

Charlton Villager

© 2024, Issue #44

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Thursday-Friday, Oct. 31-Nov. 1, 2024

Housing plan goes before the public

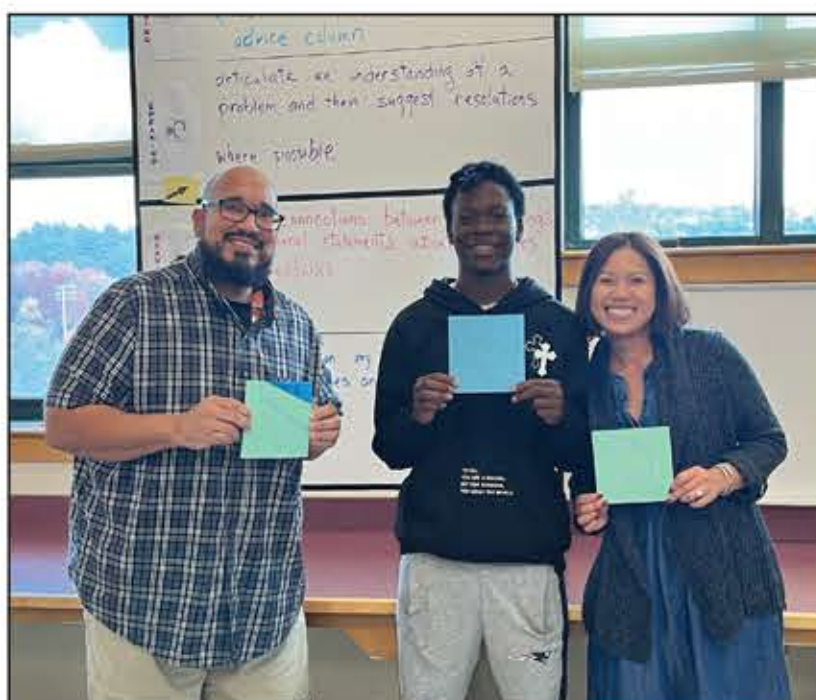
BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — A handful of residents turned out to have their say at the first Housing Production Plan forum last week.

A second forum will happen Nov. 12 at the Senior Center at 10 a.m. (Spanish) and 11:30 a.m. (English). Both seek public input beyond the survey that's been circulating for months now into what Southbridge wants and needs in terms of housing.

As forum leader Emily Glaubitz, a planner from Central Mass. Regional Planning Commission, noted the goal is to identify "any changes

Turn To **HOUSING** page 14



Courtesy

DA'S OFFICE VISITS TANTASQUA

As part of their busy community outreach schedule, members of Worcester County District Attorney Joseph Early's team recently visited Tantasqua Regional High School. Dating safety was one of many topics covered at the event. The DA's outreach team visits schools across the county to discuss this issue, among several others. "Having positive, healthy relationships is crucial. Hope from our outreach team visited Tantasqua High School to talk about our dating violence prevention," read a statement released by the DA's Office. "Thank you to Ms. Nguyen for having us." Students

took part in several activities during the program, including writing down qualities they would want to see in healthy relationships. Members of the DA's outreach team discuss several other topics during their yearlong series of presentations. These include the dangers of drugs and alcohol for young people; avoiding distracted driving; and the importance of cybersecurity. To learn more about programs provided by the DA's Office, visit www.WorcesterDA.com.

Charlton Town Meeting approves expenditures, bylaw changes

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — Charlton's fall annual town meeting on Oct. 21 saw little drama as a little over 50 residents addressed the ten articles up for debate on the warrant including bylaw changes and increased investment in several departments.

The meeting lasted less than an hour, and started with the approval of funds for unpaid bills for the prior fiscal year and moved to inter- and intra-departmental transfers which were also approved. The transfers included moving \$150,000 from free cash to the Other Post Employment Benefits Trust (OPEB) per the town's funding

plan and utilizing \$84,000 to fund a new dispatcher and a new police officer. The request for a new dispatcher had been brought to town officials by the police and fire chiefs in the weeks leading up to the special town meeting to providing enough dispatch help to manage the increased workload for both departments. Other appropriations were \$26,000 for benefit costs for the dispatcher and officer positions and \$750,000 for the Capital Stabilization Fund.

Another article involved several motions concerning miscellaneous capital items and the utilization of free cash. Among the approved projects in the

Turn To **CHARLTON** page 14

Christmas by Candlelight returns to Old Sturbridge Village

STURBRIDGE — Old Sturbridge Village is pleased to announce the return of Christmas by Candlelight, a cherished holiday celebration of New England's festive traditions. Tickets are now on sale to the public for select dates in November and December.

The Village will transform into a stunning winter wonderland beginning Nov. 29, featuring more than 85 beautifully decorated trees on the Christmas Tree

Trail, over 80 wreaths, hundreds of candles illuminating the pathways, and 5,625 feet of garland adorning historic buildings. Each evening of the program will kick off at 4:30 p.m. with a magical lighting ceremony.

Visitors can experience a variety of activities, including knitting Christmas stockings and baking traditional holiday treats. Guests can stroll through the picturesque village and cross the enchanting Christ-

mas Wish Bridge, a scenic path lined with trees along the Quinebaug River. Children will have the chance to meet Santa and Mrs. Claus in their new cabin, where they can share their holiday wishes. Visitors are also encouraged to participate in the annual Gingerbread House contest, where creative entries will be displayed for public voting.

"Christmas by Candlelight is a celebration

Turn To **CHRISTMAS** page 14

Youth mental health First Aid training completed by Bay Path Nursing students

CHARLTON — September is National Suicide Prevention Month and Bay Path practical nursing (PN) students continue to do their share in learning. Research states that suicide is the 10th leading cause of death overall in the US and that the overall suicide rate has increased by 35 percent since 1999. The PN class of 2025 learned the signs of suicide to prevent home or workplace-based tragedy.

Some members of the PN Class of 2025 completed the Youth Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training lead by Lynn Lynch, MBA, Director of Business Operations and MHFA Instructor of the Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services, Inc. (www.SYFS-MA.org). The six-hour curriculum, completed in one full professional development day, gives the participant a three-year certification upon completion.

Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN Academy Director at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy has been working with the Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services for the PN students MHFA training for over five years. "We are grateful to have Lynn return to Bay Path annually and the our Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services for their continued provision of



Lynn Lynch, MBA front row, second from right with members of the PN Class of 2025.

Courtesy

the MHFA training for the PN students!" said Bolandrina. "I cannot emphasize enough how important it is for our Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services to have the skills and knowledge to identify and respond

to signs of mental disorders and how to provide initial help and support," Bolandrina added.

MHFA trained individuals may assist someone experiencing a mental health or sub-

stance use-related crisis. In the MHFA course, the PN students learned risk factors and warning signs for mental health and addiction concerns, strategies for how to help in crisis and non-crisis

situations and well as where to turn for help for both adult and youth.

Topics covered include depression, mood disorders, anxiety, trauma, psychosis, and substance use disorders.

Participants learned how to apply the MHFA action plan in situations when someone is experiencing panic attacks, suicidal thoughts of behaviors, non-suicidal

Turn To **HEALTH** page 14

Brookfield Congregational Church

Spaghetti and Meatball Dinner

Saturday November 9 at 5:30pm

Fellowship Hall

On the common

Spaghetti and Meatballs, Salad, Garlic Bread, Desert and beverage

Donation \$12 adults, \$6 children ages 6-12, under 6 free • Family of 5 or more \$25

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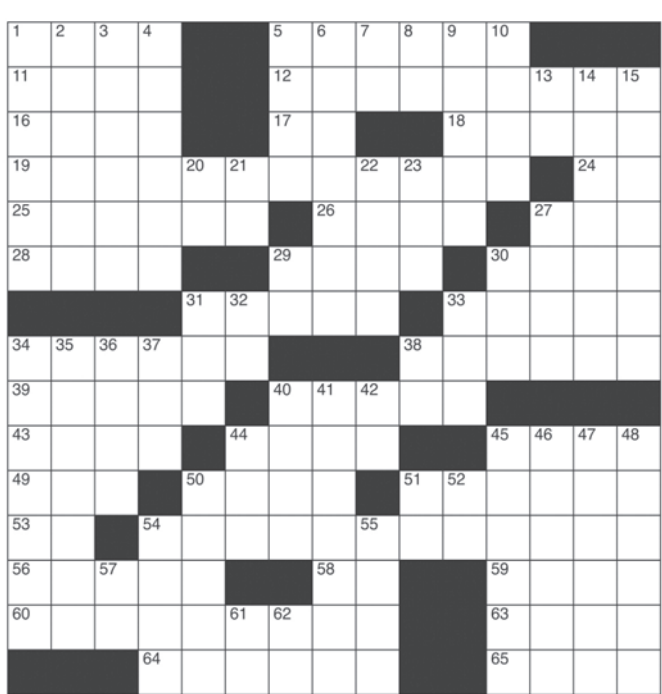
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- CLUES ACROSS
1. __ Spumante (Italian wine)

5. Highly impressed

11. Pronoun to identify something specific

12. Uttered in an impassioned way

16. Outfits

17. “Westworld” actor Harris

18. Stewed game casserole

19. Indignities inflicted on others

24. Blood type

25. Says beneath one’s breath

26. Taxis

27. Transmits genetic information from DNA to the cytoplasm

28. NFL great Randy

29. Where college students live

30. Brief Yankees sensation Kevin

31. Condiment

33. -frutti

34. Polish city

38. Astronomy unit of distance

39. Romanian village

40. Bears first overall pick Williams

43. Irritated

44. Clothing for sale has them

45. One-time world power

49. When you anticipate arriving

50. Farm building

51. Organize thoughtfully

53. Detective

54. One who reduces

56. Nursemaids

58. Partner to “Pa”

59. World’s longest river

60. Commemorates

63. Compound

64. The Lannisters and Starks fought for one

65. Email function
- CLUES DOWN
1. Open-roofed entrance

2. Japanese religion

3. Dancer’s garments

4. Distributes

5. Yemeni port

6. Spanish doctors

7. It cools your house

8. Engine variant

9. Makes more manageable

10. Days (Spanish)

13. Milliliter

14. Spread out from

15. With two replaceable hydrogen atoms

20. Respectful title for a man

21. Equally

22. Scarlett’s home

23. Big Blue

27. Subway dwellers

29. One-tenth of a liter

30. Central European river

31. Distress signal

32. Expression of sympathy

33. Bar bill

34. Football equipment

35. Dance music

36. Russian river

37. Mary __, cosmetics

38. Gym class

40. Autos

41. Fourth and honorable name in ancient Rome

42. Defeats (abbr.)

44. A way to color

45. Planet

46. Form of humor

47. Taken without permission

48. Go over again

50. Auto parts manufacturer

51. Detective’s source

52. Home of the Flyers

54. Short official note

55. Emit coherent radiation

57. In the year of Our Lord

61. Atomic #18

62. Not from, but...

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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SOUTHBRIDGE POLICE LOG

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of Oct. 14-28.

A juvenile, age 17, was arrested on Oct. 14 for Unlicensed Operation of a Moped by a Minor; Disorderly Conduct, Disturbing the Peace, and operating an Uninsured and Unregistered Motor Vehicle.

A 50-year-old male from Southbridge was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 15 for Disorderly Conduct and Disturbing the Peace.

Jessica Alice Alves Santana, age 31, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 15 for Domestic Assault and Battery. A 35-year-old male from Southbridge was issued a summons in lieu of arrest during the same incident for Domestic Assault and Battery.

Anthony J. Trapasso, age 27, of Wales was arrested on Oct. 16 for Possession of a Class B Drug.

A 22-year-old male from Southbridge was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 16 for Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of license.

A 33-year-old male from Southbridge was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 17 for operating an Uninsured and Unregistered Motor Vehicle.

A 49-year-old male from Worcester was taken into protective custody in connection with a warrant on Oct. 19.

A juvenile, age 15, was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 20 for Larceny of a Motor Vehicle and Nighttime Felony Breaking & Entering into a Vehicle.

Joshua R. Cable, age 40, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 21 for Larceny From a Building and in connection with a warrant. A 33-year-old female from Southbridge was issued a summons in lieu of arrest during the same incident for Larceny From a Building.

Raymond Eugene Cadarette, age 44, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 22 in connection with a warrant for Possession of a Class A Drug with Intent to Distribute.

A 45-year-old male from Southbridge was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 22 for Forgery and/or Misuse of an RMV Document and Failure to Register as a Sex Offender.

Nicole m. Ploof, age 36, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 22 for Possession of a Class A Drug and in connection with a warrant.

Salvador Serrano, age 60, of Southbridge was taken into protective custody and subsequently arrested on Oct. 23 in connection with a warrant for Trespassing.

Justin Ray Thomson, Jr., age 19, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 23 in connection with a warrant for Assault & Battery with a Dangerous Weapon.

Zachary Wonderlie, age 18, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 23 for Speeding, Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle, operating an Uninsured and Unregistered Motor Vehicle, and a Number Plate to Conceal ID.

Alexis Fraticelli, age 49, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 23 for Violation of an Abuse Prevention Order.

Taylor Lee Kups-tas, age 27, and Troy L. Souto, age 26, both of Southbridge, were arrested on Oct. 24 for Vandalization of Property.

A 40-year-old male from Southbridge was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 24 for Wanton Destruction of Property valued at more than \$1,200.

Brian K. Glover, age 45, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 24 in connection with a warrant for Failure to Register as a Sex Offender.

A 47-year-old female from Southbridge was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 24 for a Marked Lanes Violation and Leaving the Scene of Property Damage.

A 20-year-old male from Southbridge was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 24 for Speeding and operating an Uninsured and Unregistered Motor Vehicle.

Alicia Marie Bisanti, age 39, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 25 in connection with a warrant for operating a motor vehicle after suspension of registration.

A 37-year-old male from Southbridge was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 25 for a Number Plate Violation to Conceal ID and operating an Uninsured and Unregistered Motor Vehicle.

Latroy Demond Gaines, age 44, of Ux-bridge was arrested on Oct. 25 in connection with a warrant for Possession of a Class B Drug.

A 58-year-old female from Dudley was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 25 for Leaving the Scene of Property Damage.

Riley Christopher Blair, age 19, of West Brookfield was arrested on Oct. 26 for multiple counts of Carrying a Dangerous Weapon, Disorderly Conduct, and in connection with a warrant for Assault with a Deadly Weapon.

Monica Marie Wardle, age 27, of Mossup, Conn. was arrested on Oct. 26 for Violation of an Abuse Prevention Order.

A 35-year-old male from Hartford, Conn. was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 27 for Operating a motor vehicle after suspension of registration, Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle, a Marked Lanes Violation, and a Number Plate Violation to Conceal ID.

A 58-year-old female from Southbridge was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 27 for making a False Report to Public Safety Dispatch.

Scott W. Smith, age 51, of Worcester was arrested on Oct. 27 for Shoplifting By Concealing Merchandise (second offense).

Wayside Church hosting Pumpkin Slingshot Bash

CHARLTON — Wayside Church, 6 Haggerty Rd. in Charlton, will hold a Pumpkin Slingshot Bash Nov. 9.

All are invited. There will be a chance to send a pumpkin in the air using our prebuilt pumpkin sling shots. Also, there will be food available as well as arts and crafts for the children.

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Sheriff's Office distribute winter coats to community

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — Even though temperatures have been unseasonably warm in recent weeks, it will soon be time to put on cold-weather gear again. And Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis is helping to ensure that community members stay warm this winter.

Last week, members of the Worcester County Sheriff's Office and the Worcester County Reserve Deputy Sheriff's Association held the first distribution day for their annual Winter Coat Drive.

With support from several community partners, including the Worcester Red Sox, officials on Oct. 22 distributed coats to multiple organizations.

The donations will be used to help families, youngsters, and seniors this winter.

"It is estimated that our teams distributed well over 1,500 coats today to many different organizations throughout Worcester County," read a statement re-



Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis (pictured fourth from right) and his team recently partnered with several community organizations to distribute coats to those in need.

leased by the Sheriff's Office.

By the end of the 2024 distribution drive, officials hope to hand out more than 4,000 new winter coats to those in need.

Several community volunteers and representatives from various organizations are thanked for helping members of the Sheriff's Office in distributing coats.

For Evangelidis and his team, it's critical to support initiatives

that assist residents throughout the community, especially amid a challenging economy. Every coat received by a community member means one less item a family or senior has to purchase this holiday season.

"Every year, we have the joy of handing out these coats, which symbolize much more than just a winter jacket. They represent a community that cares," Evangelidis said. "The people who receive

these jackets are grateful for the gesture from the Sheriff's Office. This is a special time of year for the Sheriff's Department, and we're excited to connect with the community members we serve."

Since the pandemic, high prices and lost jobs have combined to place a strain on residents nationwide, especially families and seniors. For Evangelidis and his team, it means a lot to help those seeking assistance in

keeping their families warm this winter.

"Many community members and representatives of local organizations have supported the coat drive in various ways," read the statement released by the Sheriff's Office.

Last month, a coat drive kickoff event brought together local organizations, business owners, and other supporters. Held at Pepe's Italian Restaurant in Worcester, the event raised money and awareness for the massive community initiative.

Since the first distribution

cial thanks all community members, businesses, volunteers, and local organizations who have stepped up and shown support for the annual coat drive.

"Thank you to all who have supported this initiative and joined us," read the statement issued by the Sheriff's Office.

For more information about the coat drive, or to learn about several other programs the Sheriff's Office runs to support the community, visit www.worcestercountysheriff.com.

Courtesy



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Ruth Wells Center hosting Holiday Fair Saturday



SOUTHBIDGE — The Ruth Wells Center for the Arts is holding the annual Holiday Fair on Saturday, Nov. 2 from 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Located at 111 Main St. in Southbridge, admission is free and complementary refreshments will be available. A variety of crafters will fill the galleries with handmade jewelry, soaps, prints, photos, paintings, papercrafts, ornaments and other gift ideas. There will be live music by Mike K, as well as raffles for a variety of baskets featuring gift cards from local businesses, art and wine. Raffle proceeds will benefit the Ruth Wells Center to provide programs, workshops and exhibits to promote art and culture in the community.

The Holiday Fair provides shoppers the opportunity to find unique and special gifts- just in time for the holiday season. The Ruth Wells Center has ample parking and is conveniently located in the heart of Southbridge. Crafters include Hilary Amedy, Billy Bolster, Heather Croteau, Ron Dion, Joyce Foster, Doug Hockman, Cynthia Keane, Suzanne Wasserman and Alison Wilhelm. For more information, call 508-764-3341.



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November events at the Charlton Public Library

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

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

PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

Movies @ The Library

All showings are on Tuesdays at 1:00 ONLY - No registration required.

November 5 : FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION. 2006. Rated PG-13. Runtime 86 minutes.

November 12 : WHAT'S COOKING. 2000. Rated PG-13. Runtime 110 minutes.

November 19 : ALICE'S RESTAURANT. 1969. Rated PG. 111 minutes.

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

Thursdays from 1:00-3:00 - Upstairs Reading Room - No registration required

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

Fantastic Fall Soups

Saturday, November 2, 1:00-2:00 - Community Meeting Room - Registration required.

Join Therapy Gardens for a heartwarming and healthy presentation on fall soups. Whether you're an experienced cook or just starting, this presentation will inspire you to bring the flavors of fall into your home. Space is limited to 30, so

registration is required.

Better Read Than Dead Book Club - AMONG THE BROS: a fraternity crime story by Max Marshall

Wednesday, November 6, 11:00-12:00 - Sibley Reading Area - No registration required

A monthly meetup to discuss fascinating true crime books. Books available prior to discussion.

Genealogy Group Meeting

Thursday, November 7, 6:00-7:30 - Community Meeting Room - No registration required

The Charlton Library Genealogy Group is a friendly group of people who share an interest in genealogy. Meetings alternate between general discussion topics and guest presenters. Tonight's meeting is general discussion and story telling. The meetings are free and open to the public.

Take Great Photos With Your Smartphone

Saturday, November 9, 11:00-2:00 - Community Meeting Room - Registration required.

This class is for those interested in producing high-quality images with their smartphone cameras. Everything necessary for taking great smartphone pictures will be addressed

Friends of the Library Meeting

Tuesday, November 12, 3:30-4:30 - Community Meeting Room

Monthly meeting of Friends of Charlton Public Library. All are welcome.

Pie Season Pennant Craft

Wednesday, November 13, 10:00-11:30 - Community Meeting Room - Registration required

We'll be crafting our own pie pennants to celebrate the season. This program is for adults and teens ages 13 and up. Registration is required.

CPL Book Discussion - ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE by Elizabeth Strout

Thursday, November 14, 6:00-7:00 - Community Meeting Room - No registration

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

Check library event calendar listing for Zoom link.

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group

Thursday, November 14, 6:00-7:30 - Local History Room - No registration required

Led by experienced caregivers and offers information, resources, and strategies specific to caring for someone with Alzheimer's and other Dementias along with support for transitioning to different care settings. No registration

Co-sponsored by Tri-Valley and Charlton Public Library.

Saturday Acoustic Roots Jam

Saturday, November 16, 12:00-1:30 - Community Meeting Room

An acoustic only music jam. Open to all 18+. From September through May the group meets at Charlton Public Library, and from

June through August the group meets at an off-site location. Email Rich at Cule5632@gmail.com for more information.

Book Banning in Massachusetts

Tuesday, November 19, 6:30-7:30 - Community Meeting Room

Local journalist Jeff Raymond moonlights as an activist and founder of MassTransparency (www.masstransparency.org) in Millbury, Massachusetts. He successfully fought a book banning effort in his hometown, and will discuss those efforts as well as MassTransparency's attempt to learn more about book banning statewide. He will discuss his experience as well as provide tips and recommendations on how to fight censorship in your community.

Charlton Ukulele League & Ensemble

Thursday, November 21, 6:00-7:30 - Community Meeting Room - No registration required

Experienced musicians and newbies all welcome. Questions? Email Cule5632@gmail.com

Death Cafe

Thursday, November 21, 6:00-7:30 - Sibley Reading Area - No registration required

A group-directed discussion of death with no agenda, objectives or course of action, no set conclusions and no judgment. Questions? Email kwalker4@mac.com.

Critical Thinking Discussion Group - THE TIPPING POINT by Malcom Gladwell

Friday, November 22, 1:00-2:00 - Sibley Reading Area (Main Floor) - No registration required

No experience with critical thinking discussion groups is necessary. Books/materials are available for checkout one month prior to discussion. Questions? Email saga3@charter.net.

Puzzle Race

Saturday, November 23, 11:00 - 1:00 - Community Meeting Room - Registration required

Each team will receive the same 500 piece puzzle provided by the library. The team that finishes first or completes the most before time is called wins! Registration is required- only one person from each team should register. Teams can have up to six members.

Charcuterie Workshop

Tuesday, November 26, 6:00-7:30 - Community Meeting Room - Registration required in person

Kick off the holiday season with this hands-on workshop! For adults and teens ages 13 and up. This class is limited to 24 participants and requires a non-refundable copay of \$10.00. Please visit the adult circulation desk to register and pay.

PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH

Lego Club

Friday, November 1, 3:30-4:30 - Story Time Room - No registration; drop-in

LEGO Club encourages children to learn while having fun! Cre-

ativity, problem-solving, and teamwork are some of the skills that "playing" with LEGOS can teach children. LEGO's provided. For ages 5 - 10.

Me and My Mini with Sunflower Movement Therapy

Mondays, November 4, 18, 25 from 10:30-11:15 - Community Meeting Room - Registration required

A 45-minute creative movement group for ages birth through 2.5 with a grown-up. Focused on adult and baby spending quality time together, fostering attachment, and baby interacting with others their age. 3-week session - Mondays on November 4, 18, 25. Register for each week you can attend.

Sing and Swing with Deb Hudgins!

Tuesdays, November 5 & 19 from 9:45 - 10:30 AM - Story Time Room

Join Deb Hudgins for a rollicking, fun time of dancing, singing, and playing instruments! This program is best for ages 2-5, but younger and older siblings are welcome. Registration is required.

Wiggles & Giggles for Littles (YFCP)

Thursdays, November 7, 14, 21 at 9:45 & 10:30 (2 sessions)- Community Meeting Room

Join the YMCA Family & Community Partnership for a free music and movement series created and facilitated by music teacher Laine Hanlon! Children, ages 6-23 months, with a parent/caregiver, will sing, move, play musical in-

Turn To CPL page 14



Community Connection



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Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy UNICEF Club announces new officers

CHARLTON — The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy Class of 2025 announced the election of new UNICEF Club officers.

Elected were Elizabeth Achayo of Worcester as chair, Tamara Lidonde of Spencer as co-chair, Delene Sarsfield of Charlton as secretary, Loise Ngigi of South Grafton as treasurer, and Rachel Anane of Worcester as press relations officer. The election was held recently as the Practical Nursing Class of 2025 held the US Constitution Day under the guidance of Professor Virginia Dockstader, BSN, RN of Hopkinton.

Achayo holds a college diploma in Human Services (career guiding and counseling, from Kenya). She is a support specialist with the Justice Resource Institute (Framingham, MA). Lidonde is a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) with experience working at Venture Community Services and CareOne Concord. She completed her secondary education at Worcester Technical High School. Sarsfield is a CNA at CareOne at Millbury. She graduated from Holy Name Central Catholic Jr/Sr



Courtesy

Seated from left: Rachel Anane, Delene Sarsfield; standing from left: Loise Ngigi, Tamara Lidonde and Elizabeth Achayo.

High School in Worcester. Ngigi currently works for Venture Community Services (Sturbridge, MA) as a direct support professional. She graduated

ed from Moi Girls Kamangu High School in Kenya. She obtained her CNA training at 3Dimensions Health Services in 2017.

Anane works as staff at Arbor (Southborough). Prior to coming to Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, she has taken courses at Framingham State University.

All UNICEF Club officers are certified in Dementia care and have a valid Healthcare Provider/ BLS Provider CPR from the American Heart Association. As UNICEF Club officers they will lead the PN Class of 2025 in children’s advocacy and raising awareness. The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy UNICEF Club was founded in 2016 and each year club officers lead members through various fundraising methods that serve to educate and raise awareness of relevant issues happening locally and globally. The UNICEF Club meets after school hours. Plans are underway for educational fundraising activities.

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Savers Bank welcomes Gregory Vilardo as new Vice President & Chief Financial Officer

SOUTHBIDGE — Savers Bank is pleased to announce the appointment of Gregory Vilardo as the new Vice President & Chief Financial Officer. Vilardo provides an extensive background in finance, accounting, and leadership, bringing a wealth of experience to help guide the Bank’s continued growth and success.



Gregory Vilardo

Vilardo joins Savers Bank from Northeast Home Loan, LLC, where he served as Senior Vice President & Chief Administrative Officer, overseeing finance, accounting, and administrative

functions. His background includes key roles such as Vice President, SEC Financial Reporting at Farmington Bank in Connecticut and Chief Financial Officer at Enjet Aero New Britain,

where he played a pivotal role in financial strategy and management.

In his new role, Vilardo will lead the Accounting and Investment functions at Savers Bank, ensuring financial management aligning with the Bank’s strategic initiatives. His leadership is expected to foster continued financial stability and support the Bank’s mission of providing exceptional service to the communities it serves.

“We’re pleased to welcome Gregory to our executive team,” said Rosemary Picard, President & CEO of Savers Bank. “His expertise and proven track record will be invaluable as we continue to expand our services and enhance our financial performance. We’re confident that his leadership will help us achieve our long-term goals and reinforce our commitment to our customers and community.”

Vilardo holds a B.A. in Accounting from Siena College and began his career as a public accountant and financial consultant.

Charlton Public Library hosting virtual parenting workshop

CHARLTON — Charlton Public Library presents “The Organized Parent” virtual workshop Tuesday, Nov. 12 from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Are you a parent struggling to keep track of school papers and assignments? Is your afterschool schedule of commitments overwhelming? This fun and informative virtual workshop, presented by Jenna Elliott of The Naked Flower, will give you new ways to approach the clutter and commitments that school days can bring into the home. She will share tips on:

1. Combating over-committed schedules
2. Entry and exit strategies

3. Tips on tackling the paper trail
4. Fun and helpful resources

Jenna Elliott is the founder of The Naked Flower, Professional Organizers. She has been an organizer and re-designer for more than 20 years and works with various clients in the office and at home. Before starting The Naked Flower (www.thenakedflower.com), Jenna was a master floral designer and project manager for a Fortune 500 company.

To register for this workshop, please visit www.charltonlibrary.org.

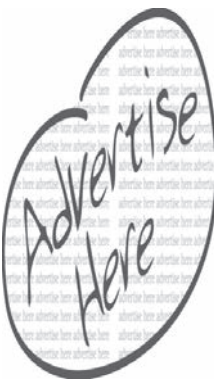
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The joy of America’s pastime

As the leaves change colors and the air turns crisp, the onset of fall brings with it the arrival of one of America’s most cherished traditions: baseball playoffs. For generations, baseball has held a special place in the hearts of Americans, to become a timeless pastime that brings happiness, unity, and a sense of belonging.

Baseball’s roots in America run deep, tracing back to the 19th century when it evolved from a simple game into a full-fledged professional sport. Over the decades, baseball has become more than just a game. From the crack of the bat to the roar of the crowd, baseball’s enduring appeal lies in its ability to evoke nostalgia and a sense of belonging. It reminds us of our history, spanning generations to connect grandparents, parents, and children through the love of the game.

During playoff season, this connection becomes even more profound. The excitement of watching your favorite team battle it out on the national stage, the suspense of each pitch, and the thrill of a game-winning home run all create moments of genuine joy and a bit of adrenaline as well!

But it’s not just the game itself that brings happiness; it’s also the sense of community and camaraderie that baseball fosters. Ballparks across the nation become gathering places for fans of all backgrounds to come together and share in the experience. Whether you’re tailgating in the parking lot, high-fiving strangers after a big play, or singing along to “Take Me Out to the Ball Game” during the seventh inning stretch, baseball erases our differences, just like that.

Baseball has seen the nation through some of its darkest days, offering a distraction and a source of comfort during times of crisis. From the Great Depression to the aftermath of 9/11, baseball has been a constant, reminding us that there is always something to look forward to and that, together, we can overcome adversity.

With that, we all have our favorite teams, so please indulge us as we take this opportunity to say, in lieu of the Red Sox...go Dodgers!

Letter submission
policy

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

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

OPINION

Pumpkin Possibilities: Recipes that Recycle!

Once Halloween is over, the big question remains: What to do with those perfectly fine sugar pumpkins used as porch props and party centerpieces? From whipping up a variety of pumpkin treats to prepping purée for future use, the following recipes, culled from old files and the internet, promote pumpkin repurposing!

Preparing Pumpkin: Freezing cooked, pureed pumpkin is a favored way to preserve the taste and texture of pumpkin for use in holiday recipes. Sugar or pie pumpkins are ideal candidates for freezing as the pulp is thicker and firmer. To easily prepare a pumpkin for pureeing, simply place the whole fruit in the microwave for about a minute or so to soften the skin. This will make the pumpkin much easier to peel. Cut the pumpkin in large slices, peel the skin and remove the strings and seeds. Then cut the slices into smaller pieces. Boil the pumpkin pieces until tender, then mash or process the pumpkin pulp until it forms a smooth, thick puree.

To store, freeze in Ziploc bags or frost safe containers.

Pumpkin Granola
Autumn flavors, such as pumpkin puree, maple syrup and cranberries mix with crunchy pumpkin seeds and nuts and for a seasonal taste treat you can enjoy throughout the season.

Note: This recipe differs from the one shared in this column last year at this time, and doesn’t require hours of roasting!

Ingredients:3 1/2 cups rolled oats; 2 1/2 cups puffed rice cereal (like Rice Krispies); 2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice mix; 3/4 tsp salt; 3/4 cup brown sugar; 1/2 cup pureed pumpkin; 1/4 cup smooth applesauce; 1/4 cup maple syrup; 1 tsp vanilla extract;1 cup chopped nuts; such as walnuts pecans, pecans, etc; ½ cup pumpkin seeds; 1 cup raisins and dried cranberries

Directions: Preheat the oven to 325 degrees and line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a large bowl, combine oats, puffed rice cereal. In a medium bowl, whisk together spices, salt, sugar, applesauce (smooth), pumpkin puree, maple syrup and vanilla. Whisk until very smooth.

Pour wet ingredients into dry ingredients and stir with a spatula or large spoon until mixture is evenly coated. Spread on prepared baking sheet in an even layer.

Bake for 30 minutes, then turn over the granola carefully using a large wide spatula, spreading as thin as possible. Sprinkle the nuts onto the granola, and bake for additional 15



TAKE THE HINT
KAREN TRAINOR

minutes, until crisp and golden. If center isn’t fully dried, remove the edges of the cooked granola to a cooling rack and let the rest cook for another 10-15 minutes until done. Cool on pan or on a fine wire rack. Break up granola. Add dried fruit before serving.

Pumpkin Ginger Cookies
Fresh pumpkin transforms into a crisp cookie with this old fashioned recipe.

Ingredients: ½ cup of butter, softened;1 cup granulated sugar; plus more for rolling the cookies; ½ cup fresh pumpkin puree; 1 egg; 1 teaspoon vanilla extract; 2 cups all-purpose flour; 2 teaspoons baking soda; 2 teaspoons cinnamon; 1 1/2 teaspoons ground ginger; 1 teaspoon ground cloves; 1/2 teaspoon salt

Directions: In a large bowl beat the butter and sugar together until creamy and smooth. Add the pumpkin, molasses, egg, and vanilla extract, mix until well combined.

Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, spices, and salt. Add dry ingredients to wet ingredients and mix until combined. Refrigerate dough for at least an hour.

To bake, preheat oven to 350° F. Line a baking sheet with a parchment paper. Roll spoon sized balls of dough in granulated sugar until well coated and place on prepared baking sheet, about two inches apart. Bake for 10–12 minutes, or until cookies look cracked and set at the edges. The cookies will still be soft. Let the cookies cool on the baking sheet for a few minutes after removing them from the oven, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Makes about three dozen cookies.

Pumpkin Latte
Leftover pumpkin elevates a simple cup of Joe to holiday gourmet status!

Ingredients: two cups whole or 1% milk; two tablespoons pumpkin puree; two tablespoons granulated sugar; two tablespoons pure vanilla; ½ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice (or substitute 1/4 tsp cinnamon, 1/8 tsp cloves, 1/8 tsp nutmeg, and a scant pinch of ground ginger); 3/4 cup of strong, brewed coffee (or substitute one half cup espresso).

Directions: Place coffee and milk in a small crockpot. Mix in the pumpkin, vanilla and spices. Cover and cook on high for an hour or two. When ready, whisk again to mix. Ladle into mugs and top with whipped cream and shaved cinnamon if desired.

This recipe will serve two people.

Turn To **HINT** page 14

Donor-advised funds: A smart way to give



FINANCIAL FOCUS
TREVOR NIELSEN

You can find several ways to make charitable gifts — but if you’re looking for a method that can provide multiple tax benefits, along with an efficient platform for giving year after year, you might want to consider a donor-advised fund.

Once you open a donor-advised fund (DAF), you can contribute many types of assets, including cash, publicly traded stocks, bonds, CDs or non-cash items such as closely held business interests, art or collectibles. You can then decide how to invest the money, possibly following a strategy suggested by the DAF sponsor organization you’ve selected. The next step involves choosing which charities to support, how often to provide support (such as once a year) and how much to give each time. You’re essentially free to direct the money to any charities you like, provided they’re IRS-approved charitable organizations.

Now, let’s look at the possible tax advantages offered by a DAF:

Immediate tax deduction – A few years ago, changes in tax laws resulted in a vastly increased standard deduction, which, in turn, led to far fewer people itemizing on their tax returns and having less incentive, at least from a tax standpoint, to contribute to charities. But if you don’t typically give enough each year to itemize deductions, you could combine several years’ worth of giving into one contribution to a DAF and take a larger deduction in that tax year. And you can claim that deduction, even though the DAF may distribute funds to charities over several years.

Tax-free growth of earnings – Once you contribute an asset to a DAF, any earnings growth is not taxable to you, the DAF or the charitable groups that receive grants from the DAF.

Avoidance of capital gains taxes – When you donate appreciated stocks or other investments — or for that matter, virtually any appreciated asset — to a DAF, you can avoid paying the capital gains taxes that would otherwise be due if you were to simply sell the asset and then donate the proceeds to charitable organizations. Plus, by receiving the appreciated asset, rather than the proceeds from a sale, the charitable groups can gain more from your contribution. And you can also take a tax deduction for your donation.

While these potential tax benefits can certainly make a DAF an attractive method of charitable giving, you should be aware of some potential tradeoffs. Once you contribute assets to a DAF, that gift is irrevocable, and you can’t access the money for any reason other than charitable giving. Also, your investment options are limited to what’s available in the DAF program you’ve chosen. And DAFs can incur administrative costs in addition to the fees charged on the underlying investments.

You may want to consult with your financial professional about other potential benefits and tradeoffs of DAFs and whether a DAF can help you with your charitable giving goals. Also, different DAF sponsors offer different features, so you will want to do some comparisons. And because DAFs can have such significant implications for your tax situation, you should consult with your tax professional before taking action.

If a DAF is appropriate for your situation, though, consider it carefully — it might be a good way to support your charitable giving efforts for years to come.

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

A winter season of colorful Amaryllis blooms

This winter, brighten your mood and surroundings by planting and growing a few amaryllis. Your thoughts may turn to red when considering this plant but now you can find a variety of colors and flower shapes. Select the color that best suits your mood and indoor décor.

Fill your home with these beauties for the holidays. Then keep the blossoms coming all winter long. Plant several different types of amaryllis bulbs, from the southern and northern hemispheres, and you'll get a long-lasting, colorful display.

Most amaryllis bulbs grown in the U.S. are imported from Holland, and their natural bloom time is January through March. Exactly when the flowers will open is impossible to predict. The best strategy is to choose sev-

GARDEN
MOMENTS

MELINDA
MYERS

eral different varieties and plant them three to four weeks apart during November, December, and January so you'll always have flowers coming into bloom.

Kick off the holiday season with amaryllis bulbs imported from growers in the southern hemisphere. As we enter autumn, it's springtime in South America, and these bulbs are eager to begin to bloom. Pot them up before early November for flowers in December.

Brighten the holiday season with the pure white, fully double flowers of Alaska amaryllis (longfield-gardens.com). The white blossoms with lime green throat combine nicely with winter greens. Plant the bulbs in the fall and enjoy the blossoms throughout the holiday season.

Keep the flowers coming with an early bloomer such



Courtesy — LongfieldGardens.com

Plant Alaska amaryllis bulbs in the fall to enjoy pure white, fully double flowers throughout the holiday season.

as Evergreen, which is always quick to break out of dormancy. Its flowers have narrow, lime/chartreuse petals on 20-inch plants adding a freshness to any room. Enjoy the impressive display as each bulb produces two to three stems with four to six blooms each.

Add a bit of fun and flare with the eight-inch flowers of Dancing Queen. You'll enjoy the showy layers of ruffled snow-white petals highlighted with brush strokes of red.

If you are a fan of the popular color pink, there is an amaryllis for you. Pink Surprise Amaryllis has enormous hot pink flowers with a silky sheen and a touch of white at the tip. It is a stand-out and perfect as a centerpiece on the dining room table or as a colorful welcome when displayed on a table by your front entrance.

For those who prefer something a bit more subtle, check out Terra Cotta Star. The soft watercolor hues of salmon, rose, buttercream and pistachio along with its dark veins add an artistic flare to each blossom.

Showcase and enjoy your colorful amaryllis by displaying it on a mantle, kitchen counter, or entryway table. Then watch the amazing show as the first sprout ap-

pears, followed by buds and finally, its spectacular trumpet-shaped blooms. Or cut a few flowers to enjoy as long-lasting cut flowers.

Order these and other amaryllis varieties early for the greatest selection. Selecting an assortment of colors, flower shapes and bloom times provides months of beauty and enjoyment.

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

POSITIVELY SPEAKING

TOBY MOORE

Well, I know I said last week that my spooky season series was done, but with many requests for one more, I said, why not? I couldn't resist sharing just one more story for Halloween. And this one might be the strangest yet. It's the tale of a place where the mysterious meets the unexplained—where eerie lights dance across the horizon, and science and folklore collide. I'm talking about the Marfa Lights.

In a remote stretch of West Texas desert near the small town of Marfa, strange, glowing orbs

have illuminated the night sky for centuries.

According to local history, the first recorded sighting was in 1883, when a rancher named Robert Ellison noticed lights flickering in the distance, initially thinking they were Apache campfires. But as he traveled closer, the lights seemed to move farther away, as if intentionally evading him.

Interestingly, Native American tribes in the area, including the Apache, were aware of these lights long before settlers arrived, referring to them as "fallen stars" and interpreting them as celestial or supernatural phenomena.

The Marfa Lights, which appear as bright orange, red, or blue orbs, have been seen shifting, darting, and splitting apart only to rejoin moments later. Some say they float, while others claim they hover above

the ground, weaving in and out of view.

During World War II, the Marfa Lights caught the attention of pilots stationed at the nearby Midland Army Air Field. Intrigued, these pilots attempted to locate the source of the lights, thinking it might be a natural or man-made structure. Despite multiple attempts, they never found the origin. It was as though the lights were aware of the pilots' presence, evading discovery every time they tried to pinpoint their source.

What causes these lights?

Some say they are cars from a nearby interstate, Route 67, but that doesn't explain how they've been observed long before the automobile.

Some theories range from the scientific, like reflections or naturally occurring gases, to the supernatural, with legends suggesting they're

spirits or entities keeping watch over the land. But one thing's for certain—the lights behave in ways that defy easy explanation, especially in encounters that seem almost personal.

Consider the story of a film crew that arrived in Marfa hoping to capture the lights on camera. After setting up equipment for hours, the crew finally spotted the lights flickering in the distance. But as they moved in, strange things began to happen. Cameras shut down inexplicably, and batteries drained without reason. Some crew members reported feeling as though the lights were watching them, reacting to their every movement. No matter how they tried, they couldn't get a clear shot—the lights would appear just out of reach, then disappear, only to reappear elsewhere. By the time they left, the

crew was convinced that the Marfa Lights weren't just a natural phenomenon, but something else—something almost... aware.

Another tale comes from a local rancher who encountered the lights late one night while driving home. As he traveled down the dark, empty road, he noticed glowing orbs trailing behind his truck. At first, he thought they were headlights, but the lights behaved strangely, veering off into the desert only to reappear closer to him, moving in sync with his truck. He described it as if the lights were "following" him, curious yet keeping their distance. Finally, as he neared home, the lights suddenly broke away and vanished into the mountains. Shaken, the rancher was left wondering—were the Marfa Lights watching him, guiding him, or simply

toying with him?

To this day, the Marfa Lights remain a mystery. Scientists have tried to pin them down as reflections, atmospheric gases, or mirages caused by temperature inversions. Yet no explanation fully accounts for their behavior, nor for the strange interactions people report. And the stories continue to pile up, from locals who've seen the lights their entire lives to travelers who stumble upon them unexpectedly.

As Halloween draws near, and we gather around to share tales of the unknown, remember that some mysteries are closer than we think. They flicker on the horizon, waiting to be seen—but not necessarily to be understood.

Happy Halloween, and may all your mysteries be as strange as the Marfa Lights.



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Masons hand out sugar highs

SOUTHBRIDGE — Kids going to the Masonic Lodge didn't get tricked, but might have gotten nipped a bit by evil car trunks while collecting candy at Saturday's Trunk or Treat.



Gus Steeves
George Makara takes down the flag as the event wraps up.



Holly and Clay Tull flank a trunk full of skulls. Bwa-ha-ha-ha!



Gus Steeves
Josh Kirkwood carries daughter Eleanora.



Gus Steeves
Sadness from the film "Inside Out" made an appearance and lived up to her name.

(Left) Brooke and Harper Kirkwood of Charlton hit up Eric Willard for candy.

Collector or crafter? Charlton City UMC has it all

CHARLTON — Charlton City UMC's Dynamic Cards, Collectibles, and Craft Show is coming to 74 Stafford St., Charlton, on Saturday, Nov. 9, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.! Come and roam two floors of exhibitors offering comics, trading cards, sports cards & memorabilia, jewelry, art, glassware, body oils, toys, handmade gifts, bags, and just about anything else you can think of.



Admission is free. Partial proceeds from the event also support Abby's House in Worcester (shelter for abused women and children), UMCOR (one of the best disaster relief agencies in the world) and Charlton REAS (senior heat fuel assistance) You win with all the vendors, and the world wins when you help others in need. Snacks and beverages will be available for purchase. Charlton City UMC is handicapped accessible, with plenty of parking.

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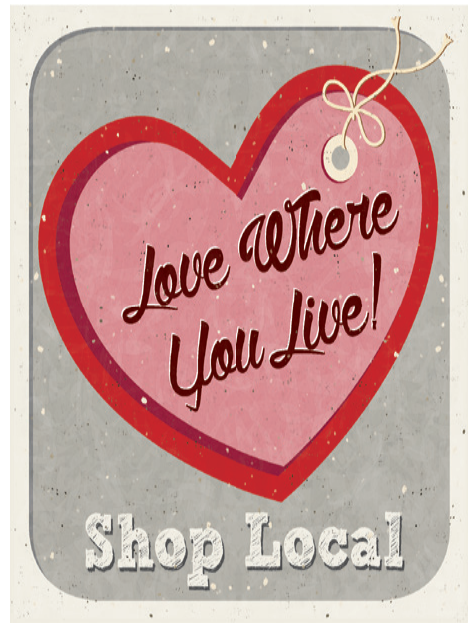
Gateway Players announces auditions for Neil Simon's "Plaza Suite"

SOUTHBRIDGE — Gateway Players Theatre in Southbridge is hosting auditions for "Plaza Suite," the first show of our 50th Anniversary season. This comedy is written by Neil Simon. They will be held on Sunday, Dec. 1 and Tuesday, Dec. 3 at 7 p.m. Please note that the auditions will be held in the Community Room of the Southbridge Police Station, 1 Mechanic St., Southbridge.

Auditions will consist of cold readings from the script. Performance dates are Feb. 21, 22, 28 and March 1 & 2. Rehearsals will be on Sunday and Tuesday nights. Presented by permission through special arrangement with Concord Theatricals. The adult cast consists of five women and seven men. Directed by Mike Dupuis and produced by Jeanne Dupuis. For more information, please contact Gateway at 508-764-4531.

producer who, after three marriages, is looking for fresh fields. He calls a childhood sweetheart, now a suburban housewife, for a little sexual diversion. Over the years she has idolized him from afar and is now more than the match he bargained for. The last couple is a mother and father fighting about the best way to get their daughter out of the bathroom and down to the ballroom where guests await her or as Mother yells, "I want you to come out of that bathroom and get married!"

Hilarity abounds in this portrait of three couples successively occupying a suite at The Plaza. A suburban couple take the suite while their house is being painted and it turns out to be the one in which they honeymooned 23 (or was it 24?) years before and was yesterday the anniversary, or is it today? This wry tale of marriage in tatters is followed by the exploits of a Hollywood



Trunk or Treat offers spooky fun!

BY BRO. JIMMY FALZONE
QUINEBAUG MASONIC LODGE

SOUTHBRIDGE — Saturday, Oct. 26 was a beautiful fall day for the Trunk or Treat event held at the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge in Southbridge.

Every year, the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge Community Outreach Program holds this fun event for the children in the community. Children and adults alike dressed up in their costumes to retrieve treats from the row of cars all decorated and decked out in the parking lot of the Quinebaug Masonic lodge in Southbridge. Passing cars beeped their horns as they drove by to witness all the children and decked out cars.

This Trunk or Treat event is just one of the many community outreach program events the lodge has held this year. Many lodge members and their families along with friends volunteered their time and resources for this fun event for the children. A special thank you, shout out to Nichols College for donating the big green wild and wacky floppy inflatable tube man on display in the Quinebuag Lodge parking lot for



Courtesy
Children gathering around the farmhouse theme trunk or treat decked out vehicle to get all kinds of treats and listen to the farm animals in the background.

this event. If you would like additional information about Freemasonry, go to www.massfreemasonry.org and read about this great fraternity and to find a lodge nearest you.

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Southbridge Water Department to perform hydrant flow test

CHARLTON — Southbridge Water Department will perform a hydrant flow test on their hydrant on Wednesday, Nov. 6 at approximately 9 p.m. The location tested will be Power Station Road in Charlton. The procedure will include testing the operation and capacity of the hydrant on the property.

The Department requests that during this period customers check their water before washing clothes. Customers may also get accumulated sediments in their house laterals the next morning. This will clear after a brief run of water at the tap.

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Nurse educators learn about generative AI tools

WORCESTER — Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy faculty and staff (pictured above, from left) Shannen Sherman, BSN, RN, of CT, Donna Pope, LPN, of Southbridge, Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, of Athol, Ana Olivar, EdD, MSN, RN, CRRN, of Rutland, and Cheryl Cahill of Oxford all completed the workshop for Nurse Educators presented by the Massachusetts Rhode Island League for Nursing (MARILN) on Friday, Oct. 25 at the Hogan Center, College of the Holy Cross.

The 2024 MARILN Fall Conference and Annual Meeting - Innovate and Educate: Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools for



Nurse Educators speakers were Rachel Cox Simms DNP, MS-HPed, RN, FNP-BC Assistant ProfessorMGHInstitute of Health Professions (Boston, MA); Semiha Asli Bozkurt PhD, RN, CHSE Clinical Assistant Professor University of Massachusetts Boston (Boston); Catherine Carroca DHS, MSN, RN, CNE Associate Professor Massachu-

setts College of Pharmacy of Health Sciences (Boston), and Joseph Gordon-Reznar Associate Chief Nursing Officer Cambridge Health Alliance (Boston). The purpose of the workshop is to empower nurse educators with the knowledge and skills to effectively integrate generative AI tools into their teaching and professional practices. The participants explored the fundamental principles of generative AI and discovered practical applications for creating engaging educational materials, designing innovative assignments, and enhancing assessments. The workshop addressed ethical considerations and best practices, en-

suring responsible AI usage in educational settings. At the end of the workshop, participants were equipped to leverage AI for professional development, scholarly activities, and enrich the learning experience for nursing students.

The Massachusetts Rhode Island League for Nursing (MARILN) is a constituent of the National League for Nursing. MARILN aims to improve nursing at hospitals, public health, and other organized nursing services by encouraging nursing education and awarding scholarships to students in nursing programs to encourage their education.

LEGALS

PUBLIC NOTICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
PROJECT: _Fueling Station and Convenience Store
LOCATION: 16 Sturbridge Rd. Charlton MA
PROONENT: Edwards Services LLC
The undersigned is submitting an Environmental Notification Form (“ENF”) to the Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs on or before October 22, 2024
This will initiate review of the above project pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (“MEPA,” M.G.L. c. 30, ss. 61-62L). Copies of the ENF may be obtained from:
Bertin Engineering 66 Glen Ave Glen Rock, NJ 07452
(Name, email address, phone number of proponent or proponent’s agent)
Electronic copies of the ENF are also being sent to the Conservation Commission and Planning Board of Charlton (Municipality).
The Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs will publish notice of the ENF in the Environmental Monitor, receive public comments on the project, and then decide if an Environmental Impact Report is required. A site visit and/or remote consultation session on the project may also be scheduled. All persons wishing to comment on the project, or to be notified of a site visit and/or remote consultation session, should email MEPA@mass.gov or the MEPA analyst listed in the Environmental Monitor. Requests for language translation or other accommodations should be directed to the same email address. Mail correspondence should be directed to the Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs, 100 Cambridge St., Suite 900, Boston, Massachusetts 02114, Attention: MEPA Office, referencing the above project.
By Edwards Services LLC (Proponent)
November 1, 2024

CHARLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Charlton Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on November 13, 2024, at 7PM on the application of Steven Burque.
The applicant has filed for a Notice of Intent for the construction of a single-family home within 100 feet of a BVW. The project location is: Burlingame Road, Charlton MA 01507. Parcel ID: 42-A-4.2.
Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Charlton Conservation Commission will be conducted in person and via remote means. Members of the public who wish to participate can access the meeting remotely by request. Copies of the NOI may be examined at the Conservation Office by appointment during business hours.
Thomas O’Malley
Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission
October 31, 2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Worcester Division Docket No. WO24P2530EA Estate of: Paul E. Cahill

Date Of Death: June 14, 2023 INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE
To all persons interested in the above-captioned estate by Petition of Petitioner
Jessic A. Cahill of Southbridge MA a Will has been admitted to informal probate.
Jessic A. Cahill of Southbridge MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond.
The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
October 31, 2024

Legal Advertisement
Notification is hereby given that an application has been filed by Angelina’s 538, LLC for New On-Premises Liquor License – Restaurant –All Alcoholic Beverages at the premises currently located at 538 Main Street, Fiskdale, MA 01518 with the Sturbridge Select Board. In accordance with MGL Ch. 138, a public hearing will be held on Monday, November 18, 2024 at 6:35 p.m. This hearing will be held at Veteran’s Memorial Hall, Sturbridge Town Hall, 308 Main Street, 2nd Floor, Sturbridge, MA 01566.
Your advertisement must appear 10 days prior to the public hearing to comply with Massachusetts General Laws and /or Town of Sturbridge Bylaws. Failure to comply may result in your application being denied or delayed.
October 31, 2024

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF TAX VALUATION
The Town of Southbridge Assessor’s Office has been conducting the Fiscal Year 2025 Revaluation as required by Massachusetts State Law. This update of values ensures that all properties have been assessed at full and fair market value as of January 1, 2024. The Assessor has received preliminary certification from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. The Public Review period will be available to the public from November 1, 2024 to November 8, 2024.
The revaluation requires the verification, analysis, and use of arms-length sales from calendar year 2023. Sales from the year 2022 were used to value property when the numbers of 2023 sales were insufficient for analysis. Market trends indicate that different property types may change in value more or less than other property types. Overall, real and personal property values increased 11%. Individual parcel valuation changes may vary due to data updates and corrections, new construction, and the effect of market trends for different types of properties.

The preliminary assessed values for Fiscal Year 2025 will be available at the Jacob Edwards Library during normal business hours as well as the Town of Southbridge Website. The valuation information will also be available online at <https://www.ci.southbridge.ma.us/>. You may also contact the Assessor’s Office located in the Southbridge Town Hall at 41 Elm Street by phone or in person with any questions or concerns.
SOUTHBRIDGE BOARD OF ASSESSORS
October 31, 2024

CHARLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Charlton Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on November 13, 2024, at 7PM on the application of Christina Barber.
The applicant has filed for an After-the-Fact Notice of Intent for retaining wall improvement. The project location is: 169 Sunset Drive, Charlton MA 01507. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Charlton Conservation Commission will be conducted in person and via remote means. Members of the public who wish to participate can access the meeting remotely by request. Copies of the NOI may be examined at the Conservation Office by appointment during business hours.
Thomas O’Malley
Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission
October 31, 2024

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. WO24P3631EA CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION Estate Of: Celine Anne Chamberland Also known as: Celine A Chamberland Date of Death: 11/23/2021

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Mark Standrowicz of Sturbridge 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:
Mark Standrowicz of Sturbridge MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration.**
IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 11/19/2024**
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: October 23, 2024
Stephanie K. Fattman,
Register of Probate
October 31, 2024

Public Notice
Notice is hereby given under Chapter 140, Section 2 of Massachusetts General Laws of a public hearing to be held in the George Parent Meeting Room, second floor of the Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, Southbridge, MA, on Tuesday, November 19, 2024 at 1:30 p.m..
This hearing pertains to a Common Vic application by Nakamas Smoothies, 343 Main St., Southbridge, MA. Anyone wishing to speak will be given the opportunity to be heard.
This notice is also published electronically on www.stonebridgepress.com and on www.masspublicnotice.org
Town of Southbridge
Licensing Clerk
October 31, 2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Worcester Division 225 Main Street Worcester, MA 01608 (508) 831-2200 Docket No. WO17P3135EA Estate of: Antoinette M Dupre Date of Death: 10/02/2014 CITATION ON PETITION FOR ORDER OF COMPLETE SETTLEMENT
A Petition for **Order of Complete Settlement** has been filed by **John R Dupre of Allentown PA** requesting that the court enter a formal Decree of Complete Settlement including the allowance of a final, and first account , the first amended and other such relief as may be requested in the Petition.
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 11/12/2024.**
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
October 16, 2024
Stephanie K. Fattman, Register of Probate
October 31, 2024

Local residents named to Simmons University Dean's List

BOSTON — The following local residents have been named to the 2024 spring semester dean's list at Simmons University in Boston.

* Lindsay Albright, Charlton

* Molly Brodeur, Charlton

* Jessica Hennessey, Fiskdale

To qualify for dean's list status, undergraduate students must obtain a grade point average of 3.5 or higher, based on 12 or more credit hours of work in classes using the letter grade system.

About Simmons University
Located in the heart of Boston, Simmons is a respected private university offering nearly 50 majors and programs for undergraduate women

and graduate programs open to all on campus, in blended formats, or entirely online in nursing and health sciences, liberal arts, business, communications, social work, public health, and library and information science. Founded in 1899, Simmons has established a model of higher education that other colleges and universities are only recently beginning to adapt: the combination of education for leadership in high-demand professional

fields with the intellectual foundation of the liberal arts. The result is a Simmons graduate prepared not only to work, but to lead in professional, civic, and personal life - a vision of empowerment that Simmons calls preparation for life's work. Follow Simmons on Twitter at @SimmonsUniv, and on LinkedIn at <https://www.linkedin.com/school/simmons-university/>.



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• Spencer New Leader

• Sturbridge Villager

• Charlton Villager

• Southbridge News

• Webster Times

• Auburn News

• Blackstone Valley Tribune

OBITUARIES

Joseph Maurice “Moe” A. Comtois, 94



Stafford Springs, CT & Southbridge, MA—Joseph Maurice “Moe” A. Comtois, aged 94, passed away peacefully on October 22, 2024, while surrounded by his loving family.

Born in Woonsocket, R.I., to immigrant parents, the late Albert and Donald (St. Germain) Comtois, Moe joined the U.S. Army at aged 21 and honorably served for two years during the Korean War, earning the Army of Occupation Medal (Germany.) Moe traveled much of Europe and always spoke fondly of its natural beauty. He also served in North Africa, Austria, Italy, and Switzerland. During his enlistment, he learned Italian and spoke it fluently throughout his life, and while visiting St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, he was touched by Pope Pious XII.

In August 1951, Moe married Claire R. Bourdon and they raised five children in Southbridge, MA. He leaves behind Susan Reilly of Worcester, MA; Marc Comtois of Oxford, MA; Carol Childress and her husband Barnet, of Sturbridge, MA; his two sons, Steven Comtois and David Comtois, pre-deceased Moe in 1980 and 2019, respectively. In 1986, Moe re-married Kerstin Gagne and they lived in Woodstock, CT for several years. Moe leaves behind his step-daughter Gretchen and her husband Michael Clark of Putnam, CT, and step-son Timothy Gagne of Granby, CT. Moe also leaves behind numerous grand-



children, great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews, who he dearly loved. Moe also leaves behind his only living sibling, Madeleine Schotter, of Woonsocket, R.I. Moe was predeceased by his brother, Marcel, and sisters, Jeannine, Claudette, and Marguerite.

For most of Moe’s working life, he enjoyed working as Water Treatment Plant Operator for the Southbridge Water Supply and was responsible for taking measurements of snow and rain that were phoned in for local weather forecasts; patrolling, hiking, and posting the thousands of acres of the water supply property; and he successfully completed numerous training courses related to public drinking water supplies. He also served as a Special Police Officer for the Town of Southbridge.

Most recently residing in Stafford, CT, throughout his life, Moe enjoyed deep sea and fresh water fishing, digging for quahogs in RI, holding huge yard sales, throwing clambakes, painting cars, and he especially loved spending time with all his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

Following a family Celebration of Life, Moe will be laid to rest with his sons, Steven and David, and his former wife, Claire, in the Old Notre Dame Cemetery, Southbridge, MA. Donations in Moe’s memory may be made to: The Steven Comtois Memorial Scholarship, c/o Bay Path Regional Technical Vocational High School, Attn: Business Office, 57 Muggett Hill Road, Charlton, MA 01507.

To leave a message of sympathy for his family, please visit: www.introvignefuneralhome.com

Robert J. Patterson, 73



Sturbridge: Robert J. Patterson, 73, of New Boston Rd., passed away on Saturday, Oct. 26th, in Backus Hospital, after a long illness.

He leaves his loving wife, Cynthia Ann (Collett) Patterson of Sturbridge; his two daughters, Michelle Mojica and her husband Santo of Sturbridge and Elaine Arena and her husband Kevin of Sturbridge; his brothers, David Patterson and his wife Judy of Texas and Chuck Patterson and his wife Terese of Framingham; his two sisters, Maryann LaPierre and her husband John of Burlington and Judy Buono and her husband Jay of Ipswich; his six grandchildren, Brittany Cooper and her husband Zachary of Astoria, NY, Emily Arena of Sturbridge, Brandon Mojica of Sturbridge, Christie Arena of Vermont, Abby Arena of Sturbridge, and Daniel Mojica of Sturbridge; great grandchildren, Hayden and Jayce Blackburn.

He was predeceased by a brother, Johnny Patterson. Robert was born June 18, 1951 in Waltham, the son of Walter P. and Pearl Irene (Walsh)

Patterson.

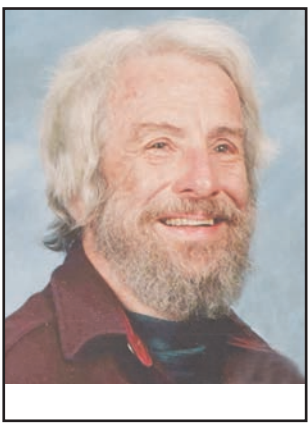
Born in Waltham, Bob spent most of his life there and graduated from Waltham Vocational High School. Bob worked as a mechanic for Paul’s Auto in Waltham for many years before moving to Sturbridge to be close to his family. He worked for Karl Storz for 20 years in Charlton and Auburn. Bob cherished every moment spent with his

family. He also enjoyed fishing, campfires, and fixing anything he could get his hands on. His willingness to lend a helping hand and his genuine kindness left a lasting impression on everyone who knew him. And in the end he embraced his faith in God whole-heartedly.

His funeral will be held on Saturday, Nov. 2nd at 11:00AM, in the Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge. Burial will follow in North Cemetery, Sturbridge. Calling hours in the funeral home will be held on Friday, Nov. 1st, from 5:00 to 7:00pm.

www.morrillfuneralhome.com

John E. Worrell



Charlton - John Worrell, a long-time resident of Brimfield, recently of Charlton, died October 18th at Harrington Hospital, Southbridge. Born in 1933, John was raised on a farm in central Indiana, and remained a farm boy at heart all his life. He loved to roam the woods and fields of his childhood home and his home of 51 years in Brimfield, and fields, forests, and deserts around the world, looking for birds, mushrooms and other wild edibles, animals, and archaeological evidences of past human activities. He wore many hats over his life: minister, college professor, archaeologist, museum researcher, activist for civil rights in the US, working with the campaigns of Cesar Chavez and Martin Luther King, and then in the Middle East, particularly Palestine.

John graduated from Milligan College in Tennessee, and worked as youth minister in his home church in Indiana while earning advanced degrees from Butler University, and then a PhD in Near Eastern Studies from Claremont University in California, while working as a minister of social action in a church there. He taught at Phillips University, Oklahoma, Hartford Theological Seminary, Connecticut, and Holy Cross College, Massachusetts. While teaching he worked in archaeology in Israel and Palestine, for a few years as director of an archaeological expedition to Tel el-Hesi in Israel. Then

he turned his archaeological expertise to American archaeology as archaeologist, then Director of Research at Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts. Upon retirement he devoted his energies to human rights in the Middle East, including two years on the ground with Palestinians, and peacekeeping missions to Palestine with Christian Peacemaker Teams, and to Iraq with

Voices in the Wilderness. Throughout all, John was a loving family man. He leaves his four children: Brad Worrell and Catharine of New York City, Bret Worrell of Millbury, Babette Worrell of Worcester, and Lilly Glass Akoto of Vancouver, Washington. He greatly enjoyed his four grandchildren and two great grandchildren, walking, birding, gardening, and always teaching. His life companion of 50 years, Linda Ammons, and lifelong friends, Sandy and Kent McCallum will miss him deeply. He also leaves his brother Phil Worrell of Johnson City, Tennessee, and his sister, Mary Ann Plahitko of Danville, Indiana, many nieces and nephews, and a host of grand-nephews and nieces, and great-grand-nieces and nephews. A Celebration of Life will be held November 10th from 1:00 PM -5:00 PM, at Hyland Orchard, Sturbridge. Memorial contributions may be sent to Community Peacemaker Teams. www.morrillfuneralhome.com

QCC receives grant from Greater Worcester Community Foundation

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College has received a \$12,500 grant from the Greater Worcester Community Foundation (GWCF). QCC will use the funds for its Bridges to College program, a support program to prepare students for college-level math and English courses.

“I’m excited that the college has the opportunity to deliver more Bridges to College classes to prepare students for success in college-level math and English. The success rates in credit classes for students who participated in a Bridges to College program are compelling,” said Dean of College & Career Pathways Carol King.


According to King, after taking the math Bridges to College class, 93 percent of students passed a college-level math class. Of the students who participated in an English Bridges to College class and subsequently enrolled at the college, 88 percent passed ENG 101 or 102.

The Bridges to College program provides non-credit programming in English and math for students considering college. The program includes support from a case manager, who offers guidance with higher education processes such as interacting with professors and reading a syllabus. Case managers also connect students to resources such as tutoring, counseling and the college’s food pantry.

“Students considering this program should know that they will be fully supported and gain the skills and confidence to succeed at QCC and beyond. Our staff takes the time to get to know the students and make them feel comfortable,” said Director of Mentoring and Special Programs Kalan Lewis.

“As a new college student, it can be intimidating to ask for help and get connected with all the support services. Bridges to College offers a sense of belonging through building a relationship with students and making them feel comfortable in a college setting,” Lewis continued.

Friday's Child



Lisa

Age 11

Registration # 7811

Hi! My name is Lisa and I like unicorns!

Lisa is described as both funny and intelligent. She is open to new experiences and has gone horseback riding, taken violin lessons, played volleyball at her school, and taken part in a local Wizard of Oz production. She loves arts and crafts, playing card and board games, and watching videos on her tablet. Lisa enjoys reading and you can always count on her to have a book in hand. Lisa would one day like to take gymnastics or karate lessons. Lisa also attends a youth group, which she enjoys very much.

<https://adopt.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/child/7811>

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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CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

STORY TIME - Tuesdays and Fridays at 10:45am. Join us for stories, songs, rhymes and a craft. All children must be accompanied by an adult caregiver. No registration required.

LEGO CLUB - Thursday, November 21 at 6:00pm. Love Legos? Come build with us. For ages 6 to 12 with an adult caregiver. Registration is required.

I'M A WORK OF ART - Saturday, November 23 at 1:00pm. "Come join art teacher Kim Larkin of

Klassic Kreations for an art class that celebrates art's perfect imperfections! Wear your art clothes to create a "classic kreation" as unique as you are!" Registration is required.

TEEN & ADULT PROGRAMS

IN-PERSON - AFTER-NOON BOOK GROUP - Tuesday, November 12 at 1:00pm. This month's book is "The Spectacular" by Fiona Davis.

IN-PERSON - ARM-CHAIR TRAVELERS BOOK GROUP - Wednesday, November 20 at 6:30pm. This month's book is "Miss Morgan's Book Brigade" by Valerie Perrin.

IN-PERSON - WORLD BUILDING BOOK GROUP - Tuesday, November 19 at 6:30pm. This month's book is "To Shape a Dragon's Breath" by Monique Blockgoose.

FOR EVERYONE IN-PERSON - COMMUNITY PUZZLE SWAP - Tuesday, November 12 from 4:00pm to 7:00pm. Bring donated puzzles to the library beginning October 28 or bring them on the day of the swap. Please, no missing pieces. Puzzles of all sizes. Bring your own, take some home. Tables will also be set up to work cooperatively during this time. Registration is not required.

Go to sturbridgeli-brary.org for more information.

Wales Community Pantry launches new initiative

WALES —“Since December of 2023 we have seen the need for our services grow by an astounding 70 percent and the growth has not abated. Nor do we expect it to,” notes Ann Davidson, Director of the Wales Community Pantry.

Thanks to a grant from The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts the Wales Community Pantry, located at 85 Main Street in Wales, hopes to be able to provide a consistent supply of fresh milk, dairy items, and bread to its patrons. The Pantry regularly serves 172 households from the communities of Holland, Brimfield and Wales and, according to Ann Davidson, “our numbers are growing weekly. She said, “the

Pantry routinely provides nutritious food to seniors, veterans, the disabled, and the working poor and we turn no one who is hungry away.”

Currently the Wales Community Pantry’s major source of milk and bread is through donations of salvaged food from local grocery stores.

“Salvaged commodities,” Davidson said, “are those which are within a day or two of expiring, and although we are profoundly grateful for these donations, they are inconsistent.”

WCP estimates it will cost about \$1,000 per month to provide a steady supply of items such as fresh milk, bread, cheese, and butter, groceries, which are not regularly available



Courtesy

Wales Community Pantry Volunteers getting ready for their Tuesday opening.

generosity, which is tax deductible, each business that contributes will be heavily promoted through local social media during the month of their sponsorship. The Facebook arm of the WCP, which is Pantry Wales, currently has 516 followers. All of its postings are shared on the Brimfield, Holland, Wales, Fiskdale, and Sturbridge community pages, resulting in an outreach of over 23,000 people. Additionally, once the program is up and running, WCP will send out press releases to local news outlets to highlight the generosity of our monthly sponsor.

The Wales Community Pantry depends wholly on grants and donations for its funding. During its food drives the most donated item

is boxed macaroni and cheese, which requires milk and butter to prepare. Sadly, these basic items are too often luxuries for WCP patrons, and the mac and cheese boxes get pushed to the back of the cupboard. The Sponsor the Fridge for a Month drive hopes to remedy this. If \$1,000 a month is too much for a single business, Davidson noted, the WCP would be more than delighted to have two businesses act as dual sponsors.

“The truth is,” Davidson said, “we appreciate any and all support.”

If your business wishes to join this initiative you may contact the Wales Community Pantry at 413-245-0055 or via email at walescommunitypantry@gmail.com.

Council hears from landlord on plans

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — One of the town's more recent large property owners took center stage at the last Town Council meeting, as White Paper Strategies' Chris Morgan laid out his thoughts on rental property management.

He said his firm targets “distressed buildings” others tend to avoid “to bring unoccupied units [back] onto

the market.” The overall goal is to provide “good tenants in, good tenants out, and a good experience for everybody from the beginning,” he said, noting his target tenants “gainfully employed and safe” with good background checks and no prior evictions, he claimed.

“If you're a bad landlord, it's not a surprise you get bad tenants,” Morgan said. “It's a two-way street.”

The firm currently owns more than 300 properties in Central Mass. Among them are 124 residential and commercial units in Southbridge at five locations – 37 Central, 295, 344 and 395 Main, and four buildings at the corner of Oliver and Hamilton – with its office at 395 Main, he said.

To describe his redevelopment concept, Morgan showed a few photos of a site in Worcester he said had 14 percent occupancy when he bought it and visibly needed repairs. “The buildings we acquired [here] were not even close to that,” he said, meaning in worse condition (although he noted the Oliver property was in good shape). He described most of his buildings as “so under duress that they can't even have 100 percent occupancy” due to various code violations when he buys them. Some of them have been condemned, but can't be demolished because they're historical, he noted.

Among other things, he said he wants to “protect the historical uniqueness” of Southbridge and restore kinds of retail that aren't available online to Main Street.

While councilors were generally receptive to his presentation, there were some questions. George Chenier expressed concern that development might “create a vacuum and put the disadvantaged out on the street” and wants to ensure there's a plan for seniors and low income people. He pointed to the fact Lebanon Hill Apartments (aka TAG) sold not long ago for \$7.1 million and is again on the market, after rent hikes on its senior residents. He also cited another recent large purchase where “numerous” callers told him they'd received rent hikes of “\$1000 above what they were paying.”

Morgan said he sets rents based on the HUD fair market value, meaning 40 percent of the regional median income. Some are Section 8, and rents are \$1100 for one bedroom, \$1300 for two and \$1600 for three.

“We want to add units, not make them more expensive,” he claimed, later noting he'd like to make some of the second-floor downtown commercial spaces residential.

He said they have evicted a few people, mostly at the Whitford building because they found “illegal paraphernalia,” but generally try to avoid doing so. In some cases, they've let tenants' leases run out and didn't renew them. But if the tenant's good, he said they move them into a different apartment while renovating theirs.

To Steve Kelly, “the more housing you have out on the market, the price will stabilize.” But our town has seen “no new construction,” which he argued “has a lot to do with over-regulation.”

By coincidence, this presentation happened the same week as the first Housing Production Plan forum; see related story for details.

After Morgan spoke, the council got a mouthful from resident Zach Lavergne about the schools. Specifically, he ripped into the relatively recent contract with High Road Schools to run the “substantially separate” program at the Academy and elementary schools for kids with “Social-emotional behavioral difficulties.”

Lavergne said HRS requires students to be scanned by metal detectors, take off shoes, and lock up phones and backpacks to go to class, describing that as “an unjust policy that our general education students are not subjected to [and] disability-based discrimination.”

Noting three of his four kids have disabilities and that he works in the mental health field, he decried that as a “flagrant violation of their civil rights” and potentially puts kids into “the school to prison pipeline.”

The council generally didn't comment on Lavergne's statement, but Kelly later thanked him during Councilors' Forum. He said the receivership has been “extremely frustrating for us as councilors.” Noting he's a defense attorney, he agreed with Lavergne's “prison pipeline” reference. Without a high school education, “your chances of winding up in the criminal justice system are exponentially higher,” he said.

In other business, the council approved a few grants, including one that will hire a two-year staff person to promote weatherization and related energy efficiency, and another that will fund buying a new airport mower. A third was an “Expression of Interest” for a second-round Municipal Vulnerability grant to analyze the condition of public and private dams and levees around town.

Additionally, Manager Jack Jovan said the town's electricity aggregation program bids came in, with the low bidder being Direct Energy at about 13 cents/kWh. The town also received grants for a few ongoing projects, including \$50,000 for a Mill Street brownfield study, \$226,549 for four energy projects at various buildings, and the state's Municipal Pavement Program agreement, by which the state will repave more than three miles each of Route 169 and 198 at no cost to the town.

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



Housing

continued from page 1

you'd like to see in this town” and to define “an appropriate range of housing options” that work for Southbridge.

This is the town's first such plan, aimed at setting a “numerical target goal” of construction that specifically meets the state's definition of affordable housing over the next five years. Generally, that means rents that are deed-restricted and/or subsidized to be no more than 30 percent of the tenant's income, based on the area median income. Exactly what the region is was somewhat unclear, but other sources have defined it as the county. Glaubitz said tenants can qualify if they make up to 80 percent of the median income (\$117,300), with “low income” defined as 50 percent of that, and “extremely low” as 30 percent.

Glaubitz showed some data slides regarding Southbridge conditions. The 2022 median income was \$55,182, but median single-family home cost was \$325,000. Among those figures were that about 60 percent of our housing stock is multi-family, 44 percent was built before 1950 and the same percentage is owner-occupied, and the average rent is \$1679. Median income for renters is \$35,564, but for owners is \$94,092; 17.9 percent live below the poverty level (several people thought that figure was too low).

“Median household income really hasn't changed that much in the last 12 years,” but house prices have more than doubled, Glaubitz observed.

By those criteria, Southbridge's current housing stock sits at 4.9 percent “affordable” – 385 units – with the state goal of 10 percent, meaning the town needs

to add 402 units. She noted that does not take into account Section 8 homes or any unsubsidized low-rent housing that already exists, but it can include subsidized housing of both public and private ownership.

Resident Mike Segarra noted Southbridge was told years ago it would “get a new high rise every year” to address housing needs, but that hasn't happened. (He was referring to the Quinebaug Plaza building, a publicly-owned apartment complex run by the town's Housing Authority.)

Several participants agreed a key method of addressing housing needs would be to build more public housing. Other suggestions included restoring the ability to do rent control (which would require overturning a state constitutional amendment from the 1990s), allowing more “accessory dwelling units” (aka “in-law apartments” that state law recently made a “by-right” use in single family districts), or changing tax law to increase rates on commercial apartment buildings and vacancies.

Regarding the latter, Sue Starkey said the law should require landlords to use their income to maintain their properties, not just pocket it. Often, the town can't get issues fixed because they can't find the landlords, who own properties through LLCs and other shell companies.

CMRPC's Joe Sziabowski said that'd have “a whole Board of Health angle to that,” and landlords could either comply with state subsidized-housing rules or build “good housing that doesn't necessarily comply.”

Starkey also later noted housing availability can expand by increasing any local limits on how many unrelated people can live together. She dubbed that a

“golden girls” apartment, after the famous TV series.

According to the town zoning bylaws, Sec 10, the limit is somewhat vague. A “boarding house” is limited to four unrelated people, but other kinds of homes seem to fall under this definition – “Family: Any number of persons related to one another by blood, marriage, or adoption, all residing together as a single integral housekeeping unit; or not more than three unrelated persons residing together as a single, integral housekeeping unit.” The “not more than three” has been struck through on the Web site as a proposed change, but that has not yet gone to public hearing or Town Council for approval.

To Karen Salides, two key issues are that “we just had an influx of immigrants last year” and that there's been a “decline in the younger age groups while the baby boomer group is increasing.” In Southbridge, the median age has risen from 35.8 to 38.9 since 2000, but nearby towns have risen even more. There, median age is now in the low 40s.

The two forums are just part of a year-long planning process. The survey is still open in both paper and online versions; a draft of survey results to date is on the town's Web site. Early next year, Glaubitz plans to submit the plan to the Planning Board and Town Council for approval, after which it goes to the state.

More details, including the survey, are available at <https://southbridge.civilspace.io/en/projects/housing-production-plan>.

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

Charlton

continued from page 1

different motions were \$200,000 for structural repairs to the historic #2 Schoolhouse, \$250,000 for the townwide radio system project, \$50,000 for improvements at the Town Hall, \$80,000 for technology upgrades, \$10,000 for design plans for the library generator, and \$50,000 for the Fire Pond/Cistern Pipe and Screen Replacement project.

The article also ap-

proved \$285,000 from free cash replacement firearms and the replacement of several cruisers in the police department. The motion was worded to include leases as the Police Department explores a new hybrid purchasing model involving leasing some vehicles while continuing to purchase cruisers. Other allocations included \$75,000 for the Fire Station Alerting System for Station 1

and \$407,500 from free cash for several DPW investments including three vehicles and repairs to the salt shed roof as well as \$550,000 from retained earnings for two sewer projects, the North Main Street Pump Station upgrades and the Plant Head Works Project. Closing out the financial items in the warrant were a request to replace Fire Department Engine 2 which was tabled until the Annual Town Meet-

ing in May and \$700,000 moved from free cash to the Stabilization Fund.

The remaining articles of the night involved proposed bylaw changes, starting with an amendment to Chapter 115, the numbering of buildings. The change was proposed by the Building Commissioner to amend the bylaw to allow the Board of Selectmen to approve policies determining the schema for assigning numbers to buildings and prop-

erties. The approval at town meeting now allows the town's highest elected board to establish a numbering system for new buildings or house number changes to better assist emergency officials in locating or identifying homes without the confusion from redundant numbers and sub-letters or repetitive number schemes of roadways with similar names. Articles 8 and 9 were Zoning Bylaw revisions, the first seeking

to change 98 Northside Road to an agriculture and rural residential lot. With Article 8's approval, Article 9 then removed 98 Northside Rd., along with 92 and 106 Northside Rd. from the wireless telecommunication overlay district. The final article of the night was a Zoning Bylaw amendment for the Subdivision Proposals section that fixes a clerical error in the floodplain overlay district.

Christmas

continued from page 1

traditions that make the season truly special,” said Rhys Simmons, Director of Interpretation at Old Sturbridge Village. “Our goal is to transport you back in time with an experience that delights all the senses. Picture twinkling lights adorning the trees, the enticing aromas and flavors of mulled cider and freshly baked gingerbread, and the familiar sounds of holiday car-

of the
cher-
ished

ols echoing all around.” This year's Christmas by Candlelight will feature an array of live entertainment, including historical performances and readings of Christmas tales for children. New this year is “Upon a Midnight Clear – An Acoustic New England Christmas,” a musical journey showcasing local artists reinterpreting classic carols.

In addition to the festivities, guests can explore the origins of classic traditions such as nutcrackers and gin-

gerbread, along with a remarkable miniature nativity scene featuring more than 600 pieces. The Richardson House will showcase Italian Christmas customs. There will also be plenty of opportunities for holiday shopping at the Miner Grant Store and the Ox & Yoke Mercantile.

“This event has become a tradition for so many guests year after year, and many families look forward to it as the highlight of their holiday season,” continued Simmons. “We invite every-

one to experience the joy of the season, relish in classic traditions, and create new memories with loved ones this winter at Christmas by Candlelight.”

Christmas by Candlelight is made possible by our generous sponsors: Cornerstone Bank, Country Bank, G&F Precision Molding, and Southbridge Credit Union. For more information on tickets and full event details, visit the Old Sturbridge Village website.

CPL

continued from page 3

rhythm, and listen to stories. Siblings are welcome.

Fiber Arts Club for Tweens & Teens

Fridays, November 8 & 22 - 3:45 - 4:30 - Story Time Room

Are you interested in knitting, crocheting, needle felting, or other fiber art? Join us to practice your craft, learn from more experienced friends, or teach others! Don't forget to bring your current projects! Best for tweens and teens ages 9 -18. Registration required.*Please only register the tween or teen attending the program, not parents/caregivers. Younger siblings are not allowed to attend this program due to the presence of sharp objects.*

The Organized Parent Workshop (VIRTUAL EVENT)

s t r u -
ments,
learn

Tuesday, November 12, 6:30 - 7:30 PM - Virtual via Zoom

Learn new ways to approach the clutter and commitments that school days can bring into the home.

This is a VIRTUAL event. Please register online; the Zoom link will be sent prior to the event.

Crafternoon for Kids

Friday, November 15, 3:30-4:30 - Story Time Room

Drop by the Storytime Room and

make a fun craft! Best for ages 5-10.

Let's Dance a Story for ages 3-6

Tuesday, November 26, 10:00-10:45 - Community Meeting Room - Registration required.

Children will explore dance and movement inspired by the words in a storybook. This group will learn how to help the brain and the body work together; discover new vocabulary words, and foster a love of books with full-body learning. Please register chil-

dren in this age range only. (Younger siblings should not be included in the registration.)

My Little Pony Club

Wednesday, November 27, 4:00 - 4:30 PM - Story Time Room

Do you love My Little Pony? Meet up with other My Little Pony fans and do a fun activity! Don't forget to bring your favorite pony (if you have one)! This club is for ages 5-10.

Hint

continued from page 3

You can double or triple the recipe as needed.

Easy Pumpkin Bread

Simple and easy, this classic pumpkin bread recipe can be doubled. Loaves freeze well.

Ingredients: 1 1/2 cups flour; 1/2 teaspoon of salt; 1 cup granulated sugar; 1 teaspoon baking soda; 1 cup pumpkin purée; 1/2 cup olive oil; 2 eggs, beaten; 1/4 cup water; 1/2 teaspoon each nutmeg, cinnamon and allspice; 1/2 cup chopped walnuts.

Directions; Preheat oven to 350°F Sift together

the flour, salt, sugar, and baking soda. Mix together pumpkin, oil, eggs, 1/4 cup of water, and spices. Lightly combine with the dry ingredients. Stir in the nuts. Pour into a well greased loaf pan. Bake 50-60 minutes until toothpick comes out clean.

Win Dinner for Two at the Publick House

**

Win 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 draw-

ing. 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 ques-

tions and/or hints to: Take the Hint!, C/o the Southbridge Evening News, PO Box 90; Southbridge, MA 01550. Or E-mail KDRR@aol.com. Hints are entered into a drawing for dinner for two at the historic Publick House Inn.

Health

continued from page 1

self-injury, acute psychosis (hallucinations or delusions), overdose or withdrawal from alcohol or drug use, and reactions to a traumatic event.

“Providing education to the PN students and supporting them so they're in the best state of mind for their nursing journey is a wonderful tie-in,” Bolandrina said. “The feedback on the MHFA training remains positive. We continue to engage in conversation, education, and breaking the stigma of mental health disorders.”

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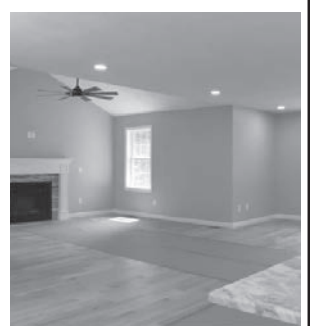
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Jumpin’ Juba to perform at Jacob Edwards Library

SOUTHBRIDGE — JUMPIN’ JUBA, a Boston-based blues and roots music group, will perform a concert at the Jacob Edwards Memorial Library on Thursday, Nov. 14 at 6:30 p.m.

JUMPIN’ JUBA has played over one thousand shows in Massachusetts since its formation in 1998. The group is led by Steve Hurl, whose finger-style electric guitar skills, blues-inflected vocals, songwriting and arranging give the band much of its flavor.

The hour-long show at Jacob Edwards Library will feature both classic American blues and country, early rock & roll, and occasional Latin and Caribbean grooves. More info about the band and links to video clips can be found at www.stevéhurl.com

Hurl is joined by upright acoustic



bassist Dave Lock-eretz and Jumpin’ Ju-ba’s longtime drum-mer Brian Flan.

Jacob Edwards Li-brary is located at 236 Main St., South-bridge, MA 01550. Their phone number is 508-764-5426.

The concert is funded by a grant from the Southbridge Cultural Council, which is part of the Massachusetts Cul-tural Council.

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Sturbridge resident promoted to Managing Director at Slowey McManus Communications

BOSTON — Slowey McManus Communications (SMC) today announced that Account Director Brittany Murphy has been promoted to Managing Director of the firm.

After a successful career in broadcast journalism in Central and Western Massachusetts, Murphy has been with SMC for more than four years, rising from Senior Account Executive to Managing Director. She focuses on healthcare, energy and nonprofit clients.



part of our management team, providing important media industry insights and direction for client teams. She has established strong connections with a range of clients. Her hard work, ability to manage teams and secure high value media coverage have been a big part of our success these past few years. Britt will continue to be an important part of our team in the future,” said Jim McManus, principal partner of SMC.

The Sturbridge resident is a graduate of Emerson College in Boston.

“Britt has quickly become a key

Slowey McManus has expanded in Central and Western Massachusetts, adding more than eight clients in the past few years. It is the only public relations firm with offices in Boston and Worcester.



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