November 2026

Stop by the Children's Room any time during November to complete a moth themed scavenger hunt and win a small prize.

SHANNON MCKENNA SCHMIDT DISCUSSES "THE FIRST LADY OF WORLD WAR II"

Virtual - Monday, November 2 at 7:00pm

Shannon McKenna will be discussing her book, "The First Lady of World War II: Eleanor Roosevelt's Daring Journey to the Frontlines and Back" - the first book to tell the full story of Eleanor Roosevelt's unprecedented and courageous trip to the Pacific Theater during World War II. We'll discuss how the trip impacted the war effort, Eleanor, and the world. This is a virtual event and registration is required to receive the link. Sponsored by the Friends of the Ashland Public Library.

FESTIVE HOLIDAY SOUPS

Tuesday, November 3 at 6:30pm

Whether it's for a holiday meal, a get-together with friends or a quiet night at home, come learn how to make festive soups and taste test a couple. Get recipes for Butternut Squash and Ginger, Roasted Red Bell Pepper, Pumpkin Soup with Lentils, Beet and Apple Soup with Horseradish Cream, and more! Registration is required.

WOMEN OF THE AMERICAN RENAISSANCE: MARY MOODY EMERSON AND SARAH ALDEN BRADFORD RIPLEY

Wednesday, November 4 at 2:00pm

Presented by Ellen Duzak, this project shines a light on the little-known stories of inspiring women of Concord, MA during the American Renaissance of the 1800's. This presentation focuses on Mary Moody Emerson and Sarah Alden Bradford Ripley. Each had a powerful influence on the Transcendental philosophy of Ralph Waldo Emerson and the education and inspiration for a generation of men and women. Registration is required.

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

MAKE-IT MONDAYS: WOOLY BEAR CATERPILLARS

Monday, November 9 at 3:30pm

Kids, ages 7 to 12, will use yarn and pipe cleaners to make their own friendly, fuzzy woolly bear caterpillars. Registration is required.

PUZZLE SWAP

Tuesday, November 10 from 5:00pm to 7:00pm

Puzzle Swap. You can bring puzzles to swap, or just come and take puzzles that people have already donated. We are accepting puzzles of all sizes and for all age groups! Bring donated puzzles starting October 26, or on the day of the swap. There will be a puzzle set up for people to work on cooperatively during the 2 hours.

USS CONSTITUTION: HISTORY & THE 1812 MARINE GUARD

Thursday, November 12 at 6:30pm

This presentation will focus on the history of the USS Constitution as well as weaponry, clothing, and uniforms of the period. The 1812 Marine Guard is the period Marine Guard for USS Constitution "Old Ironsides" and is considered such by the US Navy. The 1812 Marine Guard is primarily a ship board unit.

Presenting is Henry Rodrigues, a retired US Navy Chief Petty Officer, having served for 24 years including a tour of duty aboard the USS Constitution. He will be joined by Laura McCarthy who will present on textiles.

UNCOVERING THE PLYMOUTH BLITZ - RESEARCHING AND REMEMBERING ONE OF WW2'S DEADLIEST AIR RAIDS

Virtual - Wednesday, November 18 at 7:00pm

Author and researcher Michael C. McLaughlin, Associate Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and PhD Candidate at the University of Plymouth, UK, will provide an intimate, behind-the-scenes look into the history and making of his new book, "Plymouth Blitz: The Bombing of Portland Square & the Devastation of a City". This is a virtual event and registration is required to receive the link. Sponsored by the Tewksbury Public Library.

JHPL KID'S LAB: CRANBERRY CHEMISTRY

Thursday, November 19 at 3:30pm

Kids will investigate chemical reactions and the properties of physics in this dual experiment! Together we will make cranberry oobleck and then we will write secret messages using the cranberry juice! Registration is required.

POKEMON CLUB

Thursday, November 19 at 6:00pm

Young Pokémon fans, ages 5 to 12, and their caregivers are invited to join us for themed activities and fun. Kids can bring their card collections to play the official TCG game or simply show off their favorites. Registration is required.

MAKE-IT MONDAYS: DECODEN PICTURE FRAMES

Monday, November 23 at 3:30pm

Kids, ages 7 to 12, will learn about the Japanese crafting style decoden. They will create a trinket filled picture frame for one of their favorite photos. Registration is required.

MORE HOLIDAY ROMANCE BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS WITH BOOKLIST REVIEWER, JOHN CHARES

Virtual - Monday, November 30 at 7:00pm

With the holidays right around the corner, take a minute (or an hour) to relax and find some good holiday romance reads. John Charles will give us his "best of" list of 2026 that will have your TBR pile tipping over and your holidays spent cozying up to a good book. This program is sponsored by the Friends of the Ashland Public Library.

The trouble with being almost ready

Lanterns Along Main Street
By CHARLES

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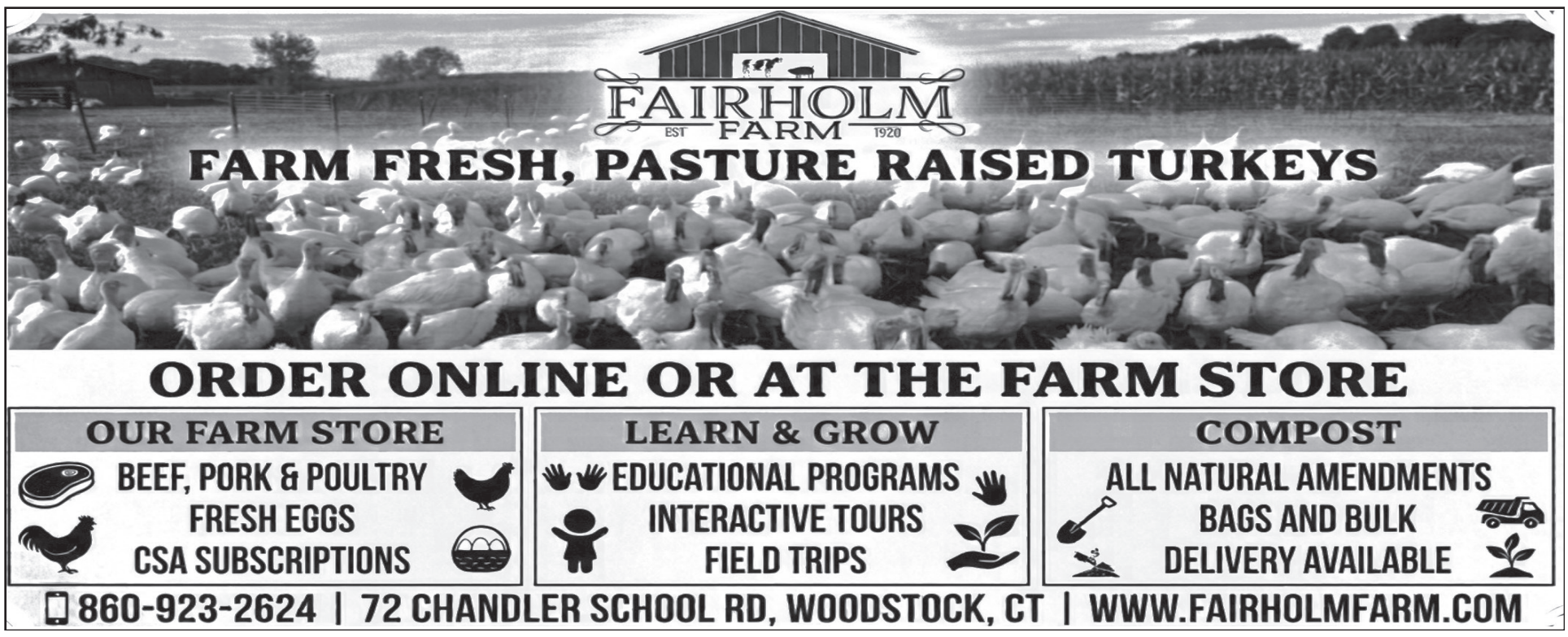

St. Anne and St. Patrick Parish to celebrate 140th anniversary with special dinner

STURBRIDGE — St. Anne and St. Patrick Parish invites the public to celebrate its 140th anniversary at a special dinner on Wednesday, April 14, 2027, at the Publick House Historic Inn in Sturbridge. The event runs from 5 to 9 p.m., with cocktail hour from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. A cash bar will be available.

Tickets are $75 per person and include a plated dinner and dessert. Tickets are available online at stannestpatrickparish.com/event-tickets or by calling the parish office at 508-347-7338.

The dinner menu includes a mixed green salad with house-made maple vinaigrette dressing and the Publick House's famous pecan sweet rolls and dinner rolls. Guests can choose from three entrée options: butter crumb scrod with lemon-dill sauce; orchard chicken with cornbread-sausage stuffing and a velvety cider-cream sauce; or butternut squash ravioli with julienne vegetables and a creamy Amaretto sauce, a vegetarian option. Dessert will be deep-dish apple pie with ice cream.

"We are grateful to celebrate 140 years of faith, prayer, and community at St. Anne and St. Patrick Parish," said Father Sal Musande, pastor. "This anniversary dinner will be a wonderful opportunity to bring people together in celebration of our parish's rich history and continued mission. We are also pleased to welcome special guests who will join us for this milestone occasion. We invite parishioners, former parishioners, friends, and members of the wider community to celebrate with us."

For 140 years, St. Anne and St. Patrick Parish has served as a place of worship, prayer, and community in the Sturbridge area. The anniversary celebration honors the generations of parishioners, clergy, and supporters who have helped shape its history and sustain its mission. The dinner offers an opportunity to reflect on this legacy while looking forward to the parish's future.

St. Anne and St. Patrick Parish offers daily Mass, religious education, and a variety of community ministries. Visitors are welcome to explore St. Anne Shrine, the Memorial for the Unborn, the Hall of Saints, the Russian Icon Exhibit, the Votive Chapel, the Generations Statue, and the Angel of Hope Monument. The Daily Rosary is recited at 3 p.m. in St. Anne's Church, and weekend Masses are celebrated in the parish's outdoor pavilion during the summer. The parish's religious gift shop is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Pasta dinner to benefit Wreaths Across America

HOLLAND — The town of Holland will once again be taking part in the Annual "Wreaths Across America" campaign on Dec. 19. Our local group is raising money to purchase 200 wreaths to lay on the graves of our military men and women in the Holland cemetery.

On Friday, Nov. 6, we are hosting a pasta dinner at the Holland Community Center (40 Brimfield Rd- Holland, MA) to raise funds to purchase the wreaths.

Tickets ($15) are on sale now by texting Kathy at 413-265-3640, or stopping by the Holland Community Center Monday thru Thursday from 10 am until 5 p.m. This event has been sold out in past years, and we cannot guarantee that we will have tickets available at the door.

The mission of "Wreaths Across America" is to: "Remember the Fallen. Honor those who serve. Teach the next generation the value of freedom." On Dec. 19, there will be 5,200 locations in all 50 states and around the world taking part in the wreath laying ceremony.

Courtesy Photo

The Tantasqua Warrior varsity golf team defended its D2 West District title on Monday, Oct. 19 by outscoring local favorite Mount Greylock by two shots. The final score was 324 to 326 in favor of the Warriors. Team members counting for Tantasqua included seniors Andrew Weeden, Wyatt Fay, and juniors Connor Howe and Tyler Phillips. All four players shot 81. Tantasqua advanced to the State Championship on Monday, Oct. 26 at Franklin C.C.

St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church taking orders for traditional pies, ethnic delicacies

SOUTHBRIDGE — St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church is inviting area residents to enjoy a taste of traditional Albanian cuisine with a special sale of homemade-style pies and ethnic delicacies, with orders being accepted through Wednesday, Nov. 4.

The church, located at 126 Morris St. in Southbridge, is offering a selection of savory pies and traditional pastries and cookies, providing an opportunity for residents to bring some distinctive flavors to their holiday tables.

The menu features four varieties of savory pies: spinach, leek, sauerkraut and squash. Whole pies, measuring 12 by 17 inches, are available baked or unbaked and frozen for $45 each. Half pies, measuring 12 by 9 inches, are available baked only for $23 each.

In addition to the pies, the church is offering an assortment of ethnic delicacies, including rolled baklava and kadaif for $3 each, twist cookies at four for $4, date-nut filled cookies for $2.50 each, and kourabias, traditional butter cookies, at four for $5.

The selection offers both savory and sweet options for family gatherings, holiday celebrations or anyone interested in sampling traditional foods associated with the region's Albanian heritage.

All purchases are available by advance order and takeout only. The deadline to place an order is Nov. 4, and no orders will be accepted after that date.

Orders will be available for pickup Monday, Nov. 23, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church, 126 Morris St., Southbridge.

To place an order, call 508-764-6226 and leave a name and telephone number. Callers will receive confirmation of their orders.

With Thanksgiving approaching, the sale provides an opportunity for local families to add traditional Albanian dishes and desserts to their holiday meals while supporting a Southbridge religious institution.

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Trunk or Treat returns to Major General Salem Towne Masonic Lodge!

BY BRO. JIMMY FALZONE
MAJOR GENERAL SALEM TOWNE MASONIC LODGE
SOUTHBRIDGE

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Major General Salem Towne Masonic Lodge (MGSTL) Community Outreach Program hosts this popular annual event. Children and adults are encouraged to wear Halloween costumes and collect candy and treats from decorated vehicles in the lodge's Southbridge parking lot.

Courtesy Photo

Children and adults in Halloween costumes enjoy last year's Trunk or Treat in the MGST Lodge parking lot. Join the fun this weekend at the MGST Masonic Lodge, 339 Ashland Ave. in Southbridge.

The event will take place Saturday, Oct. 31, from 1 to 4 p.m. at 339 Ashland Ave. in Southbridge. Children can collect treats as they visit each decorated vehicle, while passing drivers honk in support. Lodge members, their families and friends, and Nichols College student volunteers contribute their time and resources to make this spooktacular event possible for children across surrounding communities. Sponsored by the Freemasons of Southbridge, Trunk or Treat is open to everyone and is being held by dispensation of the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Boston. To learn more about Freemasonry or find a lodge near you, visit www.massfreemasonry.org.

CCUMC offers mouthwatering turkey dinner Nov. 21

CHARLTON — Charlton City United Methodist Church is hosting their delicious annual Turkey Dinner on Saturday, Nov. 21 from 5-6:30 p.m. On the menu will be their famous turkey dinner with all the fixings! Turkey, mashed potatoes with gravy, peas with pearl onions, stuffing, butternut squash, cranberry sauce and dinner rolls with butter, followed by homemade pumpkin pie topped with whipped cream!

$15.00/adult, $8.00/children six to 12, free for children five and under with a $50 max per family. Always a sell out so reservations or take out are recommended by calling 508 248-7379. Please leave your name and number in case we need to reach you. CCUMC is located at 74 Stafford St., Charlton. Our building is fully handicap accessible with ample parking.

Winter Coat Closet opens Oct. 31

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Winter Coat Closet, an ecumenical project, sponsored by local churches and located at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 446 Hamilton St., Southbridge, will be open Saturdays from Oct. 31 to Dec. 19. The hours are 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

We have new & gently used warm winter coats for men, women and children. The coats are free but limited to one per person. All are welcome to come browse our racks and try something on! We also have a number of scarves, hats and mittens.

Donations are accepted at the Coat Closet on Saturdays when we are open or at the office. Please call and leave a message for Chris at Holy Trinity Church 508-765-9559.

The Winter Coat Closet is happy to be in its 19th year of helping people in our community stay warm!

Charlton City UMC welcomes Voices of the Master

CHARLTON — Charlton City United Methodist Church will be hosting an afternoon of uplifting music by the well known artists, Voices of the Master, on Nov. 14 from 2-4 p.m. They are a music ministry of the Greenville Baptist Church. Admission is free but there will be a free will offering. The music starts at 2 p.m., followed by a time of fellowship, conversation with the artists and light refreshments.

Charlton City UMC is located at 74 Stafford St., Charlton, and is handicapped accessible with lots of free parking. For any questions, please call 508 248-7379.

Courtesy Photo

Rory Herrick represented Tantasqua and Massachusetts on Sunday at Mohegan Sun in the New England Girls' Championship as one of the 12 qualifiers from the state. She shot a 7-over par 78 to finish tied for 5th place and only 2 shots out of 1st. Herrick will finish off her high school golf career in the spring as she competes in the girls' district tournament in June.

Troop 163 to hold drive-thru baked potato fundraiser

STURBRIDGE — Troop 163 of Sturbridge will hold its annual drive-thru baked potato fundraiser on Sunday, Nov. 15 at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Sturbridge from 5 to 6:30 p.m.

Each meal will include a baked potato with assorted toppings (sour cream, cheese, bacon bits, and green onions), a cup of soup or chili, and a dessert. Tickets are $12 each; a family pack of four meals is $44.

Tickets must be purchased in advance, and can be ordered by contacting a scout in the troop or by emailing Troop163Sturbridge@gmail.com.

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LEGALS

Public Notice

Notice is hereby given of a public hearing to be held in the George Parent Community Room, second floor of the Town Hall on Monday, November 16, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in regards to the application of Ramon Salazar Disla d/b/a RS Auto Group, 128 Charlton St., for the issuance of a Wholesaler Class II License. Those wishing to speak regarding this application will be given an opportunity to be heard.

This notice is also published electronically on www.stonebridgepress.com and on www.masspublicnotice.org

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE
John D. Jovan Jr., Town Manager
Licensing Authority
October 29, 2026

Planning Board
Public Hearing

In accordance with the provisions of In accordance with MGL Ch. 40A, and the Town of Brimfield Zoning Bylaw section 7, the Planning Board will be holding a Public Hearing on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, at 8:00 p.m. at Hitchcock Academy located at 2 Brookfield Rd. Brimfield, MA 01010.

The purpose of the hearing is to consider a Site Plan Review application for Lawrence Bronner of Brimfield LLC who is looking to add an additional storage building for Parcel: 9/B/9 located at 338 Palmer Rd. Brimfield, MA 01010.

David Killian
Planning Board Chair
October 22, 2026
October 29, 2026

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
STURBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD
PROPOSED ZONING AMENDMENT

In accordance with the provisions of MGL Chapter 40A, Section 5, the Sturbridge Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Monday, November 9, 2026 at 6:35 PM** in the **Center Office Building 2nd Floor, located at 301 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566 and/or by virtual means** if circumstances warrant, in accordance with applicable law, to consider amendments to the Town's Zoning Bylaw.

The proposal would amend the Zoning Bylaw by inserting a new **Article XXI Temporary Moratorium on Data Centers**

Section 300-21.1 PURPOSE

In recent years, the introduction of Data Centers in many areas of the United States has introduced new challenges for communities, creating substantial demands on energy and water supplies and causing environmental disturbances, including noise. The Town needs time to study and consider the regulation of Data Centers in light of the land use considerations they raise and potential negative impacts they can cause to communities.

Section 300-21.2 DEFINITION

"Data Center" shall mean: "A facility composed of networked computers, storage systems, and computing resources that is used to process, store, and disseminate large amounts of data, and that such a facility is either a principal use or is used in a standalone capacity".

Section 300-21.3 TEMPORARY MORATORIUM - DURATION

For the reasons set forth above and notwithstanding any other provision of the Zoning Bylaw to the contrary, the Town of Sturbridge hereby enacts a temporary moratorium on the application for and on the use, building or installation of Data Centers, as defined herein. The moratorium shall be in effect through September 30, 2027. During the moratorium period, the Town shall undertake a planning process to address the effects of such structures and uses in the Town and to enact bylaws in a manner consistent with sound land use planning goals and objectives.

The purpose of this temporary moratorium is to provide the Town with temporary time to develop and adopt appropriate zoning regulations specific to this rapidly evolving technology. Data centers are significantly different from traditional utility or industrial uses and raise unique considerations related to environmental impacts and compatibility with surrounding land uses.

Additionally, this moratorium will allow sufficient time to study best practices, review updated state guidance and fire code requirements, consult with public safety officials, and engage the public, while preventing development proposals that could outpace local regulations. The moratorium is a temporary pause only and is intended to result in a well-crafted bylaw that provides clear standards and predictability for applicants while protecting public health, safety, and welfare. Presently the Town has no zoning bylaw adequately addressing these issues.

During the time of this moratorium the Planning Board will work to develop and enact Bylaws in a manner consistent with sound land use planning goals and objectives. This moratorium shall be in effect through September 30, 2027 or the date on which the Town adopts amendment to the bylaw concerning Data Centers, whichever first occurs.

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted in person and may be conducted via remote means if circumstance warrant, in accordance with applicable law. This means

that members of the public body as well as members of the public may access this meeting in person, or via virtual means. https://meet.goto.com/619527397

Every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post of the Town's website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of the proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

Charles Blanchard
Chairperson
October 22, 2026
October 29, 2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate
and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO26P3422EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate Of:
Jeffrey Pontbriand
Date of Death: 08/11/2007
To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Judith Nickerson of Marshfield MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: .

Judith Nickerson of Marshfield MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration.**

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 11/17/2026.**

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

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION
UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS
UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

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

WITNESS, Hon. Kathryn M. Bailey, First Justice of this Court.

Date: October 19, 2026
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
October 29, 2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate
and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO26P3423EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate Of:
Lorna Lynn Pontbriand
Date of Death: 09/09/2023
To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Late and Limited Formal Testacy and/or Appointment** has been filed by **Judith Nickerson of Marshfield MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: .

Judith Nickerson of Marshfield MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration.**

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 11/17/2026.**

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

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UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS
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WITNESS, Hon. Kathryn M. Bailey, First Justice of this Court.

Date: October 19, 2026
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
October 29, 2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate
and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO25P2292EA
CITATION ON PETITION
FOR ORDER OF
COMPLETE SETTLEMENT
Estate of:
Joseph P Graves
Date of Death: 04/05/2025

A Petition for **Order of Complete Settlement** has been filed by
Wade Graves of Southbridge MA
rrequesting that the court enter a formal Decree of Complete Settlement including the allowance 'of a final account such relief as may be requested in the Petition. **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 11/17/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

WITNESS, Hon. Kathryn M. Bailey, First Justice of this Court.

Date: October 29, 2026
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
October 29, 2026

NOTICE OF SALE
Lein Sale

Request a Notice of Lein Sale be Published on the following listed Units
Household & Misc, Items
Unit No 616
Dennis Curboy
99 Elm Street, Apt. 2
Southbridge, MA 01550
Household & Misc, Items
Unit No 273
Henry Skiba
126 North Street
Ware, MA 01082
Household & Misc, Items
Unit No 014
Shawn Gillette
49 Eden Street
Ludlow, MA 01056
Household & Misc, Items
Unit No 259
Simeon Paresky
P.O. Box 402
Sturbridge, MA 01566
Household & Misc, Items
Unit No 005
Corey Varnum
426 Cronin Rd
West Brookfield, MA 01585
Household & Misc, Items
October 15, 2026
October 22, 2026
October 29, 2026

Town of Sturbridge
Zoning Board of Appeals
Public Hearing Notice Special Permit
Liam Ferguson

In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 40A, §11, the Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday, November 18, 2026 at 6:35 PM at the Center Office Building located at 301 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566 and/or by virtual means if circumstances warrant, in accordance with applicable law; on the application of Liam Ferguson.

The applicant is requesting a Special Permit pursuant to Article XVIII §300-18.2 and a Finding pursuant to Article XV §300-15.2A of the Zoning Bylaw to expand, change or alter a pre-existing, non-conforming use or structure for the property located at 51 Bennetts Road. The applicant is requesting a Special Permit to construct a 1,140 sq. ft. garage that will be located within 15' of both side property lines, where 20' is allowed. No other non-conformities will be intensified as a result of the proposed construction.

The proposed request can be viewed at https://www.sturbridge.gov/zoning-board-appeals/pages/recent-filings or arrangements can be made to view the application packet by contacting the Sturbridge Planning Department.

Any person interested or wishing to be heard on this proposal should appear at the time and place designated. Members of the public may watch the meeting online via the Town's on demand video broadcast or via cable television on Channel 191.

It is the intent to have this Public Hearing in person. However, if circumstances warrant, the Board may choose to hold this Hearing via virtual or hybrid (in person and virtual) means.

In the event of a virtual or hybrid meeting, please follow this link: https://meet.goto.com/619527397.

Please note that the meeting/hearing will not be suspended or terminated if technological problems interrupt the virtual broadcast, unless otherwise required by law.

Diane Trapasso, Chair
Sturbridge Zoning Board of Appeals
October 29, 2026
November 5, 2026

Sturbridge Planning Board
Public Hearing
Application for Site Plan Approval
NBM Realty, LLC

In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 40A, §11, the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, **November 9, 2026 at 6:45 PM** in the **Center Office Building located at 301 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566 and/or by virtual means** if circumstances warrant, in accordance with applicable law; on the application of NBM Realty, LLC for the property located at **152 Main Street.**

The applicant requests Site Plan Approval as required by the Sturbridge Zoning Bylaws Article XIX, Site Plan Review, to construct two 3-story, 2,323 sq. ft. multi-family residential buildings and associated paved parking per the plans and specifications submitted for the property located at 152 Main Street, Sturbridge.

The parcel is currently developed with two 2-story multi-family residential buildings, a paved parking area and a gravel parking area. The existing buildings will remain in place with no proposed additions or alterations, and the existing parking areas will be removed to accommodate the new parking configuration.

The proposed request can be viewed at at https://www.sturbridge.gov/830/Recent-Filings or arrangements can be made to view the application packet by contacting the Sturbridge Planning Department.

Any person interested or wishing to be heard on this proposal should appear at the time and place designated. Members of the public may watch the meeting online via the Town's on demand video broadcast or via cable television on Channel 191.

It is the intent to have this Public Hearing in person. However, if circumstances warrant, the Board may choose to hold this Hearing via virtual or hybrid (in person and virtual) means. In the event of a virtual or hybrid meeting, please follow this link:
https://meet.goto.com/619527397.

Please note that the meeting/hearing will not be suspended or terminated if technological problems interrupt the virtual broadcast, unless otherwise required by law.

Charles Blanchard
Chairperson
October 22, 2026
October 29, 2026

Annual St. John Paul Parish Bazaar to take place Sunday

SOUTHBRIDGE — The annual St John Paul II Parish Bazaar will take place Sunday, Nov. 1.

The fun begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m. In the upstairs hall, there will be a Huge Community Raffle of Gift Certificates, prizes. A Renewed Jewelry Boutique, Theme Basket Table, Village Bake Shop, Silent Auction, Religious Table, a This and That table which has crafts and different items for sale and a Ring Toss Game for ages 21 and above (Ring a bottle and win a bottle of wine or Spirits), Jar Deal, Children's Ring Toss, Wheel of Chance. Live Entertainment acts will be: Now & Then with Sandy Allen, Cody Peck, Guitarist & Vocalist, Trinity Catholic Academy Choir, "11 on the Outside" featuring Tony Postle and Gereen Langmeyer, Trinity Catholic Academy Cheerleaders, Pulaski Brass Band, Peter Morse, Director (2:30 to 4 p.m.). Cash Raffle (First Prize $1,000, 2nd Prize $500.00, 3rd through 7th Prize $100), 50/50, and scratch ticket raffle.

In the downstairs hall - Karol's Kafe 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Begin with breakfast and then enjoy a leisure lunch. American & Spanish food available along with water, soda, & coffee.

Flu Shots, RSV shots, Covid booster, Shingles shots, will be offered from 11:00am to 2:00pm by Auburn Pharmacy (Please be sure to bring your insurance/Medicare cards). Please call Ray Fournier 774-318-8928 to get more details and to pre-register and get a schedule time.

All are invited, rain or shine, ample parking (upper and lower parking lots). There is handicap access on the side facing church for upper and also the lower hall.

Neil Camara from Charlton makes Dean's List at Adelphi University in New York

GARDEN CITY, N.Y. — Neil Camara, from Charlton, has been named to Adelphi University's Spring 2026 Semester Dean's List.

Camara was among a select group of outstanding students recognized by Adelphi's deans of Arts and Sciences, Education and Health Science, Business, Nursing and Public Health, Social Work and Psychology for superior academic performance. The list comprises full-time students-registered for 12 or more credits-who have completed at least nine graded credits who achieved a GPA of 3.5 or above for the semester. This recognition becomes part of the student's academic record and is entered into the individual's transcript.

About Adelphi: A modern metropolitan university with a personalized approach to higher learning

Adelphi University, New York, is a highly awarded, nationally ranked, powerfully connected doctoral research university dedicated to transforming students' lives through small classes with world-class faculty, hands-on learning, and innovative ways to support academic and career success. U.S. News & World Report named Adelphi a 2026 Best National University, Best College for Veterans, and Top Performer in Social Mobility. In addition, Forbes has ranked Adelphi the top private university on Long Island for three past three years.

Adelphi serves more than 7,300 students at its beautiful main campus in Garden City, New York-just 23 miles from New York City's cultural and internship opportunities-and at dynamic learning hubs in Manhattan, the Hudson Valley and Suffolk County, as well as online.

More than 125,000 alumni Adelphi graduates have gained the skills to thrive professionally as active, engaged citizens, making their mark on the University, their communities and the world.

Healing Heroes Foundation launches equine-assisted recovery program

WHITINSVILLE — Responding to the growing need for mental health resources for first responders across Massachusetts, the Healing Heroes Foundation announced the launch of its Equine-Assisted Recovery Program.

The skills-based program utilizes horses as a bridge to mindfulness and grounding to combat high stress and post-traumatic stress disorder that heavily impact firefighters, EMTs, law enforcement officers, military veterans, and other first responders. Healing Heroes Foundation is a Massachusetts-based nonprofit dedicated to fostering community, connection, and camaraderie across first responders, military members, veterans, and their families.

"This experiential, relationship-based program provides the space, community, and support for first responders to ground themselves and engage with one of nature's most empathetic creatures," says Jaime Nicholas, Co-Director of Healing Heroes Foundation. "First responders across the country are facing significant mental health and wellness challenges, and we felt a responsibility to help address that need here in Massachusetts by introducing a unique program that fosters meaningful connection and mental well-being so first responders don't have to navigate life's challenges alone."

Hosted in Whitinsville, the eight-week Equine-Assisted Recovery Program is made possible through partnerships between the Healing Heroes Foundation, Cornerstone Community Care, and Superior Stables. At the end of the program, participants will be connected with financial health resources through a partnership between Healing Heroes Foundation and First Responders Credit Union.

The program is led by Christina Cronin, LICSW, President and Clinical Director of Cornerstone Community Care. Participants will engage in structured interactions with the horses through activities such as observing, grooming, leading, and other groundwork designed to support mindfulness, self-regulation, communication, and connection. Among the horses participating in the program is one cared for by a U.S. Army veteran and current psychiatric registered nurse, further reflecting the program's connection to the communities it serves.

The Healing Heroes Foundation has filled two cohorts of participants for its Equine-Assisted Recovery Program, showing a regional demand for this innovative resource. With a focus on solidifying the curriculum and measuring outcomes with its inaugural cohort, the organization's long-term goal is to grow the program's impact and geographical reach so this critical resource can be available to first responders across the state. It is currently in talks with additional Massachusetts stables.

Equine-assisted approaches have proven to meaningfully complement clinical therapy, exposing participants to a more active, relationship-based setting. Interactions with horses such as approaching, handling, leading, and caring can make abstract concepts like consent, trust, self-regulation, and communication more tangible.

LEGALS

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Division
Worcester Probate
and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO26P2843EA
INFORMAL PROBATE
PUBLICATION NOTICE

Estate Of:
Daniel M Roscioli
Date of Death:July 13, 2026

To All persons interested in the above-captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Virginia R. Roscioli of Fiskdale MA**
a Will has been admitted to informal probate.
Virginia R. Roscioli of Fiskdale MA
has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond.
The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
October 29, 2026

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OBITUARIES

Thomas F. Leduc, 75

Southbridge- Thomas F. Leduc, 75, passed away peacefully at home on Sunday, October 18, 2026, after a long and courageous battle with Leiomyosarcoma.

He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Regina "Gigi" (Salviuolo) Leduc, a son Thomas R. Leduc, a daughter Lindsey Leduc, a granddaughter Vaeda Sea Miano, all of Southbridge, a brother Guy Leduc of Sturbridge, two nieces Amy McKinstry and Kristen Sandberg, both of Auburn, MA and their families including a great-great niece Ava Jude Gentry.

He was predeceased by his sister Judith Carmel in 2013, his father J. Cleo Leduc in 2014, and his mother Gertrude (Dubreuil) Leduc in 2022.

Tom was a lifelong resident of Southbridge. He graduated from Southbridge High School in 1969. He hit the road with National Inventory Service when he was just 17 years old traveling up and down the Eastern Seaboard. While attending Quinsigamond Community College, he began working in the Warehouse at the American Optical Company where he met Gigi in November of 1976. He went on to hold several positions in warehousing and warehouse management in including at Yankee Spirits in Sturbridge, Imperial Distributors in Auburn, and Auburn Merchandise Distributors in Whitinsville, MA.

For the last 20 years before retiring in 2019, Tom worked as an independent contractor for FedEx Ground, including as an owner/operator for 10 of those years.

Tom was a New England sports fan. He enjoyed canoeing with his father and brother, snow skiing and golfing with "The Amigos" sometimes winning the coveted "Gumba" trophy.

Tom will be remembered by family and friends as "the life of the party"; for the principles he lived by "Keep it Simple" and "Let it Be"; and for Vaeda, "Pepe will always be #1! No matter what"

A Time To Remember Tom was held on Friday, October 23, 2026, from 2-4PM at Sansoucy Funeral Home, 40 Marcy Street, Southbridge, MA 01550.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Tom's Memory to Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Division of Philanthropy, 10 Brookline Place, Brookline, MA 02445.

John B. Dirlam, 96

Southbridge: John B. Dirlam, 96, passed away on Thursday, Oct. 22nd, in his home after a long illness.

His wife of 60 years, Maria P. (Peters) Dirlam, passed away in 2022. He leaves his brother-in-law, John Peters and his wife Rosemary of Mahwah, NJ; and his nieces and nephews: Lise Blumenthal of Cornwall, VT; Anne Berlind of Portland, ME; John Berlind of Burlington, VT; Paul Berlind of New Durham, NH; and Sasha Frey of Stow, MA; Elliot Peters of Southbridge and Susan Peters of West Roxbury. He was predeceased by his brother, Peter Dirlam, his sister, Mary Freedman, his brother-in-law, Petro Peters and his sister-in-law Kathryn Peters. John was born in Worcester on Easter Sunday, April 20, 1930, the son of John C. and Mabel (Berry) Dirlam. John was a graduate of Phillips Exeter Academy in 1947. He attended Brown University where he was a part of a small group which reestablished the sport of lacrosse at the college. He was a honorary alumnus of Nichols College and received an honorary Doctor of Science in Business Administration Degree from Nichols in 2009.

He was a combat veteran of the U.S. Army in the Korean War with the 15th Field Artillery Battalion in the 2nd Infantry Division. He served in a forward observer liaison party attached to the 9th infantry regiment.

After serving his country, John joined his father and brother at the J.I. Morris Company, manufacturers of precision miniature screws, specialty parts, and industrial polishing fabrics. Peter expanded the company's offerings to include a successful line of retail eyewear comfort products. In 2008, he and his brother Peter purchased the remaining Morris family interests and continued operating the business together until 2017. John served on ASME (ANSI) committees which established the UNM miniature screw thread standards. He was also the developer and builder of the Sturbridge Crossing Condominiums, an upscale gated community of 33 units.

John had a long association with the Boy Scouts of America; he advanced to Star Scout and held many leadership positions including Scoutmaster. He was active in the Mohegan Counce of the Boy Scouts for several years, mostly in the financial area and held position of Vice President of Finance. He was named Spotlight Leader at the 100th anniversary celebration of the Boy Scouts in 2010.

He was formerly president of many organizations including, Southern Worcester County Personnel Directors Association, Tri-Community Chamber of Commerce, United Way of the Tri-Community and Harrington Memorial Hospital. He was a former trustee and clerk of Southbridge Savings Bank (now Cornerstone); on the board of directors of Peoples National Bank; advisory board member of Guaranty Bank & Trust; trustee of Old Sturbridge Village; trustee of Nichols College; former chairman and trustee of Tri-Community YMCA's capital facility endowment fund; trustee emeritus, corporator and member of the collections committee of the Worcester Art Museum; and member of the board of directors of the former Southbridge Roofing Co.

John was active in the town of Southbridge as a member of the finance committee and a school building needs committee. He was a member of church building committees and directed subsequent renovation projects. He was a past board member of Literacy Volunteers.

John with his wife, Maria, were donors of most of his extensive jade collection to the Worcester Art Museum. They also collected a large variety of paintings and sculptures. They took great interest in bird and animal observation and land conservation.

John and Maria were lifelong Tri-Community area residents and had homes in Falmouth, MA and Key Biscayne, FL. He was an avid tennis player both here and in Florida. He was an ardent reader of mostly history, especially the Civil War, WWI, WWII and Korean Wars. John and Maria traveled extensively in the United States and throughout the world.

John's funeral will be held on Friday, Oct. 30th, at 11:00am in the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 446 Hamilton St., Southbridge. Burial will follow in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Southbridge. Calling hours in the Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge, will be held on Thursday, Oct. 29th, from 4:00 to 6:00pm.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Worcester Art Museum, 55 Salisbury Street, Worcester, MA 01609.

www.morrillfuneralhome.com

HALLOWEEN 5K

continued from page A1

Melanson, 22, of Warren (20:49.6); second-place finisher Lisa Bienia Kenton, 43, of Sturbridge (21:13.3); and third-place finisher Elise Servant, 12, of Brookfield (21:33.2).

Age-category winners included Jacob Bernier of Sturbridge and Jordan Wetherell of Palmer (19 and under); Damien Dumont of Sturbridge and Jill Terlizzi of Charlton (20–29); Patrick Graham and Alexandra McConnon, both of Sturbridge (30–39); Nate Lane of Sturbridge and Julie O'Gara of Holland (40–49); Michael Spillane of Sturbridge and Jill Sheldon of Brimfield (50–59); and Robert St. John of Dudley and Elaine Dill of Monson (60 and over).

Top finishers in the 1K Pre-Teen Race were first-place finisher Esteban Gilrein, 11, of Sturbridge (4:59); second-place finisher DeAnna Hamm, 12, of Southbridge (5:08); and third-place finisher AJ Haringa, 8, of Sturbridge (5:36).

The youngest participant to complete the 5K was Giovanni Rocha, 6, of Wales. The oldest was Howard Bottomly, 79, of Sutton.

Race security was provided by Sturbridge Police, assisted by Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers from Sturbridge, Charlton, Warren and Auburn, and with help from volunteers from the Quaboag Valley Amateur Radio Club. Medical coverage was provided by Sturbridge Ambulance Squad.

Sponsors for the event included Gold Sponsors: Cornerstone Bank, Old Sturbridge Village, and TruNorth Bank; SILVER SPONSORS: Dave's Pest Control, Joe Klimavich Public Relations, Publick House Historic Inn, and Southbridge Credit Union; and Bronze Sponsors: Cormier Jewelers, George & Davis, Attorneys at Law, Gido's Brick Oven Pizza & Ice Cream, Hearthstone Market, Pioneer Oil & Propane, and Tasse-Crowley Energy.

Additional sponsors included Applebee's Grill & Bar, Big Bunny Supermarket, Cook's Orchard, Cracker Barrel, Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, Jeffrey M. Chasse, Attorney at Law, Ocean State Job Lot, Shaw's Supermarket, Sullivan Tire, and Unique Hair by Chrissy.

The TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K, 1K and Fun Walk is a Rotary Club of Sturbridge fundraiser, with proceeds supporting local student scholarships and other community needs projects.

Rotary International is a worldwide service organization whose members provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards and help build goodwill and peace. The Tantasqua Regional High School Interact Club is a Rotary-sponsored organization that brings together young people ages 12–18 to develop leadership skills while discovering the power of Service Above Self.

For more information about the Rotary Club of Sturbridge, visit sturbridgerotary.com or contact Klaus Hachfeld at laserklaus@gmail.com.

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MLS #73512426 $ 615,000

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

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Featured New Listing!
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This Beautifully Maintained Two-Level Waterfront Panoramic WATER VIEWS from almost every Single Window!! 50 Ft of Sandy Shoreline!! Front-row Northwest-facing Sunsets !!.. Offering a sweeping Wall of Windows to enjoy watching Mother Nature at her Finest!! Wood Flooring!!...This Main Level has an Effortless Layout adding a Roomy Convenient Bedroom & Large Closet, Full bath, 1/2 Bath & Laundry!!... Downstairs, the Walk-out Lower Level Transitions into a phenomenal Guest Retreat with 2 Bedrooms, Living space, and Full Bath!!..2 Car Garage! MLS#7356983 $1,050,000.

24 Laurelwood Dr
Webster Lake Waterfront

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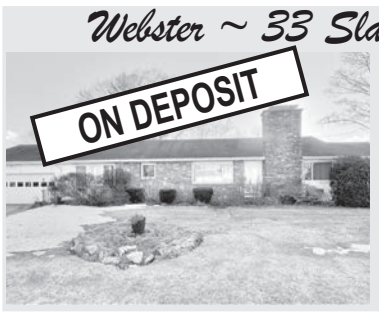
MLS#73563787 $1,750,000

Webster ~ 33 Slater Street



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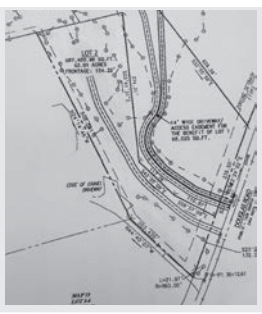
MLS # 73500183 $464,900



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Webster Lake ~
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8. Do you support a woman's right to make her own health care decisions ?
9. Should we make our medicines here in western Massachusetts so we aren't dependent on foreign drug manufacturers and supply lines, as happened during COVID shortages ?
10. Do you believe there should be term limits in Congress ?
11. Do we need to stop our elected officials and their families from enriching themselves at taxpayer expense while in office ?
12. Has Richard Neal been in Congress too long and is he unresponsive to people in western Massachusetts ?
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