

Charlton Villager

©2026, Issue #3

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Thursday-Friday, January 22-23, 2026

Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation to host Fourth Annual “Heroes Among Us” event

CHARLTON — The Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation (DCEF), which awards thousands of dollars in grants annually, will host its third annual “Heroes Among Us” event on March 28 to recognize and honor the exemplary individuals in our DCRSD community.

This event will be an opportunity to thank the many educators and support services staff who have gone above and beyond to make a difference in the lives of the students of our community. The event will be held at the Wellsworth Hotel (formerly Southbridge Hotel & Conference Center) and will include a dinner and dancing, awards ceremony, and silent auction.

Honorees are:

Cindy Snow, music teacher, Dudley Middle School

Michelle Hooper, kindergarten teacher, Mason Road



Heather Bowes, parent volunteer

Steve Laabs, custodian, Heritage School

Wayne Tower, custodian, Dudley Elementary School

Nicole Fossas, girls cross country coach, Shepherd Hill Regional High School

Len Harmon, cross country & track coach, Shepherd

Hill Regional High School

MaryEllen Cerbone, director of human resource, District Office

“As we celebrate this year’s extraordinary ‘Heroes,’ I continue to be humbled by the depth of their dedication and the lasting impact they have on our community,” shares DCEF President Sabrina Webb. “Their unwavering commitment to our students goes well beyond the class-

room. I offer my heartfelt thanks to each honoree and to everyone who champions the mission of DCEF.”

Tickets for the dinner are \$75 per person, and can be purchased online at <https://dcfFOUNDATION.ORG/Event/4th-annual-heroes-among-us-awards-night/>.

Established in 2008, the Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation (DCEF) Inc. is a nonprofit corporation that unifies efforts among educators, parents, and community members to secure the highest advantages in public education. The DCEF strives to promote continued educational excellence by strengthening community support and by funding programs that encourage innovation and enrichment throughout the district.

Sturbridge police and fire respond to Main Street crash



Pack of Paws to host greyhound adoption event

CHARLTON — Have you ever thought about adopting a Greyhound? Greyhound Options Inc, a non-profit adoption group dedicated to finding homes for retired racing Greyhounds after their racing careers are over, will be holding a Winter Social at Pack of Paws in Charlton on Saturday, Jan. 31 and the public is invited.

Greyhound Options (GO) has just entered its 30th year of operations, finding homes for more than 1,800 Greyhounds throughout Massachusetts, northern Connecticut, southern New Hampshire and Rhode Island. An all-volunteer organization, the group relies on foster families to provide a safe home for the dogs to acclimate to life after racing until a permanent home can be found. Greyhounds are known for their calm, gentle nature and are very social, fitting into almost any living situation. Widely known as “30-mile-an-hour couch potatoes”, they do not require as much exercise as people might think. They are happy with walks or a quick run in an enclosed yard.

Come see what a joy adopting a Greyhound can be or to learn more about fostering. The Winter Social is free and will be held from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. at Pack of Paws, 26A Trolley Crossing Rd., Charlton. For more information, visit greyhoundoptions.org.

Charlton Lions join effort to combat food insecurity across Worcester County



Dry ingredients for Spanish rice and min-

estrone soup were measured, packaged,

weighed and sealed and the packets loaded into

boxes to be distributed to food banks and com-

munity organizations throughout Worcester County.

“This project reflects the heart of what Lions do – bringing people together to serve our communities in meaningful ways,” said Andrew Keane, District Governor. “By working collectively across Central Massachusetts, we are making a real, measurable impact in combating food insecurities in local communities.”

The Lions of Central Massachusetts are part of Lions Club International District 33A, a network of 45 local Lions Clubs dedicated to serving the communities of Central Massachusetts. Lions focus on addressing critical community needs, including hunger, vision care, youth services, and disaster response. To learn more, visit lionsdistrict33a.com.

CHARLTON — Members of The Charlton Lions Club were among more than 150 volunteers who packaged 13,000 meals in 35 minutes to help feed area residents who are patrons of local food banks.

The service project, sponsored by District 33A of Lions Clubs International, was held on Sunday, January 11 at the Boys & Girls Club of Worcester and included volunteers from Lions Clubs, Leos Clubs (high school age Lions) and other high school students. The event was a partnership with End Hunger New England.

The Charlton volunteers spent more than 35 minutes on this effort. As early arrivals, they spent at least an hour helping to carry in the cases of food and set up the packing stations before the timed packing began.

Cornerstone Bank continues support for WCAC with \$25,000 Fuel Fund donation

WORCESTER — Temperatures are dropping and Cornerstone Bank, a community bank with locations throughout Central Massachusetts, wants to help make sure residents have the warmth they need to get through the coldest months. Just like last year, Cornerstone is donating \$25,000 to the Worcester Community Action Council's Emergency Fuel Fund. The Bank contributed \$50,000 in both 2022 and 2023.

"Each year, we see how rising fuel costs place real strain on families," said Cornerstone Bank CEO Todd Tallman. "WCAC continues to be a lifeline for residents who might otherwise have to choose between staying warm or meeting other essential needs. We are grateful to be able to support their efforts again this year."

Trinity Catholic Academy announces open house

SOUTHBRIDGE — Trinity Catholic Academy invites the community to an Open House for parents of prospective students in Pre-K through eighth grade Sunday, Jan. 25 from 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Meet our teachers, visit classrooms, and apply for early registration!

The school is located at 11 Pine St. in Southbridge.

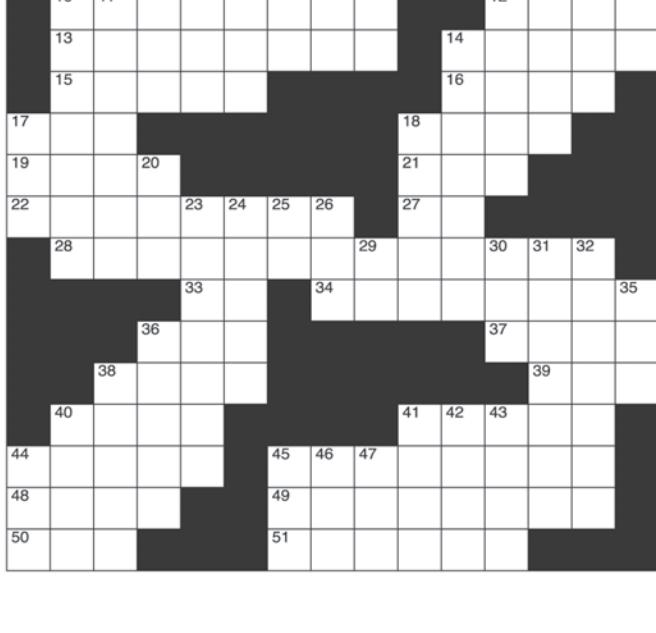
Capstone Planning Group

WEALTHCARE | RETIREMENT | INCOME

www.thecapstone.group

Located at Cornerstone Bank
200 Charlton Road (Suite B), Sturbridge, MA

Visit our website to schedule your courtesy retirement checkup today!



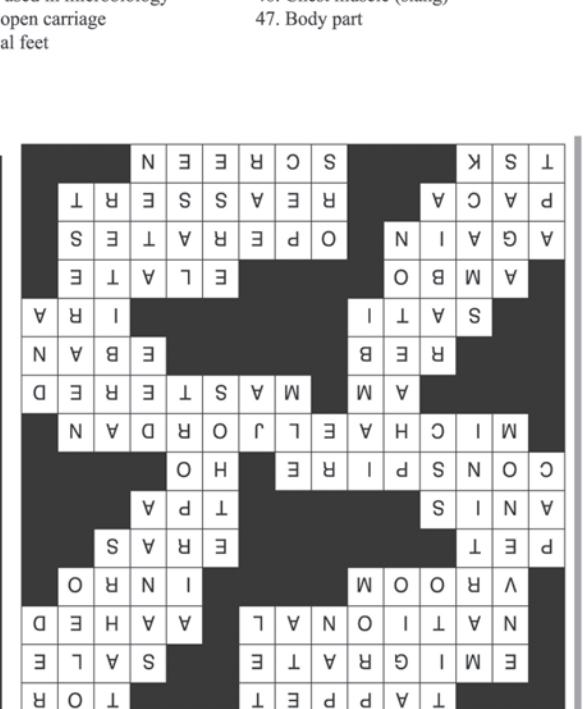
CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Mechanical lever
- 7. Rocky peak
- 10. Leave a country
- 12. Discount
- 13. D.C. ballplayer
- 14. Partner to "ooed"
- 15. Engine sound
- 16. Japanese ornamental box
- 17. Fido is one
- 18. Amounts of time
- 19. DiFranco and Phylo are two
- 21. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
- 22. Make secret plans
- 27. "Tiny Bubbles" singer
- 28. "His Airness"
- 33. Morning
- 34. Perfected
- 36. Winger guitarist Beach
- 37. Abba ___, Israeli politician
- 38. Self-immolation by fire ritual
- 39. A way to save money
- 40. Pulpit
- 41. Make ecstatically happy
- 44. Once more
- 45. Works on
- 48. Nocturnal S. American rodent
- 49. State again
- 50. Expression of disappointment
- 51. Type of door

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Yugoslavian communist leader
- 2. Exchange rate
- 3. High school dance
- 4. Peter's last name
- 5. When you anticipate arriving
- 6. Israeli city __ Aviv
- 7. Goat-like mammals
- 8. Margarine
- 9. End-of-the-spectrum color
- 10. Make poisonous
- 11. Popular beverage
- 12. Actress Lathan
- 14. Where planes land and depart
- 17. Political fundraising entity
- 18. The distinctive spirit of a people or an era
- 20. Buffer used in microbiology
- 23. Light, open carriage
- 24. Metrical feet
- 25. Email subject line feature
- 26. A street with lots of nightmares
- 29. Rapper Rule
- 30. River in Scotland
- 31. One who settles a dispute
- 32. Most chummy
- 35. We all have our own
- 36. Arab tribe
- 38. Slap
- 40. Ottoman military commanders
- 41. Scottish or Irish Gaelic language
- 42. Emit coherent radiation
- 43. Sun or solar disk (Egyptian mythology)
- 44. Inclined to
- 45. Olfactory reference syndrome
- 46. Chest muscle (slang)
- 47. Body part

PUZZLE SOLUTION



The Emergency Fuel Fund helps homeowners and renters pay home heating bills and past due balances on utility bills incurred from November through April of each year. Income-eligible residents can apply for aid through the agency's federally funded Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

"Our mission as a community bank is to support the well-being of the people who live and work here," Tallman added. "We hope this contribution helps ease the burden for households facing a difficult winter."

About Cornerstone Bank

Cornerstone Bank was formed in 2017, born of a long history of supporting the community, and providing a strong foundation to help people and businesses thrive. Serving Worcester County, Massachusetts, Cornerstone Bank's local presence and community-based banking model enables a unique ability to deliver outstanding service, with a personal touch. Cornerstone, which is a subsidiary of PeoplesBankCorp, MHC, operating independently under its own name and brand, provides the highest level of service and expertise for individuals, businesses, and community organizations with branch locations throughout Central Massachusetts. Cornerstone works to connect customers with opportunities through a broad range of deposit and loan products and services. Built on Trust is not just a tagline, but also one of our guiding corporate values. Whether a business or personal partnership, Cornerstone stands on the foundation that relationships are built on trust. To learn about Cornerstone Bank's personal and business banking offerings, please visit cornerstonebank.com or call 800-939-9103.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

January 23-30

Southbridge

Friday, Jan. 23

- Senior Center — Exercise Class, 9-10 a.m., Community Center
- Senior Center — Bingo, 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Community Center

Saturday, Jan. 24

- Southbridge Chess Club, 10-11:30 a.m., Jacob Edwards Library (all ages welcome; boards provided)

Monday, Jan. 26

- Senior Center — Exercise Class, 9-10 a.m., Community Center
- Senior Center — Paper Crafts with Jeanne, 10:30-11:30 a.m., Community Center
- Senior Center — Cornhole, 1-2 p.m., Community Center

Tuesday, Jan. 27

- Latino Group, 9 a.m.-noon, Community Center
- Senior Center — Pitch Card Game, noon-1:30 p.m., Community Center

- Winter Playgroup (ages five and under with caregiver), 1:30-3 p.m., Community Center
- Rock Painting with Recreation, 4-5:30 p.m., Community Center

Wednesday, Jan. 28

- Senior Center — Exercise Class, 9-10 a.m., Community Center
- Senior Center — Brain Games, 10-11 a.m., Community Center
- Senior Center — Tap Dance, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Community Center
- Senior Center — Scrabble, 1-3 p.m., Community Center

Thursday, Jan. 29

- Latino Group, 9 a.m.-noon, Community Center

Friday, Jan. 30

- Senior Center — Exercise Class, 9-10 a.m., Community Center
- Senior Center — Bingo, 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Community Center
- Mindfulness Meditation with Iris (bring a yoga mat if you wish), 2-3 p.m., Jacob Edwards Library

Sturbridge

Saturday, Jan. 24

- Evening of Illumination at Old Sturbridge Village (timed seasonal illumination experience; check with OSV for times and admission details).

REAL ESTATE

Charlton

\$199,000, 18 Ramshorn Rd, Revive Commonwealth LLC, to Birch Grove Prop Inc.

\$175,000, 18 Ramshorn Rd, Shaw Development Inc, to Revive Commonwealth LLC.

\$140,000, Smith Rd #3, White Development Corp, to Gillies, James, and Gillies, Tammie.

\$140,000, Smith Rd #4, White Development Corp, to Gillies, James, and Gillies, Tammie.

None

SOUTHBRIDGE

\$492,450, 51 Green Ave, Njuguna, Paul W, and Maina, Tabitha, to Dossantos, Taciso M.

\$375,000, 29 Arland Dr, Grant, Susan, to Torres, Richard, and Berrios, Evelin.

\$715,000, 52 Wells Park Rd, Wright Dorothy S Est, and Mitchell, Martha, to Kelley, Lisa, and Pina, Emmanuel.

\$715,000, 54 Wells Park Rd, Wright Dorothy S Est, and Mitchell, Martha, to Kelley, Lisa, and Pina, Emmanuel.

STURBRIDGE

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WORCESTER

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WESTFIELD

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FRAMINGHAM

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Wellesley

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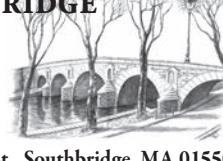
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Wellesley</h3

STONEBRIDGE

PRESS



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PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER
BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

The comfort of familiar places

There is a certain reassurance that comes from places that do not change much.

In Southbridge, Sturbridge and Charlton, those places are easy to name, even if everyone's list looks a little different. A favorite diner where the menu is predictable in the best possible way. A library corner where generations have sat with the same view out the window. A stretch of road where the scenery looks nearly identical to how it did years ago, season after season.

In a world that seems to reinvent itself constantly, familiarity can feel like a quiet luxury.

Change is not inherently bad. Our towns have evolved, adapted and grown in ways that reflect new needs, new families and new ideas. Storefronts turn over, technology reshapes daily life, and expectations shift. Progress is part of any living place. But there is also something deeply valuable in continuity, in knowing that some spaces remain steady even as life around them moves quickly.

Familiar places carry a kind of emotional memory. They remember us at different stages of life, even if we don't consciously think about it. A storefront recalls childhood errands run with a parent. A park bench brings back teenage conversations that once felt impossibly important. A library card connects past readers to present ones, all quietly sharing the same shelves.

These places ask very little of us. They don't require explanation or adjustment. We know where to park, where to sit, what to expect. That predictability creates a sense of ease that is easy to overlook until it is gone.

Winter, especially, brings this comfort into sharper focus. When weather limits options and travel, people naturally gravitate toward what feels known and reliable. There is something grounding about walking into a space where you already understand how it works, where the rhythm is familiar and the atmosphere feels unchanged. It can be a welcome contrast to the constant updates and notifications that dominate so much of modern life.

Familiar places also serve as quiet markers of time. They remind us that while our own lives may change dramatically from one year to the next, some parts of the landscape remain constant. That steadiness can be reassuring, particularly during seasons when everything else feels uncertain or in flux.

There is a temptation to measure progress only by what is new. New businesses, new developments, new initiatives. Those things matter, and they deserve attention. But there is also value in recognizing what has endured. Places that continue to serve the same purpose, in much the same way, year after year, provide a sense of grounding that cannot be replicated by novelty alone.

Small towns are uniquely positioned to offer this kind of stability. Unlike larger cities, where change can be rapid and disorienting, communities like ours often evolve more slowly. That pace allows residents to maintain a stronger connection to place, to feel rooted rather than swept along.

As new ideas and changes continue to shape the region, it is worth appreciating the quiet role familiar places play in everyday life. They offer comfort without fanfare. They hold memories without demanding attention. They remind us not only where we are, but where we have been.

Sometimes, the strongest sense of belonging does not come from what is new or exciting, but from recognizing what has remained — steady, recognizable, and quietly present — through all the changes around it.

Letter submission

policy

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

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

OPINION

Why Social Security matters more for women

When planning for retirement, Social Security isn't just another item on your financial checklist. For women especially, it's often the cornerstone of a secure retirement. The Social Security Administration reports that nearly 55 percent of Social Security benefit recipients are women, and for many, it's their primary source of retirement income.

Unlike investments that can lose value when the market drops, Social Security provides guaranteed income that adjusts for inflation and generally lasts as long as you live. That reliability makes it valuable for helping to address two major retirement risks: rising costs and the possibility of outliving your savings.

Life expectancy. On average, women live about five years longer than men (CDC 2023 Life Expectancy measure). That means they rely on Social Security for a longer period, making the decision of when to start benefits especially important.

Taking Social Security early reduces your monthly benefit. You can claim benefits as early as age 62, but every year you wait increases your monthly payments by two-thirds of 1%, or 8% per year, maxing out at age 70. Given women's longer life expectancy, that patience can pay off.

Building your benefit. Your Social



FINANCIAL FOCUS

TREVOR NIELSEN

Security benefit depends on your 35 highest-earning years. If you have years with zero or very low earnings in that calculation, it can reduce what you receive in retirement. Many women step away from work or reduce their hours to care for family members, and that trend is increasing. A 2025 University of Kansas analysis found that the share of mothers with children under age five leaving the workforce fell more in early 2025 than at any point in the past 40 years. The study also noted that rising return-to-office policies may continue to impact working mothers.

While staying in the workforce builds a stronger earnings history and better benefits, that isn't realistic for everyone. Those who can't may need to plan and fund alternative sources for retirement income.

Protection for married women. Marriage can provide additional Social Security options. A lower-earning spouse may receive up to 50 percent of their partner's full retirement-age benefit.

If your spouse dies, you can receive the higher of your own benefit or up to 100

percent of your deceased spouse's benefit. However, if you remarry before age 60 (age 50 for disabled widows), you lose eligibility for survivor benefits from your late spouse while the new marriage lasts.

Women divorced after at least 10 years of marriage may qualify for benefits based on an ex-spouse's record. If you remarry, you forfeit spousal benefits while the new marriage continues.

A word of wisdom: Report any name changes following marriage or divorce to the Social Security Administration to ensure your earnings and benefits are correctly credited.

Navigate carefully. Given the complexity of Social Security rules, the unique retirement challenges women face and the lasting impact of claiming decisions, working with a qualified financial advisor can be invaluable. An advisor can help you navigate questions about timing, spousal benefits and how Social Security fits into your overall retirement plan.

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.

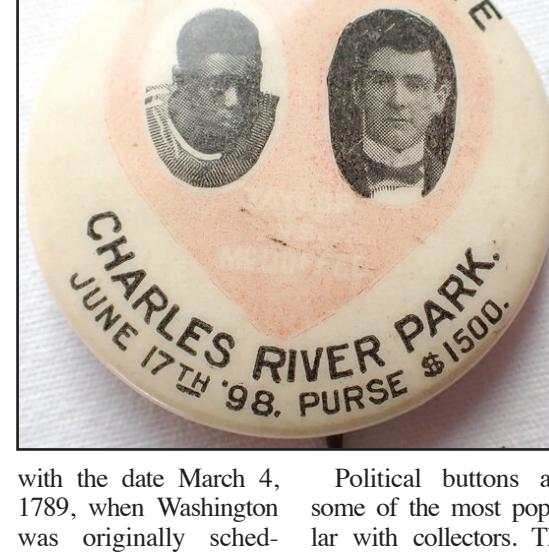
Pinback buttons



ANTIQUES,
COLLECTIBLES
& ESTATES
• • • • •
WAYNE TUISKULA

Today's column will focus on pinback buttons. Pinback buttons are usually round metal discs with a pin attached to the back that you can wear on a shirt, jacket, etc. We often associate them with political campaigns, but they were used in advertising, political messaging, and for other purposes.

I'll start by providing some history on pinback buttons. Prior to pinbacks several variations of clothes fastener buttons were created by craftsmen to commemorate George Washington's inauguration in 1789. Mount Vernon has nine different inaugural button versions in their collection, according to their website. One has an eagle



with the date March 4, 1789, when Washington was originally scheduled to be inaugurated. It was rescheduled to April 30. Another popular president's campaign advanced the use of buttons. During Lincoln's 1860 campaign ferotype (also known as tintype) photographs were made into campaign buttons. The images on thin metal sheets were reproduced and typically inserted inside of brass holders with campaign messages embossed on the brass. In 1896, the Whitehead and Hoag Company began producing brightly colored pinback buttons using a new plastic material called celluloid.

Political buttons are some of the most popular with collectors. The American Political Items Collectors group lists several subcategories of pinbacks. Some are presidential campaigns, focus on a single election year, single political parties, 3D items, local campaigns, Women's Suffrage movement, Prohibition movement, social causes, and Civil Rights.

Other types of collectible pinback buttons include comic characters, events, advertising, funny or serious sayings, entertainment, and sports.

You can buy some pinbacks for under a dollar while others can sell well into the thousands,

and we've seen some good results in our auctions. A group of political pinbacks, including McKinley for president, sold for over \$200. A group of 17 advertising, souvenir, Temperance Movement, circus & other pinbacks went for \$330 in 2024. As you might expect, sports related pinbacks are some of the most collectibles. Twelve early 1900s tobacco premium and 1930 Cracker Jack baseball pinbacks brought over \$260. Major Taylor was an African American cyclist who lived in Worcester and is in the U.S. Bicycling Hall of Fame. A pinback button labeled "Black vs. White" promoted an 1898 race between Taylor and Eddie McDuffee. It sold in one of our 2022 auctions for over \$1,400.

There is also a Worcester connection to one of the most iconic pinback buttons ever made. Harvey Ball is said to have created the iconic smiley face image that became popular on buttons since the 1960s. An article in the Smithsonian Magazine said that Ball was paid \$45 for what took him about 10 minutes to design the image for the State Mutual Life

Assurance Company. Smiley face pinback buttons with the original State Mutual markings on the back have recently sold between \$10 and \$60 in online auctions. It's not a windfall but still enough to put a smile on your face.

The single-collector Civil War auction we've been working on will begin soon. We're preparing for a major auction with fine jewelry, sterling silver, art, and other antiques and collectibles that will take place after that. We also have been accepting consignments for a major sports and comic book auction that will take place in the summer. It will feature the first baseball Ted Williams signed when he signed a contract with the Boston Red Sox. Please visit our website <https://centralmassaucts.com> for links to upcoming events.

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

Lanterns Along Main Street

There was a time when every important message in life arrived in an envelope.

You could tell what kind of day it was going to be by the look of the mail. A thick envelope meant paperwork. A thin one with careful handwriting meant something better. Sometimes it was a birthday card. Sometimes it was a note from an old friend who had not forgotten you. Either way, it required a small ritual. You carried it inside. You sat down. You opened it slowly. You read it more than once.

These days, most of our messages arrive silently. They pop onto a screen and vanish with the swipe of a finger. Efficient, yes. Convenient, absolutely. But I sometimes wonder what we lost when we stopped holding words in our hands.

I was reminded of this last week, when I found a small stack of old letters tucked inside a desk drawer. They were not famous letters. No historic figures. No dramatic confessions. They were simple notes from people who mattered to me at different points in life. A thank-you card from a neighbor after we helped move

a couch. A short letter from a relative who has since passed. A postcard sent from a vacation years ago, the handwriting slightly crooked, the ink faded around the edges.

What struck me was not the content alone. It was the care. Someone took time to sit down, choose a pen, and shape each word. Someone thought enough of me to place a stamp in the corner and walk it to a mailbox. That effort carried meaning all its own.

In our Massachusetts towns, we still see glimpses of that slower rhythm. You notice it when someone holds the door at the post office and waits, rather than rushing past. You see it when neighbors exchange Christmas cards that arrive days after the holiday, yet feel no less warm. You hear it when someone says, "I wanted to tell you this in person," and means it.

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.

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They would carry recognition. Our small towns have always thrived on these quiet gestures. The casserole dropped off without being asked. The wave to a familiar face at the grocery store. The short conversation at the hardware counter that turns into advice about life rather than screws. These are the lanterns along our main streets. They do not blaze. They glow steadily, guiding us back to one another.

This week, I plan to write a few notes and send them the old-fashioned way. No special occasion. No dramatic reason. Simply a reminder to people I appreciate that they are seen and valued.

If you are looking for a simple way to make the world around you feel a little warmer, consider doing the same. Write one letter. Address one envelope. Drop it in the mailbox and walk away knowing you have sent something more lasting than a notification.

In a fast-moving world, choosing to slow down, even briefly, can feel quietly revolutionary. And sometimes, the smallest acts carry the brightest light.

Final public hearing on CDBG Mini Entitlement grant application set for Feb. 9

SOUTHBIDGE — The Town of Southbridge will hold public hearings to receive public input on the Town's FY21- FY24 Massachusetts Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Mini Entitlement (ME) Program Activities and the FY2025 CDBG ME Grant Application.

Current CDBG activities include code enforcement, street improvements, housing rehabilitation, and commercial façade improvements. Potential activities include downtown beautification, business development, street improvements, and public social services. All activities are based on the FY24 Community Development Strategy.

The final hearing will be held in the Economic Development and Planning Department, Town Hall, 41 Elm St., Southbridge, on Monday, Feb. 9 at 5 p.m.

The Town encourages any member of the public wishing to provide input and be heard to attend any meeting. Comments may be submitted in writing by email to sstarkey@southbridgemass.org or by mail: Attn: Sue Starkey, Economic Development and Planning Office, Southbridge Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, Southbridge, MA 01550. Written comments will be accepted until Feb. 6 at 11 a.m. Any comments received will be read at the next public hearing.

Funding by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Executive

Office of Housing and Livable Communities, Massachusetts CDBG Program.

Brimfield student named to James Madison University Dean's List

HARRISONBURG, Va. — Brimfield resident Grace Timmins has been named to the Dean's List at James Madison University for the fall 2025 semester. Students who earn Dean's List honors must carry at least 12 graded credit hours and earn a GPA of between 3.5 and 3.899. Timmins is majoring in Health Sciences - BS.

Founded in 1908, James Madison University is a public university located in

Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. JMU is one of the nation's leading lights in higher education, where students enjoy engaging relationships with world-class faculty who drive education innovation and support advanced research. With state-of-the-art amenities and facilities, students have access to NCAA Division 1 athletics. JMU also has the highest post-graduation job levels of all Virginia colleges.

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WPI students complete intensive research projects

WORCESTER — At Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), all undergraduates are required to complete a research-driven, professional-level project that applies science and technology to address an important societal need or issue.

Known as the Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP), this project is a core part of the innovative undergraduate experience at WPI. Centered around project-based learning, this hands-on approach offers students opportunities to help develop thoughtful solutions to open-ended problems. These real-world problems affect the quality of life for people in the communities where students work, giving students a chance to make a difference in the world before they graduate. All WPI undergraduates are required to complete an IQP, usually in their junior year, through which they apply science and technology to

address an important societal need or issue. About two-thirds of WPI students complete their IQP at one of the university's 50+ off-campus project centers located in more than 30 countries around the world.

"The WPI project-based curriculum's focus on global studies brings students out of the classroom and their comfort zones and into the global community to apply their knowledge and to solve problems," said Professor Kent Rissmiller, professor of International & Global Studies and associate dean of The Global School. "Students are immersed in all aspects of a different culture—from the way people live and work to the values they hold to the foods they eat, all valuable perspectives for surviving and thriving in today's global marketplace. They also learn the meaning and magic of teamwork; make a real and meaningful difference in their host community; and

gain a competitive edge for any resume, or graduate or professional school application."

The following students completed projects in the fall of 2025:

Julia Philbrook of Uxbridge, class of 2027, majoring in Biomedical Engineering, completed a project titled "An HRV Biofeedback Educational Application in Iceland."

Connor Daniel of Charlton, class of 2027, majoring in Computer Science, completed a project titled "Legacies of Albanian Emigration."

About Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) is a top-tier, STEM-focused university with an

R1 research classification and global leadership in project-based learning. Founded in 1865, WPI's distinctive approach integrates classroom theory with real-world practice, preparing students to tackle critical challenges through inclusive education, impactful projects, and interdisciplinary research. With more than 70 bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs across 18 academic departments and over 50 global project centers, WPI advances knowledge and innovation in fields such as life sciences, smart technologies, advanced materials and manufacturing, and global innovation. Learn more at www.wpi.edu.

Charlton Lions welcome visitors and questioners

CHARLTON — It's a new year with new possibilities for friendship, service, learning, giving and helping — some of the goals of The Charlton Lions Club, which invites Charlton residents to learn about Lionism at an informational meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 28. Come at 6:30 p.m. to the Great Room at The Overlook. Refreshments will be served. You will not be pressured to join. The meeting will finish by 8 p.m.

Come learn what Lions do — in the Charlton area and the world. Get acquainted with local Lions. Hear about their service projects and the fun they have raising funds to support their work.

The Charlton Lions Club, which was chartered in 1975, is part of Lions Clubs

International, an association made up of 1.4 million members in 49,000 clubs who bring hands and hearts to the communities in which they serve in nearly every country on earth.

If you plan to come on January 28, please contact Membership Chair Jennie Frisella at 508-434-2527. Then come to Door 62 off the Rose Garden at The Overlook. Use the service road off Masonic Home Road, stay to the right, park on the left across from the car sheds.

If you can't attend this meeting, come any second or fourth Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. to the same location. Regular meetings are held on those dates each month, September through June.

Jess Ertsgard named to President's List at Miami University

OXFORD, Ohio — Jess Ertsgard from Sturbridge was named to the Miami University fall 2025 President's list.

Miami University students ranked in the top three percent of undergraduate students within each division for the fall 2025 semester have been named to the President's list recognizing academic excellence.

Nationally recognized as one of the most outstanding undergraduate institutions, Miami

University is a public university located in Oxford, Ohio. With a student body of over 22,600 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students, Miami effectively combines a wide range of strong academic programs with faculty who love to teach and the personal attention ordinarily found only at much smaller institutions. Established in 1809, Miami University is consistently ranked among the top 50 national public universities

Local students earn President's List honors at Nichols College

DUDLEY — Nichols College is proud to recognize the academic accomplishments of students on the fall 2025 President's List.

President's List recognizes those students who achieve high grades during a single semester. Students whose semester grade point average is 3.85 or higher for at least 12 undergraduate credit-hours and no grades below B- will receive President's List honors.

The following local students have achieved President's List honors:

Muhammad Abdul Wasay of Charlton
Cameron Burdick of Uxbridge

Olivia Charette of Charlton
John Guerin of Charlton
Ella Haker of Uxbridge
Matthew Lach of Charlton
Chloe McDonald of Uxbridge
Maggie Mullaly of Charlton
Shane Okenquist of Uxbridge
Christian Rachiele of Uxbridge
Matthew Smolski of Charlton
Emma White of Charlton
Luisa Henao of Southbridge
Robert Cleary of Fiskdale
Lydia Julian of Holland
About Nichols College

Nichols College has earned business accreditation from the prestigious Association to Advance

Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International), the longest serving global accrediting body for business schools and the largest business education network connecting learners, educators, and businesses worldwide. Founded in 1815, Nichols transforms today's students into tomorrow's leaders through a dynamic, career-focused business and professional education. Nichols offers real-world learning focused on professional depth - combined with vibrant living, competitive athletics, and an unmatched alumni advantage - equipping students to exceed their own expectations. www.nichols.edu

Emma Winkler graduates, makes Dean's List at Le Moyne College

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Emma Winkler of Sturbridge graduated from Le Moyne College in December 2025 with a Bachelor of Science in Biology degree and was named to the Fall 2025 Dean's List. To make the list, students must achieve a GPA of 3.5 or above.

Located in a suburban setting on a picturesque 160-acre campus in Syracuse, N.Y., Le Moyne College is one of only 27 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States. Offering more than 30 majors, Le Moyne provides a

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Courage theme of Faith in Film Series at Charlton Federated Church

CHARLTON — Courage is the theme of the latest Faith in Film series at the Federated Church of Charlton (FCC). On the third Friday of each month at 6:30 p.m. the public is invited to view and discuss movies at no charge. Each showing includes free refreshments and a handout with pertinent and interesting information, key concepts and discussion questions about each film.

The Faith in Film Series this winter and spring includes the following:

Feb. 20 — "Selma" (2014) — This historical drama depicts the 1965 Selma to Montgomery voting rights marches and the courage of the black clergy, including the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., at the heart of that struggle. Directed by Ava DuVernay and written by Paul Webb, the film was nominated for two Academy Awards and four Golden Globe Awards.

March 20 — "Mrs. Miniver" (1942) — This film portrays the courage of ordinary people as it tells the story of one English woman's struggle to protect her family during World War II. Directed by William Wyler and

starring Greer Garson, Walter Pigeon and Theresa Wright, the film was a critical and a commercial success, becoming the highest-grossing film of 1942 and winning six Academy Awards. In 2006, the film was ranked number 40 on the American Film Institute's list of most inspirational movies and was placed on the National Film Registry by the Library of Congress in 2009.

April 17 — "Finding Nemo" (2003) — Created by Pixar Animation Studios for Walt Disney Pictures, this animated movie depicts an epic search for a kidnapped son by his father, both are clownfish and they are aided by a dizzy, forgetful regal blue tang fish named Dory. Featuring the voices of Albert Brooks, Ellen DeGeneres, Alexander Gould, Willem Dafoe, and Geoffrey Rush it was directed by Andrew Stanton, who co-wrote it with Bob Peterson, and David Reynolds. Finding Nemo was the first film to win an Oscar in the category of Best Animated Feature.

May 15 — "The General" (1926) — This silent comedy featuring Buster Keaton who

also co-directed it with Clyde Bruckman is based upon an actual locomotive chase that took place during the Civil War. While the film was not a commercial success when it was first released, it is now recognized as one of the greatest films ever made.

June 19 — "Drums Along the Mohawk" (1939) — This is the first color film directed by John Ford. It tells the story of the fight for American Independence along the Mohawk River in upstate New York. Based on a very popular novel of the same name, it stars Henry Fonda, Colette Colbert, John Carradine, and Oscar-winner Edna May Oliver. This film will be a perfect way for us to celebrate our nation's 250th anniversary a few weeks later.

"While all different in tone, each of these films explore what it means to be courageous and how that attribute displays itself in actions," said James David Moran, curator of the Faith in Film Series.

He further commented, "This program

explores the concept of faith in all its forms from believing in God, religion, institutions, intellectual concepts, and people. Our aim is to share important works of cinema, engage in a lively conversation, and have fun."

Faith in Film screenings take place in the Fellowship Hall of the Church at 64 Main St. in Charlton. For further information please call the Church at 508-248-5550 or email Pastor Shannan Hudgins at pastor@fed-church.org.

About the 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.

Gateway Players bring

"Remedial" to the stage

SOUTHBRIDGE — Gateway Players Theatre in Southbridge presents "Remedial," written by local playwright Jordan Miller. Performance dates are Feb. 27 & 28 and March 6 & 7 at 7:30 p.m. and March 8 at 2 p.m. The performances are held at Fellowship Hall of Elm Street Congregational Church, 61 Elm St. in Southbridge. Entrance is on Park Street (around the corner). Directed by Jordan Miller, Produced by Stephen Jean.

Tickets are \$18 for adults and \$15 for seniors and youth under 18. Tickets may be reserved by calling Gateway at 508-764-4531. Online credit card ticket sales are available at <https://www.ticketleap.events/tickets/gateway-players/remedial>.

The cast includes Patrick Bracken (Robin), Tey Ferron (Dr. Hamilton),

Assumption students named to Fall Dean's List

WORCESTER — Assumption University has announced those who have been named to the University's Dean's List for the fall 2025 semester. Students named to the Dean's List must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 for a five-class, 15-credit semester to be included on this prestigious list, which is announced at the completion of the fall and spring semesters.

Mariam Ayoub of Charlton
Lillian Dolan of Charlton
Isabella Nolan of Uxbridge
Kyleigh Sacco of Uxbridge
Kelsy Brown of Charlton
Julia Carty of Charlton City
Olivia Gray of Uxbridge
Adelaide Greenwald of Uxbridge
Madison Cantwell of Fiskdale
Haley Courtney of Sturbridge
Lilina Shiers of Wales
Norah Stewart of Brimfield
Yheraldine Baez of Southbridge
Elena Jerez of Southbridge

"Earning the right to be named to the Assumption University's Dean's List is an extraordinary accomplishment and we congratulate those students who demonstrated

Vivian Eliza Nichols (Angel), Katie Walsh (Morgan), Stephen Clarke (Jamie), Greg Glanville (Cameron), Mary Tisdell (Devin) and Asher McCoy (Blake).

Robin is a disillusioned author who reluctantly takes a job teaching remedial English to a group of adult students. Bitter from past trauma and career setbacks, Robin initially struggles to connect with these diverse students, each of whom carries their own burdens. As the story unfolds, the classroom becomes a space for unexpected growth, where Robin and the students challenge each other's assumptions and learn to confront their insecurities. Through humor, conflict, and shared vulnerability, "Remedial" explores themes of resilience, empathy, and the transformative power of understanding and human connection.

exemplary academic excellence this semester," said Assumption University President Greg Weiner, Ph.D. "These students have demonstrated a deep commitment to the pursuit of truth in the company of friends that lies at the heart of the Catholic liberal education Assumption provides."

About Assumption University

Assumption University, founded in 1904 by the Augustinians of the Assumption, is a premier New England university for high-quality education, integrating career preparation and education of the whole person, drawing upon the best in the rich and centuries-long tradition of Catholic higher education. Assumption's graduates are known for their intellectual seriousness, thoughtful citizenship, and devotion to the common good. The University offers 37 majors and 49 minors in the liberal arts, sciences, business, nursing, professional studies, and other areas, as well as graduate degrees and professional credentials. For more information about Assumption University, please visit assumption.edu or follow us @AssumptionUMA.

Carissa Allard of Charlton achieves Dean's List at NECC

HAVERHILL — Congratulations to Carissa Allard of Charlton on being named to the Northern Essex Community College Fall 2025 Dean's List.

To be included, students must attain a grade point average of 3.3 or higher within the term, carry six or more credits within the term, and be matriculated in a degree program.

Northern Essex Community College, the first federally designated Hispanic Serving

Anjolina Claire Fantaroni named to President's List

at Elon University

ELON, N.C. — Anjolina Claire Fantaroni of Southbridge has been named to the President's List for the 2025 fall semester at Elon University. The President's List is composed of students with no grade below an A-minus in a minimum of 12 semester hours.

Elon University is a nationally recognized leader in engaged, experiential learning that prepares graduates to be creative, resilient, ambitious, and ethical citizens of our global culture.

At Elon, more than 7,000 students learn through hands-on experiences and close working relationships with faculty and staff whose priorities are teaching and mentoring. The curriculum is grounded in the liberal arts and sciences with emphasis on global experiences and career development. More than 70 undergraduate majors are complemented by professional and graduate programs in law, business, education, and health care. Elon is ranked No. 1 for excellence in undergraduate teaching by U.S. News & World Report.

Elon's academic divisions include Elon College, the College of Arts and Sciences; the Martha and Spencer Love School of Business; the School of Communications; the Dr. Jo Watts Williams School of Education; the School of Health Sciences; and the School of Law, with programs in Greensboro and Charlotte, N.C.

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February events at Charlton Public Library

For further details and to register for programs, please visit our website (charltonlibrary.org)

Additional parking is available across the street at Town Hall and at the Elementary School.

The library will be closed Feb. 16.

Movies @ The Library

All showings are on Tuesdays at 1:00 pm ONLY unless noted - Dexter Hall - no registration required.

February 3: REMEMBER THE TITANS. In 1971, Virginia high-school football was everything to the people of Alexandria, but when the school board was forced to integrate an all-Black school with an all-white one, the foundation of football's tradition was put to the test. 2000. Rated PG. 114 minutes. Starring: Denzel Washington, Will Patton, Wood Harris, Ryan Hurst, Craig Kirkwood.

February 10: A BIG BOLD BEAUTIFUL JOURNEY. Two strangers who meet at a mutual friend's wedding have the chance to relive important moments from their pasts, illuminating the path that led them to the present and gaining the opportunity to change their futures. 2025. Rated R. 139 minutes. Featuring: Colin Farrell, Margot Robbie, Hamish Linklater, Jennifer Grant, Jodie Turner-Smith.

February 17: BAD GUYS 2. The Bad Guys are struggling to find trust and acceptance in their newly minted lives as Good Guys, when they are pulled out of retirement and forced to do "one last job" by an all-female squad of criminals. 2025. Rated PG. 104 minutes. Cast: Sam Rockwell, Marc Maron, Awkwafina, Craig Robinson, Anthony Ramos.

February 24: REGRETTING YOU. A mother and daughter must grapple with what's left after a devastating accident reveals a shocking betrayal and forces them to confront family secrets, redefine love, and rediscover themselves. 2025. Rated PG-13. 116 minutes. Starring: Mason Thames, McKenna Grace, Allison Williams, Dave Franco.

Play Games!

Mondays, February 2 (party games), 9 (Cribbage), 23 (Scrabble), 12:30-2:00 pm - Community Meeting Room - no registration required. Beginners and experienced players are welcome! Join us to play an old favorite or learn a new game!

Fiber Arts Club for Tweens & Teens

Mondays, February 2 & 23, 3:30-4:30 pm - Storytime Room - no registration required

Do you like to knit, crocheting, sewing, embroidery, needle felting, or other fiber art? Join us to hang out, practice your craft, learn from more experienced friends, or share your knowledge with others! Please note that we cannot guarantee the presence of a teacher to instruct specific crafts at every meeting. **Bring your current projects to work on!** This group is best suited for tweens and teens aged 9-18. Registration is not required!

Wiggles & Giggles for Littles (YFCP)

Mondays, February 2 & 9, 9:45-10:15 am - Community Meeting Room - registration required

Join the YMCA Family & Community Partnership for a free music and movement series created and facilitated by music teacher Laine Hanlon! Children, ages 6-23 months, with a parent/caregiver, will sing, move, play musical instruments, learn rhythm, and listen to stories. "Wiggles and Giggles" fosters physical, cognitive, social, and emotional learning through music and motion. Siblings are welcome. Space is limited, and registration is required each week. This series is sponsored by the YMCA Family & Community Partnership (YFCP) and hosted by the Charlton Public Library. YFCP is a Massachusetts Coordinated Family & Community Engagement (CFCE) grant funded by the Department of Early Education & Care and awarded to the YMCA of Central Massachusetts.

Wiggles & Giggles (YFCP)

Mondays, February 2 & 9, 10:30-11:30

am - Community Meeting Room - registration required

Children, ages 2-5, with a parent/caregiver, will sing, move, play musical instruments, learn rhythm, and listen to stories in this FREE series facilitated by music teacher Laine Hanlon! "Wiggles & Giggles" fosters physical, cognitive, social, and emotional learning through music and motion. Registration is required. Space is limited. This series is sponsored by the YMCA Family & Community Partnership (YFCP) and hosted by the Charlton Public Library. YFCP is a Massachusetts Coordinated Family & Community Engagement (CFCE) grant funded by the Department of Early Education & Care and awarded to the YMCA of Central Massachusetts.

Tiny Tots Storytime (ages 0-2.5)

Tuesdays, February 3 & 10, 10:00-10:45 am - Storytime Room

For babies and toddlers ages 0-2.5 with a caregiver. Join us for songs, fingerplays, board books, shakers, scarves, dancing, motor skills activities, and free play! Due to the high number of attendees, this is now a ticketed program. A certain number of tickets will be given to each child on a first-come-first-served basis. Once all tickets have been passed out, the program will be full. Late Arrivals: Available tickets will be given out until 5 minutes after the program has started. After that time, the program will be closed until free play time. We thank you for your understanding.

Adulting 101, Mindfully

Tuesdays, February 3 & 17, 5:00-6:00 pm - Community Meeting Room - registration required

Join us for a free, eight-week series for teens presented by Sur-thrive Wellness. Each session covers a different "Adulting" theme/topic combined with mindful practices. These sessions are best for teens aged 12-16, but older teens are welcome to attend. Please register for each session you wish to attend. Sur-thrive Wellness is a Holistic

Adulting 101, Mindfully

Tuesdays, February 3 & 17, 5:00-6:00 pm - Community Meeting Room - registration required

Join us for a free, eight-week series for teens presented by Sur-thrive Wellness. Each session covers a different "Adulting" theme/topic combined with mindful practices. These sessions are best for teens aged 12-16, but older teens are welcome to attend. Please register for each session you wish to attend. Sur-thrive Wellness is a Holistic

Alleged Incapacitated Person

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by **Raiza Rivera of Southbridge, MA** in the above captioned matter al-

leging that **Juan Y. Lopez** is in need

of a Guardian and requesting that **Raiza Rivera of Southbridge, MA**

(or some other suitable person) be ap-

pointed as Guardian to serve **Without**

Surety on the bond.

The petition asks the court to deter-

mine that the Respondent is incapaci-

tated, that the appointment of a Guard-

ian is necessary, and that the proposed

Guardian is appropriate. The petition is

on file with this court.

You have the right to object to this

proceeding. If you wish to do so, you

or your attorney must file a written

appearance at this court on or be-

fore 10:00 A.M. on the return date of

02/10/2026. This day is NOT a hearing

date, but a deadline date by which you

have to file the written appearance if

you object to the petition. If you fail to

file the written appearance by the re-

turn date, action may be taken in this

matter without further notice to you.

In addition to filing the written ap-

pearance, you or your attorney must file

a written affidavit stating the specific

facts and grounds of your objection

within 30 days after the return date.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal af-

fares or financial affairs or both. The

above-named person has the right to

ask for a lawyer. Anyone may

make this request on behalf of the

above-named person. If the above-

named person cannot afford a law-

yer, one may be appointed at State

expense.

WITNESS, on. Kathryn M. Bailey, First

Justice of this Court.

Date: January 12, 2026

Stephanie Fattman,

Register of Probate

January 22, 2026

MORTGAGEE'S SALE

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Accessibility Expert, specializing in working with those with disabilities, including depression, anxiety, autism spectrum, learning disabilities, and other disabilities.

Intro to ChatGPT

Tuesday, February 3 from 6:00-7:00 pm - Local History Room - registration required

Thursday, February 5 from 6:00-7:00 pm - Local History Room - registration required

Curious about ChatGPT and what it can do for you? Join us for a hands-on introduction to one of today's most popular AI tools! In this beginner-friendly workshop, you'll learn what ChatGPT is, how it works, and how it can help with everyday tasks like writing, researching, organizing ideas, learning new skills, and more. No technical experience is required—just bring your curiosity and get ready to explore the world of artificial intelligence in a simple, practical way.

Baby Storytime (0-12 months)

Wednesdays, February 4 & 11, 10:00-10:45 am - Storytime Room - no registration required

For infants - 12 months only. Join us for board books, songs, fingerplays, music, shakers, scarves, bubbles & free play! This is a drop-in program. No registration or ticket required.

Better Read Than Dead Book Club

Wednesday, February 4, 11:00-12:00 - Local History Room - no registration required

Do you love true crime? So do we! Join us for a monthly meet up to discuss entertaining & fascinating details about true crimes. The book will be available at the adult circulation desk one month prior to the meeting. This month, we will discuss Death in Mud Lick by Eric Eyre.

AI for Seniors

Wednesday, February 4, 1:00-3:00 pm - Dexter Hall - registration required

Robots, smart assistants and magic-sounding tech—oh my! If you've ever wondered

Turn To **EVENTS** page A10

LEGALS

PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 166, §22F notice is hereby given of a public hearing to be held by the Town Manager on Thursday, March 5 at 10:00 a.m. in the George Parent Meeting Room, second floor of the Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, in regards to a petition filed by National Grid for the following Order for JO Pole installation: **LEBANON HILL RD:**

National Grid, Inc., requests permission to locate poles, wires and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures along and across the following public way: **LEBANON HILL RD.** National Grid to install 1 JO Pole on **LEBANON HILL RD.**, beginning at a point approximately 165 feet north of the centerline of the intersection of Lebanon Hill Rd. and Elmwood Rd. Install 1 JO Pole for residential service upgrade.

Anyone wishing to be heard regarding this petition will be given the opportunity to speak.

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE
John D. Jovan Jr., Town Manager
January 22, 2026

Town of Sturbridge Select Board Public Hearing

In accordance with the requirements of M. G. L. Chapter 40A, § 11, and the Votes Act of 2022, and effective June 23, 2022, section 25B. The Sturbridge Select Board will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at 6:45 pm at the Sturbridge Town Hall, 308 Main Street, Sturbridge MA to opt out of offering Vote by Mail and Early Voting for the Local Election in April 2026. Any person interested or wishing to be heard on the issue should appear at the time and place designated.

January 22, 2026

PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 166, §22F notice is hereby given of a public hearing to be held by the Town Manager on Thursday, March 12 at 10:00 a.m. in the George Parent Meeting Room, second floor of the Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, in regards to a petition filed by National Grid for the following Order for JO Pole installation: **MOON ST:**

National Grid, Inc., requests permission to locate poles, wires and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures along and across the following public way: **MOON ST.** National Grid to install 1 JO Pole on **MOON ST.**, beginning at a point approximately 364 feet north of the centerline of the intersection of Snow St and Moon St. Install 1 JO Pole P3-50.

Anyone wishing to be heard regarding this petition will be given the opportunity to speak.

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE

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. WO20P1528EA

CITATION ON PETITION FOR

FORMAL ADJUDICATION

Estate Of:

Bessie Michael

Date of Death: 12/27/2017

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **S/A - Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Margaret E. Michael-Ralston of Pittsford NY** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that:

Margaret E. Michael-Ralston of Pittsford NY be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve 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

OBITUARIES

Maureen Anne Ethier, 87

Ware ~ Maureen Anne (Welsh) Ethier, 87, died Sunday, January 11, 2026, at Baystate Wing Memorial Hospital in Palmer surrounded by family, following an illness. She was the beloved wife of 68 years of Richard T. Ethier, whom she married on November 30, 1957.

Mrs. Ethier was born in Holyoke, MA, on March 1, 1938, daughter of the late William and Lorraine (Gelinas) Welsh. She was a graduate with the class of 1955 from Holyoke High School. When she and her husband settled down in Brimfield to raise their family, she owned and operated the former Crystal Brook Dollhouse and Miniatures in Brimfield, MA for 33 years. Mr. Ethier would build the dollhouses, and she would craft the miniatures. Among her many activities, Mrs. Ethier enjoyed crafting, sewing, gardening, and miniaturing. She was a very involved parishioner of St. Christopher's Church, and she taught Catechism for many years to the church's youth. Her greatest joy was spending time with her family.

She is survived by her husband, Richard T. Ethier Sr. She is also survived by their children: Richard Ethier, Jr. of Tucson, AZ; David Ethier of South Grafton, MA; Christopher Ethier of Johnston, RI, and Cynthia Ethier of Shrewsbury, MA. Mrs. Ethier was predeceased by her daughter,

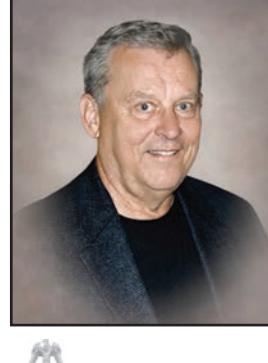


ter, Michelle Ethier-Lazo, who died September 14, 2020. She is also survived by her four grandchildren: Jennifer Ellison, James (Jay) Ethier and his wife, Lori, Garret Lazo, and Benjamin Lazo; 4 great-grandchildren: Hailey, Taylor, Adelyn, and Blake; and by her brothers Robert Welsh of Puyallup, Washington, and Michael Welsh of East Longmeadow, MA, as well as by many nephews, nieces, and friends. She is predeceased by her brothers, William Welsh and Richard Welsh, and her sister, Kathleen Welsh.

Calling hours were held on Friday, January 16, from 4-6PM, at Sansoucy Funeral Home, 40 Marcy Street, Southbridge, MA. A Mass of Christian Burial for Mrs. Ethier was held on Saturday, January 17, at 11AM, in St. Christopher's Church, 16 Sturbridge Road, Brimfield, MA. Family and friends were invited to gather at the funeral home from 9-10AM prior to the Funeral Mass. Burial was immediately follow in Brimfield Cemetery, 28 Wales Road, Brimfield, MA. The family requests in lieu of flowers that you kindly consider making memorial donations in Maureen's memory to either St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105 or to the International Guild of Miniature Artisans, P.O. Box 3643, Hollywood, FL 33083.

Stanley J. Soltys

1943-2026



Warren - Stanley John Soltys, age 82 passed away on the afternoon of Saturday, January 10, 2026, at Saint Vincent Hospital in Worcester. Stanley was born on September 3, 1943, in Palmer, Massachusetts, son of the late Stanley J. Soltys, Sr. and Genevieve E. (Kosmider) Soltys. Stanley was a 1961 graduate of Palmer High School. On December 27, 1961, Stanley enlisted in the United States Navy, and proudly served his country for four years. Stanley was stationed at the former Chelsea Naval Hospital, where he served as a medical corpsman. He and his unit were put on active alert during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. Stanley was honorably discharged on April 26, 1966, with the rank of HN (Hospital Corpsman). He enrolled in Worcester Polytechnic Institute School of Industrial Management in Worcester and received a 4-year certificate in Industrial Management. Stanley was employed for American Optical in Southbridge for 20 years and in 1987 went to work for E. Osterman Gas Service. While employed at Osterman Gas, Stanley held many titles: Plant Manager, District/Area Manager and retiring as Key Account Manager in 1999. In 2002, Stanley underwent a kidney and liver transplant at the Lahey Clinic. He enjoyed cooking and was especially known for his Bread & Butter pickles and relishes. On November 12, 1966, Stanley entered into Holy Matrimony, in St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Palmer, with Beverly Ann Bradlenski, they have been married for 59 years. Stanley was a member of the former Knights of Columbus in Warren, where he planned several fundraising dinners. For the past 21 years, he was a communicant of St. Mary's Church in Ware. He was also a past member of the Warren Capital Planning Committee. Stanley and Beverly lived for 38 years in Sturbridge and 21 years in Warren. Stanley leaves behind his loving wife, Beverly Ann (Bradlenski) Soltys, his sisters in law; Carol Ann Soltys and Joan Carol Doleva, nephews and nieces: Debra Ablicki (Tom), Daniel Murphy (April), Mark Murphy, Lisa (Soltys) Navin (Rick), Gary Soltys (Kathleen), and Jennifer (Doleva) Bowser (Jason). He also leaves behind his great nephews and nieces: Jonathan Ablicki, Jennifer Ablicki, Ashley (Navin) Malnati, Erin (Navin) Munro, John Soltys and Andrew Soltys, along with many cousins and friends. Stanley also leaves behind his loving miniature schnauzer, Lady. Stanley was predeceased by his father, Stanley J. Soltys, Sr., in 1956, his mother, Genevieve E. (Kosmider) Soltys-Dojka in 2000, and his brother, John J. Soltys and sister Helen Murphy-Hall both on August 28, 2000. Calling Hours for Stanley will be held on Friday, January 23, 2026, from 3 - 5 pm in Cebula Funeral Home, 66 South St., Ware. A Funeral Mass will be offered on Saturday, January 24, 2026, at 11 am in St. Mary's Church, 57 South St., Ware. Military Honors will be rendered following the funeral mass on the plaza in front of the church. In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to the following: The Warren Fire Firefighters Association, P.O. Box 608, Warren, MA 01083 or to Second Chance Animal Service, P.O. Box 136, E. Brookfield, MA 01515, or to a charity of your choice. Funeral Arrangements and Services are under the direction of Cebula Funeral Home, Ware. For more information and an online guestbook, please visit: www.cebulafuneralhome.com.



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EVENTS

continued from page A10 what AI actually is (and what it isn't), this fun, no-pressure class is for you. Explore how artificial intelligence shows up in everyday life, how to use it to make things easier, and why it's not just for the younger crowd. Come with questions, leave with confidence!

Threaded Together Fiber Arts Group (formerly Silver Needles Knit & Crochet Group)

Thursdays from 1:00-3:00 pm - Community Meeting Room - no registration required

Bring your current project and relax with friends. All are welcome regardless of skill level.

Genealogy Group Thursdays, February 5, 6:00-7:30 pm - Dexter Hall - registration not required

The Charlton Library Genealogy Group is a friendly group of people who share an interest in genealogy. We meet monthly on the first Thursday of the month. Meetings will alternate between general discussion topics and guest presenters. The meetings are free and open to the public.

Preschool Storytime (Ages 3-5)

Fridays, February 6 & 13, 10:00-10:45 am - Storytime Room

For ages 3-5. Join us for stories, songs, fingerplays, scarves, activities, crafts,

and free play! This is a TICKETED program. A certain number of tickets will be available for each child on a first-come, first-served basis. Once all tickets have been passed out, the program is full. Late Arrivals: Available tickets will be given out until 5 minutes after the program has started. After that time, the program will be closed until free-play begins. We thank you for your understanding.

Lego Club Friday, February 6, 3:30-4:30 pm - Storytime Room - no registration required

LEGO Club encourages children to learn while having fun! Creativity, problem-solving, and teamwork are some of the skills that "playing" with LEGOS can teach children. Join us on the first Friday of each month to complete a LEGO challenge. All LEGOs will be provided.

Try out the Lego Challenge, or create your own design! Bring your friends! This is a drop-in program recommended for ages 5-10.

Drop-in Tech Help - Local History Room - no registration required

Tuesday, February 3 & 24 and Thursday, February 5 from 4:30-5:30 pm

Saturday, February 28 from 10 am - noon

Do you have a few quick questions about technology? Would you like to learn how to use apps like Libby

or Kanopy? Drop in and speak with Charlton Library's Digital Skills Instructor and get the dedicated support you need. If you will need more than 15 minutes of tech help, please make a one-on-one appointment in person at the library, online, or by calling 508-248-0452.

We cannot assist with setting up a new device; fixing/restoring/repairing a broken or infected device, app, or email account; entering sensitive information for you (e.g. credit card information, social security number, online banking, etc.); key-boarding, typing, or proofreading documents. We cannot provide medical, legal, and business advice or opinions.

Friends of Charlton Public Library

Tuesday, February 10, 3:30-4:45 pm - Community Meeting Room

The monthly meeting of the Friends of Charlton Public Library. Everyone is welcome to attend.

CPL Book Discussion - Brave New World by Aldous Huxley

Thursdays, February 12, 6:00-7:00 pm - Community Meeting Room - no registration required

Books are available for checkout at the adult circulation desk one month prior to discussion.

Galentine's Day

Thursdays, February 12, 6:00-7:00 pm - Dexter Hall - registration required

Join us for a fun evening with crafts, snacks, and a little self care! We'll have a special Galentine's photobooth setup too! We have two sessions scheduled so that we can accommodate more

folks, please sign up for only one session. This program is for adults and teens ages 13 and up. Registration is required.

iPhone Essentials: Find My, Wallet, and Translate

Friday, February 13, 10:30-11:30 am - Dexter Hall - registration required

This class covers a variety of tools and features built into the iPhone and iPad. We learn to share our locations with our friends and family, make safe, secure payments with our phones, and converse in different languages using the Translate app.

Personalizing Your Device: Widgets and Apps

Friday, February 13, 12:30-1:30 pm - Dexter Hall - registration required

In this class, we learn to add helpful widgets to our Home Screens, choose which apps can send us notifications, and further explore options for customizing our wallpapers and Lock Screens.

Kids Yoga with Lindsey

Fridays, February 13 & 27, 4:00-4:30 pm - Community Meeting Room - registration required

In these classes, we will practice breathing techniques (pranayama), yoga postures (asana), and more to help participants connect with their bodies, minds, and spirits. This focus invites kids to recognize the ability to act and behave mindfully with compassion, to be brave, to know happiness, and to find inner peace and calm. While yoga helps build strength and flexibility, it also helps develop techniques for handling stress. Dress comfortably, and bring water and a mat if you have

Books are available for checkout at the adult circulation desk one month prior to discussion.

Galentine's Day

Thursdays, February 12, 6:00-7:00 pm - Dexter Hall - registration required

Join us for a fun evening with crafts, snacks, and a little self care! We'll have a special Galentine's photobooth setup too! We have two sessions scheduled so that we can accommodate more

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From Uganda to Jamaica

Visiting priest connects with Saint Joseph students

WEBSTER — Saint Joseph School recently welcomed Fr. James Kandole Saturday, a Catholic priest serving in Jamaica, for a two-day visit on Tuesday, Dec. 2, and Wednesday, Dec. 3. Fr. Saturday is a longtime friend of Rev. Richard Polek, pastor of Saint Joseph Parish, and the two met through Food for the Poor, an international relief and development organization that supports communities in need through emergency aid and long-term assistance, including housing and other basic necessities.

Fr. Saturday began his visit by joining the school community for its Advent Prayer Service on Tuesday morning. Afterward, he spent the day in the school's classrooms, meeting students and staff across every grade level. Teachers noted how naturally he connected with younger children—at times sitting on the floor with them to talk about their interests and questions. In the Pre-K 3 classroom, Fr. Saturday used a small Nativity set as a hands-on way to discuss the birth of Jesus, helping students reflect on the meaning of the season in an age-appropriate, engaging way.

Later that afternoon, students in Grades 5–8 gathered in the parish center for an energetic question-and-answer session. Students asked everything from his favorite foods—such as matooke (green bananas) and Jamaica's well-known jerk chicken—to thoughtful questions about his childhood in Uganda, his decision to become a priest, his favorite Bible verse, and his guiding purpose in life.



Saint Joseph School National Junior Honor Society member Axel Kapitulik (Grade 8) presents a \$500 check to Fr. James Kandole Saturday. The donation will support Fr. Saturday's ministry and help fund repairs to his church following Hurricane Melissa, a Category 5 hurricane that struck Jamaica in October 2025.

Courtesy



Fr. James Kandole Saturday sits with Saint Joseph School's PreK three-year-old students during his classroom visit, speaking about the Nativity and the birth of Jesus as the children listen attentively.

ty, and the lasting emotional impact of the destruction—

Local students earn Dean's List honors at Nichols College

DUDLEY — Nichols College is proud to recognize the academic accomplishments of students on the fall 2025 Dean's List.

Dean's List recognizes those students who achieve high grades during a single semester. To be included on the Dean's List, a student must have a minimum grade point average of 3.5 for at least 12 undergraduate credit-hours and must have received no grades below B during the semester.

The following local students have achieved Dean's List honors for the fall 2025 semester:

service, character, and citizenship. At Saint Joseph School, members commit to service throughout the year and organize regular fundraisers to support a variety of charitable causes—both local and beyond.

Fr. Saturday

returned on Wednesday for a final gathering with the entire student body. Beth Boudreau, Principal of Saint Joseph School, presented him with a school gift bag and Saint Joseph School items as a token of appreciation. During the assembly, the Saint Joseph School National Junior Honor Society (NJHS)—advised by Mrs. Karen Lefebvre—presented Fr. Saturday with a \$500 donation to support his church's work.

The assembly concluded with the school community singing "Sto Lat" and taking a group photo with Fr. Saturday. Staff and students expressed gratitude for his visit and shared hope that he will return to Saint Joseph School again in the future.

NJHS is a national student organization that recognizes middle school students for scholarship, leadership,

Local students earn Dean's List

honors at Nichols College

Meghan D'Acri of Charlton

Alexandria Patterson of Uxbridge

Tyler Richardson of Uxbridge

Hunter Schiller of Uxbridge

Jonathan Martin of Southbridge

Benjamin Yarter of Sturbridge

About Nichols College

Nichols College has earned business accreditation from the prestigious Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International), the longest serving global accrediting body for business

schools and the largest business education network connecting learners, educators, and businesses worldwide. Founded in 1815, Nichols transforms today's students into tomorrow's leaders through a dynamic, career-focused business and professional education. Nichols offers real-world learning focused on professional depth - combined with vibrant living, competitive athletics, and an unmatched alumni advantage - equipping students to exceed their own expectations. www.nichols.edu

Chase Brush of Charlton named to

Provost's List at Hofstra University

HEMPSTEAD, N.Y. — Chase Brush of Charlton achieved a perfect 4.0 GPA during the fall 2025 semester, earning a spot on

the Provost's List at Hofstra University. Chase's major is Biology.

Hofstra University's primary mission is to

provide a quality education to its students in an environment that encourages, nurtures, and supports learning. At Hofstra, new

ideas take shape through collaboration, engagement, and interaction. Hofstra students create their success with small classes and dedicated faculty, alongside a beautiful campus, plus all the opportunities of New York City within easy reach.

Valentine's Night

Maxwell Luciano's at Union Station

Dine & Dance to your favorite LOVE SONGS

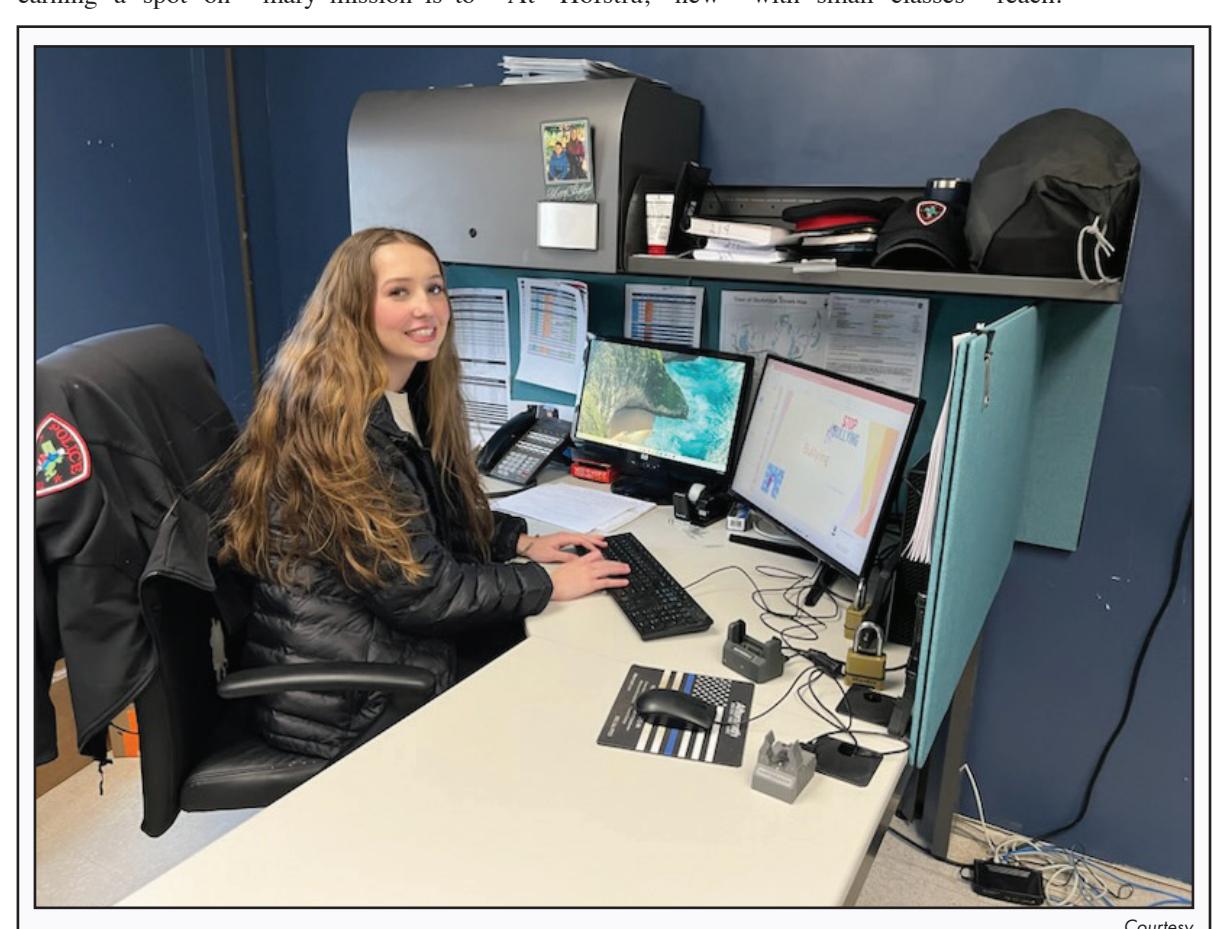
4pm Dinner

6pm DJ

Luciano's Cotton Club

Saturday, February 14, 2026

Call 508 755-1200 for reservations



The Sturbridge Police Department would like to recognize their high school intern, Natalie Sullivan, as she completes her internship with us this week. During her internship here, Sullivan has played a key role in supporting our department. She contributed to our daily operations by assisting staff with administrative tasks and presentations and gained firsthand insight into law enforcement through her time on ridealongs with our officers. We are proud to share that Natalie was accepted into all 13 schools she applied to. She hopes to attend Westfield State University this fall to pursue a major in Criminal Justice. The department thanks her for her work and service to the Sturbridge community, and wishes her the very best in your academic journey and your future professional career. Congratulations! Photo courtesy of the department's Facebook page.