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Courtesy

ALL SAINTS ACADEMY NJHS INSTALLS NEW OFFICERS

On Sept. 3, All Saints Academy held its Installation of Officers Ceremony for the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS). This meaningful event marked the beginning of a new chapter in student leadership as the newly elected officers were officially recognized. Each officer took a pledge, committing their time and effort to uphold the core values of the National Junior Honor Society: Scholarship, Service, Leadership, Character, and Citizenship. These guiding principles will shape their actions as they serve the ASA chapter throughout the school year. Congratulations to the newly installed NJHS officers: Connor Shelburne, President; Kallie Fales, Vice President; Charlotte Wentworth, Secretary; Alanna Yelu-Attigah, Treasurer. We look forward to seeing their leadership in action and the positive impact they will have on our school community.

Dudley Board of Health ponders adding PFAS testing regulation

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY — With PFAS continuing to be a lasting topic of concern and debate in Dudley, the town’s Board of Health is now mulling over the possibility of installing new regulations that would require PFAS testing for any new wells in town.

Interim Health Agent Thomas Purcell initiated the discussion during a meeting on Aug. 19, pointing out that given the continued concern over PFAS the Board of Health should at least consider adding new testing requirements to encourage transparency during new well construction or when properties are sold, although the board chose not to move on the issue until future discussion.

Purcell explained that with no state requirements for testing private wells towns need to create their own regulations using a model provided by the state. Towns can set a range of specific tests they require, which can include PFAS. While Dudley has existing regulations, PFAS is not included as a requirement. If PFAS was made a required test, the cost of testing for new wells could increase by as much as \$350 according to Purcell.

The discussion expanded to consider possibly initiating regulations for only “hot zones,” those area’s most affected by PFAS issues, or make it a town-wide regulation. There was also debate on whether regulations would require property owners to report any PFAS finding to the Department of Environmental Protection if there was a positive test. Currently PFAS tests are optional, and the results do not need to be reported to the DEP unless the property owner chooses to do so. There was also talk about increasing awareness and letting people make their own choice of what they do if they receive notices of increased PFAS risk in their area. A few private citizens spoke on the issue imploring everyone to take the risk seriously whether they are in a “hot zone” or not.

Still, the question remained whether the town should require PFAS testing to any extent. Purcell argued that PFAS testing provides assurance for everyone, whether it’s building a new home, selling a home, or buying a home in Dudley.

“It’s a peace of mind. Just like having your septic system pumped every year, every two years, every three years depending on your household. It’s an insurance policy in my eyes,” Purcell said.

He further argued that while there were concerns shared about how forced testing could impact property sales if PFAS is detected.

Purcell clarified that if the Board of Health chose, they could have voted to install the new regulation at the Aug. 19 meeting. However, despite the back and forth, the board held off on making a final decision tabling the discussion for a future meeting.

Oxford selectmen approve manager’s goals

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

OXFORD — The selectmen approved Town Manager Jen Callahan’s annual goals at their Sept. 2 meeting by a 4-1 vote.

The list fell under four headings – long-term financial and workforce sustainability, facility and infrastructure investment, improving engagement with boards, and improving residential experience.

For the first, selectmen tasked her with working with the state on revenue and expense forecasting, identifying structural budget challenges, organizational efficiency, and doing a compensation and classification study of town jobs. For the second, Callahan’s to work on building new bathrooms at Greenbriar and a new municipal parking lot, do a feasibility study of a new DPW garage, and

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Open house to showcase Dudley Senior Center renovations

DUDLEY — The town of Dudley is celebrating the newly refreshed Senior Center with an Open House at 4 p.m. on Sept. 18. All are invited to attend.

The Dudley Woman’s Club donated \$30,000 to modernize the 71 West Main St. space that provides meals and enrichment programs to our seniors as well as activities and event space to our community. This donation was made in memory of the DWC’s founding member Nancy J. Vajcovec, who dedicated countless volunteer hours to the town and local nonprofits by serving on several committees and commissions.

“The seniors are so happy with the renovations,” Council on Aging Director Deborah Johnson Director said. “We cannot thank the DWC enough for making this special gift happen.”

Nancy Jane A. Vajcovec (Feb. 18, 1947 – Nov. 26, 2022) of Dudley was one of five women who founded the Dudley Woman’s Club in 2008. Today, the club of more than 70 women of various ages and backgrounds from Dudley, Webster, Southbridge, Charlton, Uxbridge, Millbury and several Northern Connecticut towns work together to uplift and support the communities they serve.

“I thank the Dudley Woman’s Club for their generosity, Mrs. Johnson for her leadership, and the Council on Aging volunteers for

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Saint Joseph School begins new year with Backpack Blessing



Courtesy

WEBSTER — On Friday, Sept. 5, students, families, and faculty of Saint Joseph School gathered in the schoolyard for the school’s annual Backpack Blessing. The tradition, held each September, reminds students that they carry not only the pencils, crayons, and notebooks needed for learning, but also the powerful spiritual tools of prayer and blessing as they begin a new year.

This year’s blessing was especially meaningful, as it was the first celebrated by Fr. Richard Polek, who arrived on July 1 as the new pastor of Saint Joseph Basilica and headmaster of Saint Joseph School. The ceremony took place on a beautiful September afternoon, allowing parents to join students in the outdoor celebration.

Students lined up with their backpacks placed on the ground in front of them, each proudly displaying the distinctive 2025 tag. This year’s tag, designed in patriotic colors, featured the following prayer:

“Heavenly Father, bless these students and their backpacks as they embark on their new school year. Remind them of Your presence in the classroom, on the bus, and in every aspect of their lives. Guide them in their studies, help them to excel in their endeavors, and inspire them to be diligent and compassionate citizens.

Fr. Richard Polek, the new pastor of Saint Joseph Basilica and headmaster of Saint Joseph School, smiles as he blesses the backpacks of fifth-grade students during the school’s annual Backpack Blessing on Friday, Sept. 5.

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First Student hoping for smoother experience heading into new school year

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY/CHARLTON — Following an at times frustrating year for First Student in Dudley and Charlton, the company has entered the new school year confident it can close any gaps that resulted in staffing shortages and delays in route change notifications to help make for a more consistent experience for both parents and students.

Denise Bales, an Operation Supervisor for First Student, which is the contracted bus service for the Dudley Charlton Regional School District, provided an update to the School Committee in late August acknowledging that the previous year wasn't ideal and the company is working to make the new year more efficient. The school year started with 42 drivers on the fleet for 39 routes, which include some drivers still undergoing their licensing process and fill-in drivers in case of emergencies. The discussion included input concerning analytics and how the district and the company can work together to address times of increased driver shortages without interrupting the educational experience.

Last year intermittent driver shortages forced routes to be delayed, combined, or even canceled altogether causing frustration for parents who needed to work around their schedule to get their kids to stop locations or the schools. Bales said January was particularly difficult due to a stomach bug sidelining numerous drivers during a short time span. Bales said they had four reserve drivers and that she herself could step in to drive if needed. She's confident the company can maintain its routes and staffing to make for a smoother year overall.

"I have hope that this year we're going to be a thousand percent better. Our pay

is competitive, there's no reason why people shouldn't be lining up for the job quite honestly," said Bales.

School Committee member Anthony Aube said he would like to see data collected so that both the district and First Student can better understand peaks and valleys in driver absences which can help both parties better predict when there will be a shortage and work around these times when it comes to field trips, sports and other programs that require extra bus transportation accommodations.

"To a degree, there's a pattern of yes, there are these are high times of people getting sick because of the nature of the industry. But if we start seeing the analytics that show these are the normal spikes we can plan for those and we don't double up on the needs in those areas, but we only know that if we have the analytical data," Aube said.

Bales said she does keep her own record on file of any absences, when and why they occur; however she agreed there can be a more collaborative approach between First Student and the school district.

Joseph DeSantis, Director of Finance and Operations for the district, said they requested data from First Student at the end of the last school year which served as a general chart of missed routes and the reasoning. He hopes further data collection can help the district and First Student better predict increased needs and prepare for any shortages ahead of time.

"This was our first

time collecting that information as a district, so what we plan on doing is utilizing that as our starting comparison point, receiving the data on a monthly basis throughout the year from First Student, and then coupling and utilizing that information together to hopefully come up with some tangible action plans moving forward on how we can close any type of gap between open and missed routes and amount of drivers," DeSantis said.

Another major topic in the update was First Student's implementation of the updated FirstView 1.0, an application utilized by parents to track bus route information but also now utilized by the drivers to record any incidents of poor behavior by students on any given bus. Until this year there was a written disciplinary card, but the new implementation of FirstView will allow drivers to log incidents in a system that keeps a running log of any situations involving specific buses of students.

As for FirstView as a resource for parents, school officials are asking everyone to keep their app updated to the new version 1.0. Instructions for the update or how to access FirstView have been made available on the Student Transportation page of the district's Web site, along with other information regarding cur-

rent bus routes and how any changes or alterations to transportation are communicated and handled within the district.

REAL ESTATE

AUBURN

\$1,350,000, 1 Southbridge St, Vvl Realty LLC, to Central Ma Realty LLC.

\$1,350,000, 5 Jerome Ave, Vvl Realty LLC, to Central Ma Realty LLC.

\$650,000, 17 Bancroft St, Margaret Patton Ft, and Patton, Patrick, to Gallivan, Timothy, and Gallivan, Kelley.

\$550,000, 6 Athens St, Lefebvre, George C, and Lefebvre, Sara D, to Mcgloin, Courtney.

\$480,000, 2 Putnam Ln, Cooksey, Andrew, and Oneil, Melissa L, to Morrocco, Austin, and Morissette, Steven.

\$475,000, 191-193 Auburn St, Swieder, Nicholas M, to Desautels, Brendan.

DUDLEY

\$522,500, 225 W Main St, Gardecki Frank Thomas Est, and Gardecki, Bryan F, to Leblanc, Sabrina D, and Leblanc, Matthew.

\$440,000, 34 Old Southbridge Rd, Hopkins, Robert J, and Hopkins, Kersti M, to Klewin, Katherine E, and Kezik, Christopher B.

\$290,000, 8 Ridge Dr, Thibeault, Linda K, to Shaw Development Inc.

\$175,000, 72 NW Schoolhouse Rd, Engram Malcolm R Est, and Ferriter, John J, to Manchester Ent LLC.

OXFORD

\$400,000, 127 Southbridge Rd, Gillespie Jr, Ralph F, and Gillespie, Rebecca L, to Llewellyn Rt, and Crocker, David H.

\$157,000, 27 Lovett Rd, Baxter & Rojo Inc, to Power, David.

\$120,000, Coughlin Rd #5, Barton Ctr For Diabetes E, to Ttp Homes Inc.

WEBSTER

\$975,000, 11 5th Ave, Byrnes Inv Group LLC, to Afm Rt, and Marble, Allan.

\$975,000, 13 5th Ave, Byrnes Inv Group LLC, to Afm Rt, and Marble, Allan.

\$605,000, 8 Long Is, W & Sandra Perkins Lt, and Perkins, Walter J, to William Nitschke RET, and Nitschke, William J.

\$500,000, 4 Colonial Rd, Pereira-Alexio, Alcivani, and Rodrigues, Silvana V, to Carmichael, Janelle D.

\$450,000, 20 Houghton St, Francis J & A L Manzi Irt, and Manzi, Mark J, to Ipeghian, Natalie.

\$410,000, 169 Gore Rd, Lsf9 Master Part T, and U S Bank TNa Tr, to Rieser, Michael.

\$385,000, 678 School St, White, Tanya, to Megna, Michael, and Megna, Kelly.

\$360,000, 3 Sears Ave, Santora, Jai J, to Collier, Andrew, and Costello, Casey.

\$300,000, 5 Hall St, Gordon Dean Wentworth Irt, and Wentworth Jr, Gordon, to 5 Hall Street LLC.

\$42,220, 5 Kingsbury Rd, Bomysoad, Justin M, and Nye, Rachel M, to Nye, Rachel M.

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OXFORD

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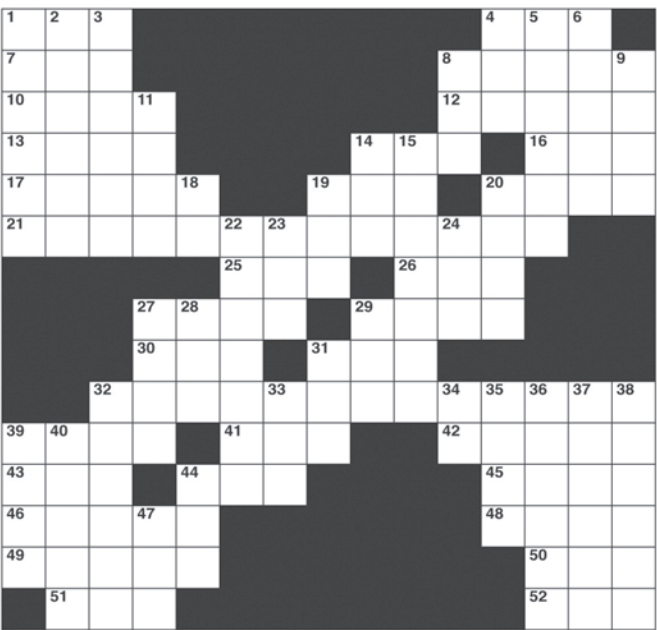
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Utilitarian fashion accessory

4. Engine additive

7. Macaws

8. Listens to

10. Self-righteously moralistic person

12. Made of wood

13. Chinese lute

14. Beginning military rank

16. Indicates near

17. Ties the score

19. Chum

20. Long ago

21. Localities

25. Midway between northeast and east

26. Make fun of

27. Tennis great Arthur
29. Construction location

30. Cow's noise

31. Blue

32. One of the Fab Four

39. Formula 1 team

41. Dash

42. Lifting device

43. Basics

44. Keyboard key

45. Old Irish alphabet

46. Shaking of the Earth's surface

48. Covered stadium

49. Sword handles

50. Longing or yearning

51. Creators' social network

52. Boxing's GOAT

CLUES DOWN

1. Occur

2. Show up

3. Capital of Taiwan

4. Ocean

5. Givers and ____

6. Gets ready

8. Ad ____

9. Fit of irritation

11. Criminal organization

14. Exclamation that denotes disgust

15. American state

18. Sensor hub

19. Before
20. The boundary of a surface

22. Witnesses

23. Singular

24. Type of meal

27. Music awards show

28. Former French coin of low value

29. A bag-like structure in an animal

31. Schenectady County Airport

32. Calm down

33. Partner to cheese

34. Cola brand

35. Stepped on

36. Japanese city

PUZZLE SOLUTION



State officials confirm second case of West Nile Virus

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — Area residents are asked to take precautions after the Massachusetts Department of Public Health announced the state's second human case of West Nile virus (WNV).

Officials confirmed that a woman in her 60s contracted the virus in Essex County.

As a result of ongoing evidence of WNV in mosquitoes, risk levels have been elevated to high in several eastern Massachusetts communities. Meanwhile, Worcester County residents are asked to remain vigilant and take steps to avoid mosquitoes.

"Massachusetts is in peak season for the spread of West Nile virus," said Public Health Commissioner Robbie Goldstein. "While the temperatures have dropped slightly, this is the time of year when most people get exposed to the virus."

The first WNV-positive mosquitoes in the state this year were announced on June 17. Since then, 364 mosquito samples have tested positive for WNV, including samples taken in Worcester and Hampden Counties.

There has also been one [animal case](#) of WNV reported this year.

Currently, the risk for WNV is moderate in 183 cities and towns across Barnstable, Berkshire, Bristol, Essex, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester Counties.

In addition to WNV, eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) has also been [detected](#) in mosquitoes in Massachusetts this year. There have been 21 EEE-positive mosquito samples, with no human or animal cases reported.

WNV and EEE are generally transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. There were 19 human cases of WNV reported in Massachusetts last year, plus four human cases of EEE, leading to one death.

One of the best ways to protect your family against mosquitoes is to avoid outdoor activities during peak mosquito hours from dusk to dawn. If you must be outside during these hours, be sure to apply insect repellent and maximize clothing coverage of exposed skin.

Residents can also reduce the number of mosquitoes around their homes by draining sources of standing water. Mosquitoes often lay their eggs in small pools, wheelbarrows, rain gutters, and drains. Residents are advised to frequently empty flowerpots and wading pools, in addition to changing the water in birdbaths daily.

It is also important to make sure that window and door screens fit tightly. Screens with holes or openings should be replaced, officials said.

Looking ahead, local leaders will post additional resources and updates on conditions within specific communities throughout the month.

Residents are also urged to take steps to protect their pets from mosquitoes.

Additional information about EEE and WNV, as well as reports of current and historical virus activity in Massachusetts, can be found by visiting: www.mass.gov.

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PUBLISHED BY STONEBRIDGE PRESS

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THE WEBSTER TIMES (USPS#024-928) (ISSN 1945-6611) IS PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY STONEBRIDGE PRESS, INC., 25 ELM ST., SOUTHBRIDGE, MA 01550. PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID AT SOUTHBRIDGE, MA AND ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICE(S). POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO WEBSTER TIMES, P.O. B OX 90, SOUTHBRIDGE, MA 01550

Healey works to ensure vaccine access

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — Amid heightening confusion over vaccine availability across the country, Gov. Maura Healey recently announced a series of measures to ensure that vaccines remain accessible to Massachusetts residents.

National vaccine access took center stage last week, when Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., was grilled by members of the Senate Finance Committee over policymaking and recent actions taken at the federal level.

In Massachusetts, leaders are hopeful that the Governor's recently announced actions will alleviate fears. With flu season fast approaching, residents statewide have flooded their elected leaders with questions over COVID vaccine access.

"Massachusetts has the best healthcare in the world," said Healey. "We won't let Donald Trump and Robert Kennedy get between patients and their doctors. When the

federal government fails to protect public health, Massachusetts will step up. The actions we are announcing today will make sure people can continue to get the vaccines they need and want in Massachusetts."

At Healey's direction, the Division of Insurance (DOI) and Department of Public Health (DPH) issued a bulletin that requires insurance carriers in Massachusetts to continue covering vaccines recommended by DPH, and not rely solely on CDC recommendations. Massachusetts is the first state in the nation to guarantee insurance coverage of vaccines recommended by the state.

These include respiratory virus vaccines, like COVID, flu and RSV, as well as routine vaccines for children, like measles, chickenpox, and Hepatitis B.

This action follows legislation filed by Governor Healey last month that would give DPH authority to set independent standards for vaccine purchasing and recom-

mendations.

"We are so fortunate to live in Massachusetts, where we prioritize science and support patients," said State Secretary of Health and Human Services Kiame Mahaniah. "With Gov. Healey's leadership and collaboration between DPH and DOI, those who want to get vaccinated will be able to without added cost or confusion because of decisions made at the federal level."

CVS is now administering COVID vaccinations in the Bay State. This followed a period of uncertainty during which Massachusetts pharmacies were unable to offer the vaccine due to a lack of required federal guidance.

After the Governor's new order opened up availability, residents secured COVID vaccine appointments at pharmacies, as of last Friday.

"As an infectious disease physician, I have seen the extraordinary impact vaccines have had in saving lives and preventing serious illness. Limiting access

to vaccines is not just shortsighted – it is reckless," said Public Health Commissioner Robbie Goldstein. "Massachusetts will not allow ideology to override evidence. We must continue to be guided by science and data. And we must do what is right, even when it is hard, because protecting public health is not optional – it is a responsibility."

Children under the age of five can receive the vaccine through their pediatrician.

Additionally, Massachusetts officials are leading efforts to create a public health collaboration with states in New England and across the northeast.

The multi-state collaborative, if launched, would focus on developing evidence-based recommendations on vaccinations, disease surveillance,

and emergency preparedness, among others.

"The Commonwealth has a long history of serving as a national leader in healthcare, especially during moments of federal mismanagement, and this action from Gov. Healey is the latest example of that leadership," said House Speaker Ronald Mariano.

Added Senate President Karen Spilka, "Vaccines save lives and protect families. Period. The Healey Administration's actions will help ensure federal drama does not affect our access to vaccines that are essential to public health."

To learn more about the Governor's order, visit www.mass.gov.

Saint Joseph School welcomes families at first family mass of the year

WEBSTER — On Sunday, Sept. 7, Saint Joseph School in Webster celebrated the start of a new academic year with its first Family Mass at Saint Joseph Basilica. More than 100 students and their families attended the celebration, joining together in prayer and community as the 2025–2026 school year begins.

The Mass marked the first Family Mass for Fr. Richard Polek, who began serving as pastor of Saint Joseph Basilica and headmaster of Saint Joseph School on July 1. Teachers and staff took their Oath of Fidelity, publicly renewing their commitment to Catholic education. Faculty members also played an active role in the liturgy by reading the Liturgy of the Word, leading the Prayer of the Faithful, and presenting the gifts.

Music for the Mass was provided by the Saint Joseph School Youth Choir, made up of more than 30 students under the direction of Mrs. Brenda Lau-Anderson and Ms. Marlena Czarnecka-Cielak. Their voices filled the basilica and added a joyful tone to the celebration.

During the Mass, Principal Beth Boudreau introduced the 2025–2026 faculty and staff, noting that the school has welcomed a significant number of new families this year. "Our teachers bring experience, passion, and dedication to their roles," she said. "Together, we are committed to creating a supportive environment where every child can grow academically, spiritually, and personally."

Following the liturgy, families gathered at the Parish Center for a festive Welcome Back Social, organized by the Home and School Association. Co-Chairpersons Pamela Parslow and Krystal Kolesnik and their committee created a celebratory setting, complete with balloons and photo backdrops for students and families to enjoy.

The event highlighted the strong sense of faith, community, and partnership that Saint Joseph School continues to foster. With enrollment on the rise and a dedicated staff, the school looks forward to a year filled with learning, growth, and shared purpose.

Historical Society planning new exhibit on “Auburn and Aviation”

AUBURN — Were you or someone in your family a pilot in the military? How about a recreational pilot? Any connections to NASA?

The Auburn Historical Society and Museum is working on an exhibit about the history of aviation in Auburn. The museum staff is looking for memorabilia, artifacts, documents, memories, and stories about any Auburn person who was involved with fly-

ing. Through 2026 articles will be written about the former Auburn airport and the people involved with it. Also, people's contributions during the wars that dealt with flying, as well as those who flew as a hobby or job. It is also the 100th anniversary of Robert Goddard's rocket testing at his aunt's farm on Pakachoag St. If you would like to contribute to the exhibit, or the book of memories, please contact the Auburn Historical

Society & Museum at 41 South St. Documents, pictures and such can be scanned into the museum archives. Any contribution will be greatly appreciated.

The museum is open Tuesday and Saturday mornings 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., and may be reached at auburnmuseum@verizon.net or 508-832-6856, www.auburnhistoricalmuseum.org.

Black Tavern Historical Society hosting program on Webster Lake history

DUDLEY — Black Tavern Historical Society is presenting a program on the pictorial history of Webster Lake.

As part of the Memorial Lecture Series named for benefactor Nancy J. Vajcovec, local history buff Jeff Stefanik will narrate his work entitled "Beside Blue Waters." Stefanik has an extensive collection of photos and postcards of the early days of the lake.

The presentation will be on Thursday evening, Sept. 18 at 7 p.m. in the Black Tavern Barn at 138 Center Rd. in Dudley. This program is free and open to all.

Oxford Lions Club awards scholarships

OXFORD — The Oxford Lions Club is proud to announce the names of three deserving seniors with scholarships at their Sept. 8 meeting:

Brea Brunelle Jacoby received the Al Dubois Scholarship

Aiden Van Arsdalen received the Lions Club Scholarship

Nicole Brzozowska received the Lions Club Scholarship

Oxford Community Center announces Spring Town-Wide Yard Sale

OXFORD — Come to Oxford on Saturday, Sept. 13, to treasure hunt at over 50 residential yard sales and multiple booths set up on the Town Common at 352 Main St.

Printed yard sale listings and maps will be available at the Oxford Community Center and Oxford Bandstand beginning at 7:30 a.m. that morning. Online listings and maps will be available Friday, Sept. 12 at oxfordma.us – go to the Community Center page to download. Hopefully, someone else's trash will be the treasure you're searching for!

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Call 774-200-7308
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Zion Lutheran hosting cornhole competition, silent auction Sept. 13

OXFORD — Do you enjoy friendly competition? Would you like to peruse and bid on our selection of silent auction items, including gift certificates from local wineries, coffee shops, restaurants and New Boston Beef? Do you appreciate hand crafted seasonal items for your home? How about a bowl of homemade chili or a hotdog with German sauerkraut for lunch? Or select your own toppings. If you answered yes to any of these questions, join us this Saturday beginning at 1 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church, 70 Main St., Oxford. You can enter the double elimination corn hole competition by registering at the gate or via e-mail: seaman.caitlin@gmail.com. The cost is \$40 per team, \$20 for a single entry (we will find you a partner), and \$10 for ages 10 through 15. This is a family friendly event. Bring your lawn chairs and join in the fun. All are welcome!

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PAW of the WEEK CRACKLE

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OBITUARIES

Dianne J. Warg 1942 - 2025



Reedsville, PA – Dianne J. (Katrenak) Warg, 82, of Brooknar Dr., formerly of Webster, died Monday, August 11, 2025, at home. She was the loving wife of Arthur Warg. Born in Webster, she was the daughter of the late George and Rita (Nowak) Katrenak. Mrs. Warg worked for many years at the Webster 5 Bank as a teller. Dianne enjoyed painting and doing ceramics. She is survived by her husband, Arthur Warg of Reedsville, PA; her daughter Jennifer Antious of New

Fairfield, CT; her two sisters, Sharleen Drouin of Webster and Linda Sokol and her husband Timothy of Woodstock, CT; her grandchildren, Braden Daley and his wife Nikkole of Bristol and Seth Daley of New Fairfield, CT, and several nieces and nephews. A visitation was held from 10:00AM to 11:00AM on Friday, September 5, 2025, in St. Louis Church, 15 Lake St., Webster, MA 01570, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 11:00AM. Burial followed in St. Joseph Garden of Peace Cemetery, Old Worcester Rd., Webster, MA. The Shaw-Majercik Funeral Home & Cremation is assisting the family with local arrangements. For memorial guestbook visit www.shaw.majercik.com.

Bernard A. Arsenault, 75

WEBSTER – Bernard A. Arsenault, 75, formerly of Webster, died Thursday, August 28, 2025, at St. Vincent Hospital in Worcester. He is survived by his brother, Paul G. Arsenault of Brookfield; and his close friends, Randy and Janice Beauregard of Brookfield. He was predeceased by a brother, Augustin A. Arsenault Jr. He was born in Webster, son of the late Augustin A. and Maud (Chickering) Arsenault Sr., and lived most of his life

in Webster before recently moving to Brookfield. Mr. Arsenault worked for Griswold Rubber in Moosup, CT, retiring in 2020. He was a hard worker throughout his life. He enjoyed fishing, riding 4-wheelers, and sitting by the fire. His dog Sadie was his best friend. A private graveside service will be held at North Cemetery in Oxford. Paradis-Givner Funeral Home in Oxford is directing the arrangements.

Commander Neal Mahan, USCG (Ret.)

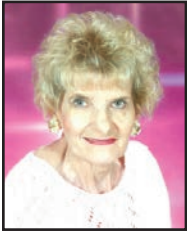


Commander Neal Mahan, a devoted husband, father, and grandfather, and a highly respected officer in the United States Coast Guard, passed away peacefully on Friday, August 29, 2025, surrounded by loved ones. He was 86 years old. Commander Mahan was born in Webster, Massachusetts, son of the late Joseph and Ruth Mahan (née Boelter); he is survived by his beloved wife, Jane P. Mahan (née Austin) of Durham, NC; his three children, Susanne Marie Harris (née Mahan), Neal Paul Mahan and Kathy Jane Mahan, a brother Michael Mahan of Webster and his cherished grandson, Matthew D. Harris; along with several nieces, nephews. Neal graduated from Bartlett High School in 1956 and then went on to graduate from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering, where he distinguished himself both academically and athletically, lettering in football and soccer. He later earned a Master's degree in Management from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California in 1972. Over the course of his esteemed career, Commander Mahan held numerous key positions within the Coast Guard. His duty assignments were operations officer on the buoy tender Mallow, Commanding Officer

of the search and rescue vessel Cape Florida and buoy tender Madrona. He also commanded the Coast Guard LORAN Station at Nalu Point in the Philippines and served as Chief of the Military Personnel Branch in the First Coast Guard District. Later, he led the Planning and Programming Branch in the Office of Marine Environment and Systems and eventually became Executive Director of the Boating Safety Advisory Council and Chief of the Boating Safety Information and Administrative Staff in Washington, DC. Commander Mahan's exemplary service was recognized with two Coast Guard Achievement Medals, reflecting his unwavering dedication to maritime safety and national service. Upon retirement he entered the private sector working for Underwriter Laboratory, first in Tampa Florida and then in the Research Triangle Park of North Carolina. Neal managed the Marine and Fire departments at UL until his final retirement in 2000. Neal will be remembered for his integrity, leadership, and deep devotion to both country and family. He spent much of his retirement as a dedicated advocate for Autism and housing for the developmentally disabled. Funeral arrangements will take place at a later date at the US Coast Guard Academy in New London, CT.



Gerda “Oma” Irena Babara Rusnica, 85



OXFORD, MA – Gerda “Oma” Irena Babara Rusnica, 85, passed away on Sunday, August 24, 2025 in Worcester, MA. She was born in Aschaffenberg, Germany and was the daughter of the late Justina and Richard Zeiss. After immigrating to the US in 1964, Gerda worked at the Dunbar Shop in Schenectady, NY. She was self-taught, mastered speaking English while becoming a US citizen. Gerda raised her only daughter and her two cherished grandchildren as an important part of their lives. She taught them love, respect, work hard, give it your best most importantly, be kind. An artist at heart, she had beautiful handwriting and loved puzzles, knitting and crocheting. Gerda was a woman of strong faith in God she belonged to St. Roch's Parish and sang in the church choir and also participating n their crocheted and knitting club in which she made baby hats, outfits, animals, scarves, mittens to raise funds for St. Rochs. She was an avid baker and made the most delicious German cookies and apple

pie. Those who knew Gerda described her as the sweet little German lady who was so kind and adored by many. Gerda “Oma” is survived by her daughter Diana (Jeffrey) O'Connor, grandchildren Nathaniel (Zahra Noori - O'Connor and Delaine O'Connor (Stephen Martinez). She is the sister of Heinz (Gelinda) Zeiss and the late Franz, Horst, and Fritz Zeiss and Renate Thiele. Gerda is the aunt of Christoph, Claudia and many nieces and nephews in her homeland in Germany. She is also survived by JoMarie, Chris, Jacob, Caleb and Anna Ethier and extended Fragomeni and Restifo families. Relatives and friends are invited to attend graveside services on Saturday morning at 10:00 am at St. Agnes Cemetery, mausoleum, Menands. Memorial contributions may be made to Schenectady NY Domestic Women's Shelter; <https://www.domesticshelters.org/fundraisers/domesticshelters.org/donate#one> in memory of Gerda Rusnica, a grateful survivor. To leave a message of condolence for the family, visit www.CannonFuneral.com. To order memorial trees or send flowers to the family in memory of Gerda Irena Barbara Rusnica, please visit our flower store.

DUDLEY POLICE LOG

DUDLEY — The Dudley Police Department reported the following arrests during the month of August. Sean Charles Harvey, Jr., age 35, of Dudley was arrested on Aug. 6 for Assault & Battery on a Police Officer, Resisting Arrest, and Disorderly Conduct. An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Aug. 7 for Violation of an Abuse Prevention Order. Kenneth M. Leblanc, age 50, of Dudley was arrested on Aug. 9 in connection with multiple out of agency warrants. Samuel Craig Adams, age 60, of Dudley was arrested on Aug. 10 in connection with a warrant. Christopher Ondrasek, age 33, of Thompson, Conn. was arrested on Aug. 10 for Operating Under the Influence (Liquor — second offense). Britney D. Arnoux, age 33, of Jamaica, N.Y. was arrested on Aug. 16 for Operating Under the Influence (Liquor). An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Aug. 16 for Assault & Battery on a Family or Household Member. Salena J. Bensahih, age 31, of Webster was arrested on Aug. 17 in connection with multiple out of agency warrants. An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Aug. 17 for Assault & Battery on a Family or Household Member, Assault & Battery on a Police Officer, Resisting Arrest, and Vandalization of Property. Cheryl Ann Biagiarelli, age 56, of Southbridge was arrested on Aug. 25 for Shoplifting By Asportation. Taylor James Mason, age 36, of Webster was arrested on Aug. 29 in connection with an out of agency warrant.

WEBSTER POLICE LOG

WEBSTER — The Webster Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of Aug. 31 to Sept. 6. A 48-year-old female from Webster whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Sept. 1 for Assault & Battery on a Family or Household Member and Vandalization of Property. Brandon C. Boyle, age 34, of Webster was arrested on Sept. 2 for Discharging a Firearm Within 500 Feet of a Building and Assault with a Dangerous Weapon. A 50-year-old male from Worcester whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Sept. 2 for Assault & Battery on a Family or Household Member. Cesar Benitez, Jr., age 38, of Webster was arrested on Sept. 5 for Disorderly Conduct. Scott Joseph Kapurch, age 32, of Webster was arrested on Sept. 5 for multiple counts of drug possess and in connection with multiple warrants. Pascal Nsengiyimva, age 32, of Webster was arrested on Sept. 5 for Operating Under the Influence (Liquor-Second Offense).

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WEBSTER SENIOR CENTER


5 Church St.
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Email: SeniorCenter@Webster-MA.gov
Senior Center hours are Monday-Friday 9 a.m.- 4 p.m., with one Thursday a month 9 a.m.- 7 p.m. Like the Webster Senior Center Facebook page to view our photographs, news and announcements. Please stop by to pick up our monthly newsletter for a complete list of activities, upcoming events, and our monthly lunch menu. You may also join our email list to view our newsletter online. You do not have to be a resident of Webster to participate in our activities and programs. ALL Seniors are welcome! Tri-Valley Lunches are served Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 11:30 a.m. Please call (508) 949-3845 at least two business days in advance to reserve or cancel your meal. A \$3 donation for 65 and up, and \$5 for 55- 64 is appreciated. All meals include milk, bread, and fruit or dessert. This week's menu: Tuesday, Sept. 16: Burgundy pork, mashed sweet potatoes, green peas, peaches. Wednesday, Sept. 17: Hot dogs, baked beans, coleslaw, baked apples. Thursday, Sept. 18: Baked potatoes, chili and cheese, jardiniere vegetables, fresh fruits. Friday, Sept. 19: Soup du Jour, corned beef sandwiches on rye bread, coleslaw, pudding. Need Transportation? Contact SCM Elderbus at 1-800-321-0243 at least two business days in advance to schedule transportation. Elderbus is available Mondays - Fridays 8:30 a.m.- 3 p.m. Come on down to the Bomba Beauty Salon at the Webster Senior Center! Call 508-341-8724 for an appointment. Bomba Beauty Salon is open for walk in appointments on Wednesdays from 10 a.m.- 1 p.m., and Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays by appointment only from 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Please call (508)

341-8724 to schedule an appointment. Let's celebrate the Fall equinox! The Friends of the Webster Senior Center will be hosting their next Friendship Series party on Monday, Sept. 22 from 1-2:30 p.m. with live music from Bob Jordan! We will also be hosting a Soup Social at 11:30 a.m.! Please make sure to sign up for BOTH! Deadlines for reservations will be on Wednesday, Sept. 17th. We are now offering MOVIE MATINEES every Wednesday at 1:00 pm! Popcorn is provided, no registration is needed. Our September movies are- “Father Goose” on 9/17, and “Mystic Pizza” on 9/24. Looking for a creative way to spend Columbus Day? Join us for our Columbus Day Craft Fair! Browse a selection of handcrafted gifts, and maybe get some holiday shopping in too! Crafter applications are open as well! Please email hackensonc@aol.com for more information. Chair Dancing Exercise classes with Forty Arroyo are the perfect workout for any fitness ability! The cost is a recommended \$3.00 donation per class. A new video class will be offered Thursday and Friday mornings, free of charge. Knitting/Crochet group meets on Mondays from 10:00 am- 12:00 pm. Bingo is every Tuesday and starts promptly at 1:00 pm. Please plan to arrive by 12:30 pm to allow time to buy your bingo sheets. Bingo sheets are not sold after 12:45 pm.

Do you like to play Cribbage? Our weekly Cribbage group meets every Thursday at 1:00 pm. Feel free to join us! Calling card players or interested persons to the Webster Senior Center! Come join us for six-card or thirteen-card pitch! Six-card pitch meets on Wednesdays at 1:00 pm. Thirteen-card pitch meets on Thursdays at 1:00 pm. Mahjongg group meets every Friday at 1:00 pm. Beginners welcome! Calling all bridge players! Are you looking to spend an afternoon playing Bridge? We're looking to get a group together! If you're interested, please leave your name and number with the front desk. Once we have enough sign-ups, we'll see what day works best for everyone! The Worcester County Sheriff's Office House Numbering Program will create a custom wooden sign with your house number free of charge. One sign per senior household. Please contact the Webster Senior Center at (508) 949-3845, if you are interested in having a house number sign made for you. Senior SAFE is a program that supports fire and life safety education for seniors. The Webster Fire Dept. will do a home visit to ensure that you have the correct smoke and CO2 alarms, and that they are working properly. This is at no cost to you! All you have to do is give them a call at (508) 949-3875.



News, really close to home



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STONEBRIDGE PRESS PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Strength in community action

It is often said that small towns are at their strongest when neighbors step forward together, and in our corner of Worcester County, the past week has offered proof. From classrooms to running tracks, from church halls to community centers, residents are showing how much can be accomplished when people take ownership of the issues that matter most.

At Shepherd Hill, students are preparing for the first “Tackle the Stigma” 5K, a new fundraiser that does more than raise money. It is a student-led declaration that mental health deserves open discussion and practical support. Cheerleaders, parents, teachers, and local advocates are working side by side, reminding us that the health of a community is measured not only in test scores and athletic wins, but also in how we tend to one another’s well-being.

Meanwhile, Tri-Valley Inc. is partnering with SilverShield to pilot a scam-detection tool for older adults and caregivers. In an age when fraud preys on the vulnerable, this local effort—complete with focus groups in Dudley later this month—proves that our region does not need to sit back and hope for solutions from far away. We can test tools, share our experiences, and equip neighbors with the resources to stay safe.

These efforts join countless others, from the Dudley Woman’s Club directing its voluntary giving toward the Boys and Girls Club of Webster, to businesses like Long Subaru stepping up with direct support for local teachers. Each example points toward the same conclusion: community action is not theoretical. It is lived daily, in small choices to show up, contribute, and lift others.

There will always be challenges ahead—questions of budgets, development, and growth—but we should not overlook the power already in our hands. When students take the lead, when seniors are heard and protected, when volunteers keep their doors open, and when businesses remember their civic role, the fabric of Webster, Dudley, Oxford, and Auburn is strengthened.

It does not take a headline-making event to remind us who we are. It takes the steady, humble work of neighbors working side by side. That is where our resilience lies.

Letter submission policy

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

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

VIEWPOINT

No greater love than this

On Jan. 13, 1982, Air Florida Flight 90 smashed nose-first into the rock-solid ice covering the Potomac River just outside Washington, D.C. To horrified onlookers, it seemed impossible that anyone could be alive inside the mangled steel carcass slowly vanishing into the water. But one by one, six survivors gasped to the surface and grabbed desperately at the tail of the plane.

They had to swim up past their dead friends and seat-mates and spouses to escape. They knew that unless they were pulled out fast, they’d soon be sinking back down to join them. Just hanging on was agony: The six survivors had fractured arms and shattered legs, and their hands were freezing into claws that slipped from the wet steel.

“Help us!” they screamed. “We’re going to die out here!”

They were only 40 or so yards from the Virginia shore but surrounded by an arctic nightmare of jagged ice. Pushing a rescue boat into those shards would be suicide. Piloting a chopper into the whipping snowstorm would be nearly as risky — that’s what brought the plane down in the first place.

Would-be rescuers yanked ladders off utility trucks and tried stretching them across the ice. They knotted scarves and fan belts into makeshift ropes and dangled them from the 14th Street Bridge. One man even tried dog-paddling through the ice chunks, hauling a jury-rigged rescue rope along with him. He couldn’t get close and was nearly unconscious by the time he was dragged back in.

Twenty minutes after the crash, the sun was going down, and no one had been able to reach the six survivors. They were doomed...until suddenly, miraculously, a rescue chopper came whisking across the darkening sky. It dropped a life ring right into the hands of one of the survivors and plucked him from the water. Then things turned really strange.

The next person to receive the ring handed it over to someone else. The chopper lofted her to safety, then wheeled back. The man gave away the ring again. And again a third time.

Arland Williams Jr. even gave it away when he knew it was his last chance to live. He must have known, because when the chopper thundered back seconds later, he was gone, vanished beneath the ice. (“The Hidden Cost of Heroism” NBCNews.com by Christoher McDougall)

What a story to read about an all too human bank examiner, who in the moment of life’s greatest challenge became an immortal hero, sacrificing his life to save the lives of three other people! Jesus emphasized that there is “no greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for a friend.” In the case of Arland Williams Jr., however, he most likely didn’t even know the people he was saving, and yet, he still offered his life to help those in desperate need right in front of him!

In the Gospels, we hear Christ say “just as you want others to do to you, you should do to them likewise.” We can talk in many theoretical ways about what divine love is, and how we are called to live out the Golden Rule of Love with all people. In Arland Williams Jr.’s last minutes of life, though, we witness a most beautiful and memorable example of love in life’s most desperate moment.

What I found interesting when I read this story was how the journalist tried to comprehend this heroic act. He tried



BEYOND THE PEWS
• • • • •
By FR. LUKE A. VERONIS
SAINTS
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to understand and then explain why someone would sacrifice his life for complete strangers. In the article, he even noted how Charles Darwin himself found it quite confusing to rationalize how someone who was ready to sacrifice his life for others could fit into his “survival of the fittest” theory. “He who was ready to sacrifice his life,” Darwin observed in a bewildered manner, “would often leave no offspring to inherit his noble nature.”

We Christians, however, understand such heroic acts as having their source of heroism and love in the source of Jesus Christ Himself, who set the ultimate example of sacrificial love when he offered His perfect, sinless life for the entire world. We hear in one of the most famous passages in all of Holy Scripture, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only son that whoever believed in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his son into the world to condemn it, but to save it.” (John 3:16-17)

Saint Paul described God’s love simply like this: “While we were still sinners, Christ willingly died for us.” God came to earth and died for the salvation of all people, including those who didn’t know him, and even those who hated him. Christ personified divine love in the most supreme way, and our faith teaches that this potential of divine love is what God has placed in each and every human being. It is from such love in which we were created, and with such which He wants each of us to live out in our own lives.

We believe that we were created in the image of this Divine Love of God, and such love has unlimited potential. The true mark of an authentic human being, one who has reached this potential, living out the divine likeness in which he or she was created, is to love the world around us in an extreme manner – not only loving our family and friends and those who are close to us, but also loving unknown strangers and even loving our enemies. This essential teaching of divine love separates Christianity from many other world religions. We were created out of love, and called to love throughout our lives. We love, not because we will receive something in return, but simply because it is our nature to love. And we are capable of such love because we were created in the image of our merciful, loving, and heavenly Father; whose unconditional love embraces all!

This divine love lies deep within all of us, and in such heroic moments like those of Arlan Williams Jr., it can surprisingly reveal itself in the most dangerous and challenging moments of life. It may seem confusing, and even incomprehensible to many secular people who don’t realize our divine origins, and who instead have allowed our own fallen nature and egocentric desires of survival of the fittest to dominate their worldview. Yet we Christians know that we were created for something greater. We were created in the image of our loving God, who imprinted deep within our souls His divine love, and the natural fruit of this love is the Golden Rule - “do to others as we want them to do to us.”

From Saint John’s passage about God’s divine love for the world, let each of us thank God for the image of love in which we were created, and be inspired by such heroic moments like that of Arlen Williams Jr., where we see in the most powerful way how love sacrifices and prevails for the sake of others.

“There is no greater love than this, to lay down your life for another.”

Cornucopia: A Nostalgic Nod to Bountiful Harvest



TAKE THE HINT
KAREN TRAINOR

Nothing quite captures autumn’s bounty as a classic cornucopia. For generations, a symbol of harvest has been the cornucopia basket overflowing with the fruit (and vegetables) of the season. Once a common centerpiece of the autumn table, it appears the nostalgic “horn of plenty” may be making a comeback as backyard farming celebrates a return to simple abundance.

Read on for some history, facts, and ideas about cornucopias!

**

History: The cornucopia, a.k.a. Horn O Plenty, has a history dating back to ancient Greece. According to legend, when the young Zeus was playing with Amalthea, the goat who had suckled him in a cave on the island of Crete, he accidentally broke off one of her horns. To make amends, Zeus promised that from that day forward, the horn would always be filled with whatever fruit she desired.

In another Greek legend, Heracles broke the horn off of an advisory during a fight over a beautiful maiden. The Naiads treated the horn as a sacred object, filling it with fragrant flowers.

Copia, the goddess of Plenty later adopted the horn, thus named the Horn of Plenty, or Cornucopia.

**

The Cornucopia came to symbolize a plentiful bounty, a tradition that has carried over to the harvest season and onto the Thanksgiving table.

Today, a growing number of people choose to keep the tradition alive by displaying a cornucopia on a mantle or dinner table. The colorful leaves, acorns and pinecones of New England provide the perfect backdrop for a Horn O Plenty overfilled with garden delights. Here are some suggestions to assemble a traditional cornucopia centerpiece:

*

Cornucopia baskets are easy enough to find at a craft or department store during the harvest season, but if you can’t locate one, a cone shaped basket will do. If you steam the cone end, it can usually be shaped into a curved horn shape.

**

Fill the inside of the basket with freshly fallen fall foliage, choose the brightest yellow and orange leaves. Sprigs of hay and grape vine also add texture to a display. Place the largest vegetables, such as squash, Indian corn, and sugar pumpkin in the widest part of the basket. Add some interesting gourds.

Next, choose fruits served the first Thanksgiving feast, such as plums and grapes, allowing the display to overflow onto the table.

Add a few bright red apples, and sprinkle chestnuts, pinecones and cranberries to finish it off. Use your imagination to create a creative cornucopia that offers interesting eye appeal. For example, artichokes, oranges, and pomegranates all add color and interest. Best of all, your family can enjoy the “fruits” of your labor; as most of it is edible.

**

A faux cornucopia can easily be created by laying a deep basket or large, shallow door basket on its back. Fill with squash, gourds, miniature pumpkins, Indian corn, apples and other fruits and vegetables of the season, allowing them to spillover onto the table. Provide coordinating light to the centerpiece by boring a hole in a couple of miniature pumpkins to form natural candleholders for tapers in assorted heights.

**

Did you know?

• For centuries, the cornucopia has symbolized gratitude for the many blessings of life.

• The term ‘cornucopia’ actually dates back to the 5th century BC in the form of two words “cornu Copiae”, which means horn of plenty. The first

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Plan B!

Remember that time you were about to jump into something big—a new business, a major life change, a dream you finally decided to chase? At first, your mind lights up with excitement. You see the vision, you make the plans, you picture the success. But then, almost like clockwork, the thought creeps in: “So, what’s your Plan B?”

Of course, having a backup plan makes sense. If Plan A falls apart, you’ve got to have a Plan B, right?

It almost feels a bit controversial writing about not having a Plan B. I think that’s because the idea is often misunderstood.

When I say “Plan A,” I’m not talking about a single project or a business idea—I mean your overarching mission.

The bigger picture. The thing that gives your life direction and meaning. It’s the north star you measure everything else against. That’s what I’m getting at when I speak about Plan A—not the small detours or adjustments, but the core mission that defines where you’re going.

When I talk about Plan B, I don’t mean little adjustments—like taking the side streets when the freeway’s jammed. That’s just flexibility.

What I mean is the bigger Plan B: the alternative to your overarching mission, the backup life you keep in your back pocket “just in case.” That kind of Plan B, as neuroscience shows, doesn’t just sit quietly in the background—it actively drains energy from Plan A, it slowly

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eats away at Plan A until it’s gone!

The prefrontal cortex, responsible for planning and decision-making, works best when the outcome really matters. Think of an athlete in a championship game—they find a level of focus and creativity they never had in practice, because, in this scenario, Plan A equals winning and Plan B equals losing.

Think of a life-or-death scenario. If you’re facing a grizzly bear in the forest, Plan A is to survive. Plan B is...not. And while Plan A can fail, having no Plan B forces every ounce of focus and energy into survival—dramatically increasing your chances of success.

When there’s only one shot—no backup—the

brain ramps up dopamine, sharpening focus and creativity. But when you create a Plan B, dopamine drops—and so does motivation. In other words, the moment you create a Plan B, you’re signaling to your brain, “Relax, no need to give it everything,” and your effort slips.

Studies from the University of Pennsylvania, Zurich, and Wisconsin all point to the same conclusion: people with backup plans perform worse on their main goals. Even thinking about a Plan B reduces persistence and creativity.

Why? Because the brain is built to save energy. The moment it realizes it can relax, it will relax.

Take Howard Schultz, the man behind

Starbucks. When he first tried to raise money to expand the company, investors laughed him out of the room. Banks turned him down more than 200 times. He could have walked away, gone back to a “safe” job in corporate America, taken a Plan B. But he refused. Starbucks was Plan A. Period. He doubled down, kept pitching, and eventually found a handful of believers. Today, Starbucks is a household name around the world.

The science explains the story: when your brain knows there’s no escape hatch, it goes all in. Dopamine spikes, focus sharpens, and creativity ignites. You start to see options you’d never notice otherwise. Pressure forces breakthroughs. That’s the hidden gift of burning the boats.

That’s the real danger of Plan B. Most of the time, it isn’t strategy—it’s fear in disguise. It feels responsible, but really, it’s a quiet permission slip to play smaller, to quit when things get uncomfortable.

The science is clear, and the stories back it up: extraordinary results only come when you stop keeping one foot out the door. So burn the boats, shut the exits, and commit like there’s no other option.

Because that’s the moment your full potential wakes up. Don’t plan for escape—plan for victory. That’s how you find out what you’re really capable of.

Toby Moore is a columnist, the star of Emmy - Nominated A Separate Peace, and the CEO of Cubestream Inc.

Wolperdinger: A fantasy-horror haven



Katie Billington with just a few of the things available at Wolperdinger Bookstop.

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

Ever heard of a wolperdinger?

I hadn’t until I walked into Wolperdinger Bookstop in Putnam, where a cuddly rabbit with horns and wings named Wolpy is the mascot and hero of owner Kathy Newman’s children’s book series.

“We’re trying to promote him,” said assistant manager Katie Billington, noting the store is “kind of like the face of” Newman’s 58 Publishing House. Beyond that, they aim to be “a safe place for people to be creative and express yourself.”

One aspect of that is the upstairs “journaling section,” where visitors are encouraged to jot down thoughts. Some of them have ended up on the wall leading up those stairs.

For the most part,



The store's mascot Wolpy is a much cuddlier version of the Germanic wolperdinger than myths would suggest.

ing out to other schools, among other things. Their front door posts flyers for various events they host, including the monthly “Horror Seeker” writers’ group, which is not just for horror, but for “all walks” of novels, stories, poetry and script-writing.

Although Wolperdinger has a Main Street storefront in the Montgomery Ward building that’s been beneficial during public events, Billington noted the building is full of services (a yoga studio and real estate firm among them) that don’t create a lot of daily foot traffic. Originally, they wanted “that big space upstairs” to host events, and “we have a fantasy of expanding into some of the stores behind us” over the next few years, to include a cafe and more books, she said.

“We’ve had a lot of people come in and say they don’t want to support Amazon and want to do local first, which we real-



The store from outside, on Main Street in Putnam.

ly appreciate, obviously,” she noted.

The theme came from Newman’s German husband, as did the fact there’s a shelf of German-language books upstairs. But the original wolperdinger was not a cuddly creature; Billington described it as “a scary being in the Bavarian forest.”

According to

Wikipedia, the first references date to the 17th century and “No two Wolpertinger [sic] look alike because they are supposed [to be] the result of crossbreeding between animals in the area such as foxes, roebucks, hares, ducks, and pheasants.” The concept can be found in various forms around the world, identified as jackalopes

in the US southwest, al-miraj in Arabia, and by other names. All of them “might be images of rabbits infected by the Shope papilloma virus, which causes tumors that can resemble horns or antlers,” the webpage states.

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

HINT
continued from page A6

known English use of the word “cornucopia” was in 1508.

The horn shape represents the spirit of endless supply of giving and sharing.

The Horn of Plenty is sometimes used as part of a Fall Equinox ritual, as it is filled with assorted garden vegetables, fruits, nuts, herbs, etc. to represent thanks for the garden harvest,

The cornucopia was prominently featured in ancient Greek and Roman cultures, symbolizing wealth and nourishment, and was

used in various art forms and coinage.

The cornucopia is sometimes depicted in body art as it is a symbol of fertility, fortune and abundance.

**

Win a Three Course Dinner for Two at the Publick House

Your tips can win you a great dinner for two at the historic Publick House Historic Inn in Sturbridge! Simply send in a hint to be entered into a random drawing. One winner per month (or whenever I receive enough tips for a column) will win a fabulous three course dinner for two at the renowned restaurant, located on Route 131 across the town common in historic Sturbridge. Because I’m

in the business of dispensing tips, not inventing them (although I can take credit for some), I’m counting on you readers out there to share your best helpful hints!

**

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

Friday's Child



Jaiden
Age 11
Registration #9212

Jaiden is a sweet, loving, and happy young person whose smile can light up any room! He’s a big fan of Disney adventures—whether he’s singing along to Moana or cheering on Tarzan’s jungle swings, he’s completely in his element. Jaiden has a bold side when it comes to food, happily diving into spicy flavors and never missing a Taco Tuesday. Social and friendly, he loves spending time with friends and family, but he also enjoys having quiet moments to relax and recharge. With his caring heart, fun-loving spirit, and zest for life, Jaiden is a joy to be around.

<https://www.mareinc.org/child/25964365697>

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.



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A CELEBRATION OF ALL THINGS GREEK



Courtesy

WEBSTER — Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church in Webster held its annual Greek Festival Sept. 6 & 7. A thousand people from the central Massachusetts community came to enjoy a delightful day of delicious food and pastries, Greek dancing, and a warm and welcoming atmosphere from this vibrant Church community.

“This is always an opportunity to show the larger community what a special, loving and joyful Church Family we have,” stated Fr. Luke Veronis. “We have been holding this Greek Festival for the past forty years, always on the weekend after Labor Day. All our foods and pastries are homemade, a labor of love done by our parishioners. It takes a lot of work to prepare for this weekend, and an exhausting couple of days, and yet our people do it with such love. It’s such a beautiful time that brings all our church together in a spirit of unity. I thank God for all my parishioners coming out and working so hard and thank the larger community for supporting our festival.”



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LEGALS

NOTICE OF SALE NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE Premises: 81 Bancroft Street, Auburn, MA 01501 By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Michael A. Robidoux to CitiMortgage, Inc., dated April 11, 2005, and recorded with the Worcester Registry of Deeds in Book 36093 at Page 267, as affected by an assignment of mortgage from CitiMortgage, Inc. to Federal National Mortgage Association, dated February 13, 2014, and recorded with said Registry in Book 52046 at Page 117, as affected by an assignment of mortgage from Federal National Mortgage Association to Nationstar Mortgage LLC d/b/a Mr. Cooper, dated July 16, 2019, and recorded with said Registry in Book 60713 at Page 343, as affected by an assignment of mortgage from Nationstar Mortgage LLC d/b/a Mr. Cooper to UMB Bank, National Association, not in its individual capacity, but solely as Legal Title Trustee for PRL Title Trust I, dated May 3, 2023, and recorded with said Registry in Book 69093 at Page 132, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder by assignment, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold by Public Auction at 12 o'clock P.M. on the 1st day of October, 2025 at the mortgaged premises located at 81 Bancroft Street, Auburn, MA 01501, Worcester County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, To wit: A certain parcel of land situate on the easterly side of Bancroft Street in said Auburn, being lot 9 on Plan of Land in Auburn, Mass., Overhill Estates Section 1A, owner by Edward Tuck, drawn by William C. Taylor Associates, April 10, 1965, and recorded with Worcester District Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 290 Plan 56, and bounced and described as follows: BEGINNING at the most westerly corner of the premises to be conveyed at a point marked by a concrete bound in said easterly line of Bancroft Street at the northerly line of land of the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority; THENCE S. 84° 25' 18" E. by the northerly line of said land of Massachusetts Turnpike Authority two hundred fifty and no hundredths (250.00) feet to an iron pip at land now or formerly of Ed Tuck; THENCE N. 12° 26' 33" E. by said land now or formerly of said Tuck one hundred ten and no hundredths (11.00) feet to an iron pipe at lot 10 as shown on said plan; THENCE N. 82° 30' 10" W. by said lot 10 two hundred thirty-seven and thirty-five hundredths (237.35) feet to an iron pipe in said easterly line of Bancroft Street; THENCE S. 18° 03' 38" W. by Bancroft Street one hundred twenty and no hundredths (120.00) feet to the point of beginning. Containing 27,470 square feet, more or less. Together with the interest of grantors in the abutting portions of Bancroft Street to the center line thereof. This conveyance is made expressly subject to the restrictions, which shall apply to all lots shown and said plan and to other land of Edward Tuck, as more particularly set forth in a Declaration dated May 25, 1965, and recorded in Worcester District Registry of Deeds, June 14, 1985, Book, 4570, Page 319. For Mortgagor's title, see deed dated September 5, 2003 and recorded in Book 31757, at Page 31 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds. Premises to be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed. TERMS OF SALE: A deposit of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. High bidder to sign written memorandum of sale upon acceptance of the high bid. The balance of the purchase price is to be paid by certified or bank check at Friedman Vartolo LLP, 1325 Franklin Avenue, Suite 160, Garden City, New York 11530 within thirty (30) days from the date of the sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. In the event of an error in this publication, the description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control. Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale. UMB Bank, National Association, not in its individual capacity, but solely as legal title trustee for PRL Title Trust I Present holder of said mortgage By its Attorneys, Friedman Vartolo LLP 1325 Franklin Ave, Suite 160 Garden City,

NY 11530
September 12, 2025
September 19, 2025
September 26, 2025

**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. WO24P3225EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR SALE
OF REAL ESTATE BY A PERSONAL
REPRESENTATIVE**
Estate Of:
Sandra A. Jacob
Also known as: Sandra Jacob
Date of Death: 05/01/2024

To all interested persons:
A Petition for Sale of Real Estate has been filed by: **Scott M. Corbin of Carson CA**

requesting that the court authorize the Personal Representative to sell the decedent's real estate at a private sale.

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 09/23/2025** . 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. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: August 29, 2025
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
September 12, 2025

**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. WO25C0458CA
CITATION ON PETITION TO
CHANGE NAME**

In the matter of:
Denise Dunn
A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by
Denise Dunn of Webster MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:
Denise Elizabeth Dunn

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Worcester Probate and Family Court before 10 a.m. on the return day of 09/23/2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: August 22, 2025
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
September 12, 2025

**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. WO25P2908EA
INFORMAL PROBATE
PUBLICATION NOTICE**
Estate Of:
Lori Ann Sinkus
Date of Death: July 04, 2023

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner
Caitlin Sinkis of Oxford MA
Caitlin Sinkis of Oxford MA has been informally appointed as Personal Representative of said 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.
September 12, 2025

**DUDLEY CONSERVATION
COMMISSION
Public Hearing Notice**

A Public Hearing will be held at the Dudley Municipal Complex, 71 West Main Street in Dudley, MA at 6:15 PM on Wednesday, September 17, 2025 to consider a **Request for Determination of Applicability** of Municipal Wetlands ordinance for the property located at 16 Lakeview Ave to replace existing deck .

This is a Public Hearing under the requirements of G.L. CH. 131 §40, as amended. Plans are available at the Conservation Commission's office at the Dudley Municipal Complex on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00-3:00 PM. For more information, call 508-949-8011.

September 12, 2025

(SEAL)
**COMMONWEALTH OF
MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL
COURT
Docket 25 SM 002604
ORDER OF NOTICE**

To:
Jeffrey R. Burley; Lisa C. Burley
and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq): Deutsche Bank National Trust Company, as Trustee for Ameriquest Mortgage Securities Inc., Asset-Backed Pass-Through Certificates, Series 2005-R4, claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Oxford, numbered 71 Charlton Street, given by Jeffrey R. Burley and Lisa C. Burley to Ameriquest Mortgage Company, dated March 16, 2005, and recorded in Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 35946, Page 133, and now held by plaintiff by assignment, has/ have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/ Defendants' Servicemembers status. If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108 on or before October 13, 2025, or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act. Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of this Court on August 29, 2025.
Attest:
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
24-010627
September 12, 2025

**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. WO25P3043EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION**
Estate Of:
Kathryn S Upton
Date of Death: 05/10/2025

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Susan Scapparone of Westminster 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:
Susan Scapparone of Westminster 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 09/23/2025.** 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. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: August 29, 2025
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
September 12, 2025

**NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE
OF REAL ESTATE**

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by **James D. Smith** to Fleet National Bank dated November 4, 2002, recorded at the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 28623, Page 183; said mortgage was then assigned to MEB Loan Trust IV by virtue of an assignment dated January 22, 2020, and recorded in Book 61813, Page 388; and further assigned to Wilmington Savings Fund Society, FSB, not in its individual capacity but solely as Owner Trustee of CSMC 2022-JR1 Trust by virtue of an assignment dated May 8, 2023, and recorded in Book 69218, Page 392; and further assigned to U.S. Bank Trust National Association as Trustee for MEB Loan Trust IV by virtue of an assignment dated June 12, 2024, and recorded in Book 70760, Page 337; and further assigned to Wilmington Savings Fund Society, FSB, Not In Its Individual Capacity But Solely as Owner Trustee of CSMC 2022-JR1 Trust by virtue of an assignment dated June 12, 2024, and recorded in Book 70760, Page 340, and further assigned to U.S. Bank Trust National Association, not in its individual capacity but solely as trustee on behalf of and for the benefit of BP-JR 1 Loan Trust by virtue of an assignment dated December 4, 2024, and recorded in Book 71479, Page 328;of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder for breach of conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at PUBLIC AUCTION at 03:00 PM on **October 8, 2025**, on the mortgaged premises. This property has the address of 581 Main Street, Oxford (North), MA 01537. The entire mortgaged premises, all and singular, the premises as described in said mortgage:

THAT CERTAIN PIECE OF PARCEL OF LAND, AND THE BUILDINGS AND IMPROVEMENTS THEREON, KNOWN AS 581 MAIN ST, IN THE TOWN OF N OXFORD COUNTY OF WORCESTER AND STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS AND BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN A DEED RECORDED IN BOOK 4941, PAGE 132.

Subject to and with the benefit of easements, reservation, restrictions, and taking of record, if any, insofar as the same are now in force and applicable. In the event of any typographical error set forth herein in the legal description of the premises, the description as set forth and contained in the mortgage shall control by reference. Together with all the improvements now or hereafter erected on the property and all easements, rights, appurtenances, rents, royalties, mineral, oil and gas rights and profits, water rights and stock and all fixtures now or hereafter a part of the property. All replacements and additions shall also be covered by this sale.

Terms of Sale: Said premises will be sold subject to any and all unpaid taxes and assessments, tax sales, tax titles and other municipal liens and water or sewer liens and State or County transfer fees, if any there are, and TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$10,000.00) in cashier's or certified check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of the sale as a deposit and the balance in cashier's or certified check will be due in thirty (30) days, at the offices of Doonan, Graves & Longoria, LLC ("DG&L"), time being of the essence. Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.

Dated: August 15, 2025 U.S. Bank Trust National Association, not in its individual capacity but solely as trustee on behalf of and for the benefit of BP-JR 1 Loan Trust
By its Attorney DOONAN, GRAVES & LONGORIA, LLC, 100 Cummings Center, Suite 303C, Beverly, MA 01915 (978) 921-2670 www.dgandl.com 57173 (SMITH)
September 12, 2025
September 19, 2025
September 26, 2025

LEGALS

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE
OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Thomas F. McCain to Manufacturers and Traders Trust Company, dated October 17, 2022 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 68447, Page 232, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at 5:00 PM on September 26, 2025, on the mortgaged premises located at 17 Pinehurst Drive, Webster, Worcester County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,

TO WIT:
The land in Webster, Worcester County, Massachusetts, on the northerly side of Pinehurst Drive, being shown as Lot 31 on "Plan No. 1, Subdivision of Property of Emil DiDonato, Webster, Massachusetts," dated March 2, 1953, recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 225, Plan 114, and bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at a stake in the northerly line of said Pinehurst Drive, 75 Feet easterly on the easterly line of Ellen Steel, measured along the northerly line of said Pinehurst Drive:

Thence South 77 degrees 12' east by the northerly line of said Pinehurst Drive, 75 Feet to a stake;

Thence North 12 degrees 48' east by Lot 32 a distance of 142.6 Feet to a stake at land now or formerly of Hector Patenaude;

Thence westerly by land now or formerly of said Patenaude and edward LaPlante 75.29 Feet to a stake;

Thence South 12 Degrees 48' west by Lot 30 a distance of 136 Feet to the point of beginning.

Subject to the following restrictions:

1. No building or part of a building shall be erected nearer than 25 Feet to a street or proposed street line, with the exception of the easterly side of Ellen Street on which the proposed street building line shall not be nearer than 15 Feet.

Subject to a first mortgage dated April 23, 2021 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 65032, Page 177 in the original principal amount of \$216,879.00.

For mortgagor's(s') title see deed recorded with Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 49959, Page 62.

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

TERMS OF SALE:

A deposit of Ten Thousand (\$10,000.00) Dollars by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by certified or bank check at Harmon Law Offices, P.C., 150 California St., Newton, Massachusetts 02458, or by mail to P.O. Box 610389, Newton Highlands, Massachusetts 02461-0389, within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication.

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

M & T BANK

Present holder of said mortgage

By its Attorneys,
HARMON LAW OFFICES, P.C.

150 California St.
Newton, MA 02458
(617)558-0500
26850
August 29, 2025
September 5, 2025

September 12, 2025

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE
OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Laura L. Fasshauer to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Radius Financial Group Inc., dated March 20, 2020 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 62099, Page 119, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, by assignment from: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Radius Financial Group Inc., its successors and assigns to JPMorgan Chase Bank, National Association, recorded on April 25, 2024, in Book No. 70432, at Page 61

JPMorgan Chase Bank, National Association to Selene Finance LP, recorded on June 20, 2024, in Book No. 70652, at Page 245

for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at 5:00 PM on September 19, 2025, on the mortgaged premises located at 4 Wysocki Drive, Unit 25, Phase III, Stonegate Condominiums, Dudley, Worcester County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,

TO WIT:

Condominium Unit #25 in Phase III of the Stonegate Condominiums, Dudley, Worcester County, Massachusetts, a Condominium created pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 183A by Master Deed dated June 2, 1986 and recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Book 9497, Page 150, which unit contains 1,022 square feet and is shown on the floor plans filed with said Master Deed and on a copy of a portion of said plans attached to Unit Deed recorded in Book 10154, Page 182 and made a part thereof, to which it is affixed the verified statement of a registered architect in the form required by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 183A, Section 9.

Said Unit is conveyed together with an undivided 1.78 percent interest in the common areas and facilities described in said Master Deed.

Said Unit is conveyed to and with the benefit of rights and interests recited in the hereinbelow referenced Deed and to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 183A.

Said Unit is to be used solely for residential purposes.

The mailing address of said Unit is 4 Wysocki Drive, Unit 25, Dudley, Massachusetts 01571.

Being the same premises conveyed to the herein named mortgagor by deed recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Book 34534, Page 306.

For mortgagor's(s') title see deed recorded with Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 34534, Page 306.

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

TERMS OF SALE:

A deposit of Five Thousand (\$5,000.00) Dollars by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by certified or bank check at Harmon Law Offices, P.C., 150 California St., Newton, Massachusetts 02458, or by mail to P.O. Box 610389, Newton Highlands, Massachusetts 02461-0389, within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication.

Other terms, if any, to be announced

at the sale.

SELENE FINANCE LP

Present holder of said mortgage

By its Attorneys,
HARMON LAW OFFICES, P.C.

150 California St.
Newton, MA 02458
(617)558-0500
27961
August 29, 2025
September 5, 2025
September 12, 2025

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE
OF REAL ESTATE

Premises: 6 Carol Drive, Unit 5B, Oxford, MA 01540

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Brian Elliot and David Elliot to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Mortgagee, as nominee for Caliber Home Loans, Inc., and now held by **NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing**, said mortgage dated January 7, 2019 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 59912, Page 297, said mortgage was assigned from Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Mortgagee, as nominee for Caliber Home Loans, Inc. to NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing by assignment dated August 29, 2024 and recorded with said Registry of Deeds in Book 70962, Page 330; for breach of the conditions in said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at **Public Auction** on October 9, 2025 at 01:00 PM Local Time upon the premises, **directly in front of the building in which the unit is located**, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

Unit B (the "Unit") in Building 5 (the "Building") of Buffumville Heights Estates Condominium (the "Condominium") located in Oxford, Worcester County, Commonwealth of Massachusetts and created pursuant to a Master Deed recorded on July 1, 1987 with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds, Book 10602, Page 30.

The mailing Address and Post Office Address of said Unit is 6 Carol Drive (formerly Dolge Court), Unit 5B, Oxford, MA 01540.

Said Unit 5B contains 2250.1 square feet, more or less, as shown on floor plans of said condominium recorded with said Registry, Plan Book 579, Plan 12, a copy of a portion of said plan being attached to the first unit deed to which is affixed a verified statement in the form required by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 183A, Section 9. Said Unit is also conveyed together with and subject to:

a. An undivided interest of 4.9400% in the common areas and facilities described in the Buffumville Heights Estates Condominium Master Deed.
b. The benefit of, and subject to all easements, rights, restrictions, agreements and provisions created in said Master Deed, and the Declaration of Trust creating the Buffumville Heights Estates Condominium Trust and the By-Laws contained therein, recorded in Book 10602, Page 58, as the same may be amended of record, the Rules and Regulations from time to time promulgated thereunder, and the floor plan.
c. Subject to and with the benefit of all easements, rights, restrictions and agreements as recited in a deed of Matthew Rockman Trustee of the Estate of Monsam Building Contractors, Inc. to John J. Sneade dated January 19, 1989, recorded with said Registry in Book 11883, Page 256.
d. The Exclusive right to park passenger motor vehicles with the driveway or portion of the driveway that exclusively servessaid Unit(the"ParkingArea");and
e. The exclusive right to use the deck adjacent.to said Unit as shown on said plans.

This conveyance is also subject to and with the benefit of the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 183A, as now in force and as from time to time amended. For title See deed from Jeffrey M. Fox and Kara M Fox f/k/a Kara M. Pierce to be recorded herewith.

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

this publication.

For Mortgagor's Title see deed dated December 13, 2018 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 59912, Page 295.

Said Unit will be conveyed together with an undivided percentage interest in the Common Elements of said Condominium appurtenant to said Unit and together with all rights, easements, covenants and agreements as contained and referred to in the Declaration of Condominium, as amended.

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

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

Other terms to be announced at the sale.

Brock & Scott, PLLC
23 Messenger Street

2nd Floor

Plainville, MA 02762

Attorney for NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing

Present Holder of the Mortgage

(401) 217-8701

September 5, 2025

September 12, 2025

September 19, 2025

**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. WO25P2989EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION**

Estate Of:
Paul Michael Mason
**Also known as: Paul M Mason,
Paul Mason**
Date of Death: 07/08/2020

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Late and Limited Formal Testacy and/or Appointment** has been filed by **Gerald Mason of Webster 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:

Gerald Mason of Webster 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 09/23/2025.**

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. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.

Date: August 25, 2025

Stephanie Fattman,

Register of Probate

September 12, 2025

SEND US YOUR NEWS!!!

Email Us @

news@stonebridgepress.news



OXFORD
continued from page A1

work on the 82 Charlton St property. For the third, he’s to provide administrative guidance to the Recreation Committee, establish a 250th Celebration Committee for 2026 events, and start working on the 2027 Master Plan update. For the fourth, she’s to conduct and analyze the results of a community satisfaction survey and work on online permitting.

“This is an impressive list to get done in a year,” she noted.

The “no” vote came from Dave Cornacchioli, who said he didn’t feel many of the items were “targeted” enough to be measurable or had deadlines. He compared the process to his own as a principal, where he’s familiar with “SMART” goals, where the acronym means “specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.”

The people, he added, “want transparency and accountability. They want answers, and I don’t see that captured here.”

Callahan said she gives updates “twice a month” as part of her manager’s reports. She also noted that some goals are hard to pin to timelines because of funding, laws, and contractors involved in them.

Cornacchioli agreed with that, saying, “You start in one direction and get pulled in 15 more.”

But to him, having timelines “just helps keep you more on target,” even though he admitted they can’t always be met.

Regarding funding, John Eul recalled that one of her goals last year was to work on better signage. A committee designed some and selected placement locations, but it’s

still in limbo because of funding to get them made. He said he can see something similar happening with 250th celebrations.

“It’s easy to put a committee together” but harder to fund it, he said.

“She doesn’t necessarily have to knock off every one of those action steps,” Cornacchioli observed, twice stating, “For me, [it should be] more targeted. Less is more.”

“I’m not worried about the accountability because I’ve been through this process before,” Chair Mark Lee said. “As far as goals are defined, there’s accountability throughout the year and at the manager’s evaluation.”

Almost as if to prove their point about timelines, the ongoing project looking at school building needs got delayed to the next meeting. Callahan was asking for two select-board representatives on that project’s stakeholder committee to work with the consultants, but board members wanted more information on when meetings will occur (day or evening) and how (in person or remote), since several work day jobs.

Earlier, the board honored several town staff for various things. Joanne Frederick is retiring after six-plus years as human resources specialist. Deputy Fire Chief John Belanger is getting a new job as fire chief in Lancaster after 17 years here. Several DPW people won awards at the state’s annual driver skills and safety event (a.k.a. the “Roadeo”).

They also approved a new contract with the dispatchers’ union, declared three older fire vehicles surplus, and approved one-day permits for various events.

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

DUDLEY
continued from page A1

their dedication,” Town Administrator Jonathan Ruda said. “Our seniors built the Dudley we know today, and the Board of Selectmen and I keep our town’s motto - ‘All was others; all will be others’

BACKPACK
continued from page A1

May they always strive for wisdom, uphold the values of justice and freedom, and use their knowledge to serve others. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

Before beginning the blessing, Fr. Richard shared a reflection with the students, recalling how a National Park view during his summer travels had filled him with awe, saying “Wow!” But seeing all the students gathered with their backpacks, he added with a smile, made him say, “WOW!” He also noted that he wore a new stole featuring Saint Joseph, which he had received in Poland shortly before learning of his assignment to Webster.

- close to heart when we plan budgets and programs. These improvements honor that legacy, and I’m proud we could make it happen.”

The Open House celebrates the re-opening of the Senior Center. Refreshments will be served.

Fr. Richard invited the students to pray for the intercession of Saint Joseph, as well as Blessed Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati, who were canonized on Sept. 9. With a touch of humor, he joked that he hoped he had brought enough Holy Water for so many students, before walking through the rows, sprinkling backpacks and students with God’s blessing.

The Backpack Blessing has become a beloved tradition at Saint Joseph School, offering both encouragement and inspiration. As the new school year begins, students carry not only their supplies but also the strength of community, the support of their families, and the prayers of their parish.

2 Lake St., Webster
508-949-3880
Library Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 9 a.m.-8 p.m., Wednesday 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

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

Adult Programming

Literacy Volunteers: ESL Classes – Tuesdays at 6:00pm
The Literacy Cafe is a free weekly English conversation class offered by Literacy Volunteers of South Central Massachusetts (LVSCM). This class is free to attend and is open to all adults. No pre-registration is required. For more information, email us at info@lvscm.org.

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

Library for All – First Two Mondays; Last Two Fridays 10AM (Chair Yoga or Craft)
This program includes one chair yoga class and one craft project that will be held on first two Mondays and the last two Fridays of the month. Either join Jess for a one-hour relaxing Chair Yoga class or join us for our craft program. Check the online calendar to see which event is scheduled. No experience necessary. This program is for teens and adults of all abilities and their caregivers. Please call ahead if special accommodations or requirements are needed.

Yoga – Saturdays at 9:30am
Join Julie or Lauren at the Gladys E. Kelly Library for a vinyasa yoga class for all levels. A typical class involves centering the mind with the breath, aromatherapy, movement of the body to release energetic blockages, and, finally, rest and relaxation. Classes are free. Funded by the Friends of the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library.

Literacy Volunteers: Citizenship Test Preparation Class – Series Begins Thursday, Sept. 11th at 6:00pm

Literacy Volunteers of South Central Massachusetts (LVSCM) is pleased to offer a free, 10-week US Citizenship Test Preparation Class. Please note that the class is taught in English, so students should be comfortable speaking and listening to English in class. Space is limited and registration is required. To register, please email Emily at info@lvscm.org.

Fall Concert Series: Oakes and Smith – Thursday, September 11th at 6:30pm
With close harmonies, soulful songs, Robert’s engaging storytelling, and Katherine’s soaring voice, husband-and-wife folk duo Oakes and Smith creates an ethereal sound not often heard in today’s popular music. Oakes and Smith hope to inspire their listeners and remind them that sincerity and soul are still alive in our world.

Adult Book Group – Monday, September 15th at 6:30pm
Join the adult book group for their discussion of *The Book That Matters Most* by Ann Hood. Extra copies are available at the circulation desk.

Trivia-Palooza 3 – Tuesday, September 16th at 6:30pm
Join Evan and Jess for Trivia Palooza 3. Assemble your team (up to 5 people) and put your thinking caps on! Registration is required.

Fire Cider with Christine Leo – Thursday, September 18th at 6:00pm
Join Christine Leo for her herbal tincture making demonstration, fire cider tasting, and “fire cider tea.” You’ll make your own pint of fire cider to bring home with you.

The Seahorse: A Pastel Workshop with Greg Maichack – September 23rd at 5:30pm
“The Seahorse” a pastel workshop with all professional grade materials, templates, and Rembrandt pastels included. Registration is required.

Programming for All Ages

Puzz Fest – Thursday, September 11th at 6:00pm
Assemble your team (up to 5 people!) and join us to see which team can complete their puzzle first. We’ll have snacks to keep you fueled as you tackle your 500 piece jigsaw. All teams will get to keep their puzzle. Registration is required.

Children’s and Young Adult Programming
Creators Club – Mondays from 4:00-5:30 PM
We will have a variety of craft materials available to put your creativity to the test! Come explore our newly rebranded Monday night program: **Creators Club!** Each month

features a new theme highlighting a different art supply for kids to experiment with and turn into their own masterpieces. September’s theme is Yarn - kids can weave, wrap, or invent their own creations! Artwork left behind will be displayed in the children’s program room for the rest of the month.

Toddler Playtime– Tuesdays at 10:00 AM
Kids 0 to 6 are invited to get their wiggles out with weekly obstacle course and fun.

Mini Block Party – Tuesdays at 6:00pm
Play with magnets, wooden blocks, and Legos.

Storytime for Littles – Wednesdays at 10:00am
Join us for a few of our favorite stories, felt story fun, and some free play. This storytime is geared toward ages 0 to 3, but siblings are welcome.

Beginner Origami-Fridays at 3:45PM
Are you interested in making origami, but you don’t know where to start? You can start here. And if you do know how to make some origami, feel free to come make some as well. For kids of all ages.

Craft Adventures: Beaded Keychains – September 11th and 18th at 4:00pm
Join us for our new Thursday craft series, Craft Adventures, tailored for elementary kids! Each month features a different hands-on project, and this month participants will create their own colorful beaded keychains to take home. A great wat for kids to get creative and try something new each month!

Kim the LEGO Lady – Tuesday, September 16th
Do you love building, creating, and having fun with LEGO? Look no further! Kim the Lego Lady is here and we want YOU to be part of our LEGO CLUB adventure. Join us for interactive building challenges, new skills and create fabulous imaginative builds. For Ages 5-11.

Creepy Comics Club – Monday, September 29th at 5:30pm
Calling all readers ages 8-12! Dive into the exciting world of graphic novels at Creepy Comics Club. Each month you’ll read a spooky graphic novel before our meeting, and then we’ll come together to discuss the book, enjoy some snacks, and have fun! This month’s graphic novel book is: *The Old Willis Place* by Mary Downing Hahn. Please register your child and then pick up a copy of the book behind the Children’s Desk by 9/26.

Beautify and expand your indoor garden

Keep your houseplants looking their best with a bit of pinching, trimming and cleanup. A few well-placed snips can improve a plant’s appearance and create cuttings to start new plants.

Start by removing any dead stems and leaves. Improve the overall beauty of spider plants, dracaenas and palms by trimming away the brown leaf tips caused by fluoride from tap water accumulating in the leaves. Avoid the problem by using rainwater, well water or water treated by reverse osmosis.

Trimming to improve the plant’s growth habit and size can provide

encourages the plant to form more branches and compact growth. When you remove the stem tip you reduce the amount of the growth hormone auxin that promotes upward growth and discourages branching.

Encourage more branching without greatly reducing the plant’s size with a soft pinch. Remove just the uppermost portion of the stem where new leaves are developing. Use a hard pinch to remove the tip and several inches of the leafy stem when you want to reduce the overall size and promote fuller growth on leggy plants.

Make a clean cut using sharp micro snips or pruners like Corona’s houseplant pruners (coronatools.com). The rust proof, stainless steel blades can cut up to a quarter inch in diameter and are shaped to make it easier to cut the intended leaves and stems. Your plant will look better, and the wound will close more quickly.

Avoid leaving stubs and keep the plant looking its best by making cuts above a set of healthy leaves or a node, the place where leaves once grew. Pruning elsewhere distracts from the plant’s appearance and the stubs create entryways for insects and disease.

When you finish pinching and pruning, do a bit of cleanup. Use a dry or damp soft cloth to wipe away any dust that accumulates on the leaves. Use a cosmetic brush to clean fuzzy leaved plants



GARDEN MOMENTS
.....
MELINDA MYERS



Courtesy — Corona Tools

Trimming with a sharp houseplant pruners or micro snips will improve a houseplant’s growth habit and size.

You’ll be amazed at how a bit of grooming and propagating can perk up a tired indoor garden. Share or trade extra rooted cuttings with family and friends so each of you can grow your indoor garden and memories.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the *Midwest Gardener’s Handbook*, 2nd Edition and *Small Space Gardening*. She hosts *The Great Courses* “How to Grow Anything” instant video series and the nationally syndicated *Melinda’s Garden Moment* radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine and was commissioned by Corona Tools for her expertise to write this article. Her Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

Home Town Service,
Town-to-Town

BIG TIME RESULTS

CLASSIFIEDS

774-200-7308

**Place your ad today!**



BOY SCOUT TROOP 273
FALL YARD SALE
Saturday, September 20th


Universal Tag Parking Lot, 36 Hall Road, Dudley
Early Birds (8am to 9am) \$10.00 per person fee
9am until 3pm FREE We accept CREDIT CARDS!"
24,000 sq.ft. of yard sale items ONE DAY ONLY
Pick your items and Make an offer!

Grouped Items: Electronics - stereos, speakers, etc. (no TVs) Tools - hand tools, lights, flooring etc.. Furniture - Tables, chairs, bed frames, cabinets, hutches, etc.. Housewares - glassware, dishes, pictures, mirrors, bowls, cups, small appliances Sporting goods - Bikes, skies, baseball equipment, golf, exercise equipment Clothes - shirts, pants, jackets, shoes, bags Kids toys and baby items - high chairs, bouncy, games, Antiques

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Regional Transit Authority celebrates milestone

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — The Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) recently celebrated surpassing five million rides, a milestone that reflects growing ridership and a commitment to expanding access across the region.

The WRTA has long served as a critical link for residents throughout Worcester County, connecting riders to jobs, schools, medical appointments, and other essential services.

“For those without access to a car, transit offers independence, consistency, and a reliable

way to participate in daily life,” read a statement released by the authority.

Since 2020, the WRTA has provided fare-free service to riders, made possible through funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the Fair Share Amendment.

Suspending fares has helped eliminate a major barrier for riders, making public transit more accessible and equitable across the region, officials said.

“Surpassing five million rides is a powerful reminder of the essential role public transit plays in the lives of our residents,” said WRTA

Administrator Josh Rickman. “This milestone reflects the ongoing investments in service reliability, route efficiency, and community engagement. Our operators, contractors, and staff have worked hard to make transit more dependable, responsive, and aligned with the needs of the people we serve.”

Doug Belanger, a Leicester selectman who also serves as the WRTA Advisory Board Chairperson, was thrilled to join fellow leaders in celebrating the recent milestone.

“This achievement shows what happens when we prioritize smart plan-

ning and consistent service delivery,” Belanger said. “From expanding service hours to launching new initiatives, WRTA has stayed focused on building a transit system people can count on. Five million rides is proof that we’re moving in the right direction.”

Looking ahead, WRTA leaders are committed to investing in several additional service enhancements. These include service analyses and surveys; accessibility upgrades for visually impaired riders; a central hub lobby renovation; bus stop improvements; and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) upgrades.

Officials are also planning to improve customer-facing technologies, including bus tracking and other services.

A community celebration to mark the five million rides is scheduled for Sept. 18 during the quarterly “Riders’ Forum.” Attendees can enjoy fun giveaways and have the opportunity to engage directly with WRTA staff members.

Information about the upcoming surveys will also be available at the event.

“WRTA team members will be on site at the central hub to share details about new initiatives and gather valuable commu-

nity feedback,” read the statement released by the authority.

The event will take place from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The WRTA is a regional transit system that serves Worcester and the surrounding 36 communities in central Massachusetts. The WRTA’s bus fleet includes diesel-electric hybrid vehicles, as well as clean-diesel buses.

As the second largest regional transit authority in Massachusetts, the WRTA also provides paratransit services for elderly and disabled riders.

All fixed routes and paratransit services are free through June 2026.



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Bobbiejo and Katelyn enrolled at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, both were seeking a new path. What they found, in addition to rigorous training and a shared passion for healing, was a deeper connection to each other and a profound understanding of what it truly means

to care. Although both share the last name Smith, they are not related by blood. Today, both are proudly Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), having passed their NCLEX-PN on the very first attempt – a testament to their dedication and Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy's com-





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"What makes nursing so powerful isn't always the science or the skill," stated Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, Academy Director. "It's the way kindness leaves a mark long after the moment has passed. The patients may not always remember every word you said, but they'll remember how you made them feel when they were at their most vulnerable. That quiet comfort, that steady calmness. Kindness doesn't fade; it settles quietly in the lives touched, in the moments you've shown up when no one else did."

Indeed, "showing up when no one else could" seems to be a motto for the Smiths. Katelyn, an alumna of Path Regional Vocational Technical High School's Class of 2018 Cosmetology shop, brings a remarkable background of compassion and community involvement to her nursing studies. She holds certifications in Dementia Care, Mental Health First Aid, and Stop The

Bleed, and has received training in Domestic Violence awareness. Her dedication to service is demonstrated through her volunteer work at the Charlton Senior Center Blood Pressure Clinic and her receipt of a Random Act of Kindness Award (RAK Foundation). She is an active member of the UNICEF Club and participated in the JAK-L Foundation's Strides for Mental Health event. Katelyn has also been honored with prestigious scholarships, including the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc., and the Greater Worcester Community Foundation's Cynthia & Harrison Taylor Scholarship.

Bobbiejo has pursued a similarly broad range of certifications and volunteer experiences, embodying the same spirit of compassionate care. She is certified in Dementia Care, Mental Health First Aid, and Stop The Bleed, and has completed training in Domestic Violence awareness and Narcan administration. Bobbiejo's academic excellence is highlighted by her induction into the National Technical Honor Society and her perfect score of 100% on the Medication Calculation

Test. She actively participated in numerous Bay Path workshops and events, including Summer Workshops I & II and Accepted Students Night Art Therapy.

Additionally, Bobbiejo advanced her career through the DSW to LPN Certificate Program. Her commitment to community service is reflected in her volunteer work at the Charlton Senior Center Blood Pressure Screenings. Like Katelyn, she was honored with a Random Act of Kindness Award.

The Smiths' shared journey through Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy not only equipped them with the clinical expertise to save lives but also reinforced their belief in the transformative power of human connection. As they embark on their careers as LPNs, they carry with them not just their certifications, but the profound understanding that in nursing, compassion is truly the most powerful medicine. Their success is a shining example to the Bay Path community, illustrating that dedication, kindness, and a commitment to showing up can lead to extraordinary achievements.

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