

SPENCER NEW LEADER

Free by request to residents of East Brookfield, West Brookfield, North Brookfield, Brookfield, Leicester and Spencer
SEND YOUR NEWS AND PICS TO News@STONEBRIDGEPRESS.NEWS Friday, December 9, 2022



Communities come together to Stuff the Bus

Photo Courtesy
AA Transportation officials team up with local students to volunteer at the recent Stuff the Bus project held at David Prouty High School.

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER
REGION — Residents in three area communities recently teamed up with AA Transportation to make the holi-

days memorable for children in need. For the seventh straight year, AA Transportation employees parked their buses at local venues to collect

Please Read **STUFF THE BUS**, page **A14**

Centennial celebration culminates in decorating contest

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER
EAST BROOKFIELD — The town's yearlong centennial celebration will culminate in style this month, as the 100th anniversary festivities wrap up with

a holiday decorating contest. All residents can enter the contest by emailing their name and address to EB100th@gmail.com. A map of entries will be posted after the Dec. 9 deadline so residents can view the

entries. This year, local photographer Mark Shea will be taking pictures and videos of all entries. These will be posted on the town's 100th Anniversary

Please Read **CONTEST**, page **A18**

Firefighter back in action after cancer battle

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

SPENCER — It's been a long road to recovery for firefighter Patrick Murray, who was celebrated by the community last week as he returned to work after beating cancer.

Murray received congratulations from colleagues and community members alike during his triumphant return to the fire station on Dec. 1. A small celebration was organized by members of the department to kick off his first shift back.

"I want to thank everyone who has supported me—my family, my department, and the community. I couldn't have done it without them,"



Photo Courtesy

Spencer firefighter Patrick Murray is back in action after a lengthy battle with cancer.

said Murray, who lives in Spencer.

In 2021, Murray was diag-

Please Read **MURRAY**, page **A14**

Return to live performances has DPHS students thriving

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

SPENCER — Not even halfway through the school year, the David Prouty High School music department has already enjoyed a full year's worth of events.

With pandemic restrictions in the rear-view mirror, local student-musicians are thrilled to return to live performances and

functions. For DPHS music students, the first three months of the school year were packed with fun events that showcased their talents.

"The David Prouty Band, led by Mrs. Forfa, are always ready to provide music to the community and make any event that much more exciting. Each month, they sound bet-

Turn To **DPHS** page **A3**

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Growing easy-care aloe vera, nature’s burn ointment

Grow your own burn ointment by adding Aloe vera to your indoor plant collection. This succulent has been used for centuries to treat superficial burns, cuts, sunburns, and more.

The gel inside the leaves is the medicinal part of the plant. Just cut away the outer part of the leaf and use just the gel on the problem areas. Make sure to remove the latex plant sap located between the outer layer (skin) of the leaf and the gel that can cause skin irritation. It is always best to test a small area of your skin first.

You may have read about Aloe vera being used in beverages and desserts. Properly prepare the aloe before consuming. Make sure to remove the latex and use only the gel to avoid cramps, diarrhea, and stomach upset. Keep Aloe vera plants out of the reach of children, cats, and dogs.

Plant Aloe vera in a container with drainage holes. Consider using a clay pot that allows the soil to thoroughly dry between watering and prevent larger often top-heavy plants from tipping over. Use a pot as wide as it is deep whenever possible to accommodate the spreading nature of this plant.



Cover the drainage hole with a coffee filter or piece of paper towel. This prevents the potting mix from leaking out the drainage holes after planting. Use a well-drained cacti and succulent potting mix.

GARDEN MOMENTS

MELINDA MYERS

Grow this plant in a sunny window along with your other cacti and succulents. South and unobstructed east or west-facing windows are usually the best. Set it under artificial lights if a brightly lit location is not available.

Water thoroughly whenever the top third of the soil is dry. Avoid applying water over the center of the plant where it can collect between the leaves and lead to rot. Pour off excess water that collects in the saucer.

Prevent early death of your plant by avoiding waterlogged soil. Watering too often or allowing the pot to sit in excess water can lead to root rot and the death of the plant. You will need to water less often in winter when days are shorter; light intensity is lower and plant growth is limited.

Keep plants away from cold drafts and temperatures below 50 degrees Fahrenheit that can damage the plants. Northern gardeners may need to move the plants back a bit from the window

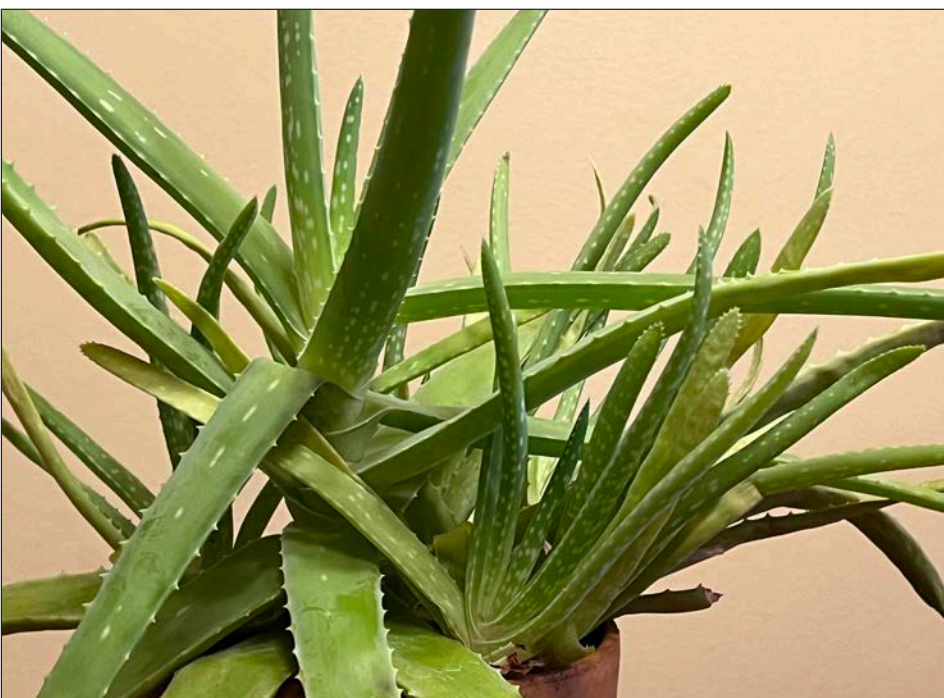


Photo Melinda Myers

Aloe vera plants grow best in sunny windows away from cold drafts.

in winter as outside temperatures drop.

Clean leaves occasionally with a damp rag. This removes any dust that may collect on the leaves and helps reduce the risk of insect pests such as mealy bugs and aphids. These plants are sensitive to many chemicals so check the label and test a leaf before treating the whole plant if additional treatment is needed.

Watch for small plants to form at the base of the original plant. You can use these offsets, often called plantlets or pups, to start new plants to grow or share with others. Use a sharp knife to separate the small plants, roots and all, from the parent plant. Repot the offsets in small containers just an inch or two larger than the remaining root system.

Enjoy the beauty and medicinal benefits of this easy-care plant. Then consider gifting a few to your favorite gardeners and cooks.

*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"** instant video and DVD series and the nationally syndicated **Melinda's Garden Moment TV & radio program**. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for **Birds & Blooms** magazine and her Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.*

DPHS

continued from page A1

ter and better, and every year we have students go on to college to pursue a career in music," said DPHS Principal Nathaniel Malone.

Highlights so far this year for Prouty's student-musicians include the Concert Band performing at the Big E, UMass Band Day, Halloween Highway, and the Quincy Christmas Parade.

Performers with Prouty's Small Ensembles group have taken part in several local events, including AA Transportation's Stuff the Bus toy donations drive, as well as a Veterans Day performance at Wire Village School. Multiple additional appearances are scheduled for the winter and spring.

Prouty students were also well-represented at auditions for Central Districts. The following DPHS students

auditioned: Marlee Domey, Thomas Bain, Connor Domey, Kadyn Murillo, Zachary Souler, and Jules Sandman. Thomas Bain accepted second chair in Central Districts and will be auditioning for All State in January.

Meanwhile, the school's Marching Band continues to impress at local events and performances.

"Throughout the season, Marching Band worked extremely hard with football games, competitions, and parades," Malone added. "At MICCA finals, the band tied for first and got silver medal. At NESBA, the band placed third, receiving a 90.1 as a final score."

In September, the Marching Band performed in East Brookfield's parade celebrating the town's 100th anniversary. No matter where Prouty's music students go, they always represent their school and community well, officials said.

"David Prouty has a long-standing tradition of excellence in Marching Band and Color Guard," said Marching Band Director Kelsey Forfa in a statement released by the school district. "And this year's band and Color Guard worked hard to continue our tradition of chasing excellence."

Forfa is thanked for the leadership she has provided this year, inspiring Prouty's musicians to fulfill their potential.

"We are so proud of Mrs. Forfa and the entire music program in their efforts this season," said Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District Superintendent Paul Haughey. "The David Prouty High School Panther Band has grown in size from about twelve musicians upon my arrival to SEBRSD to thirty-five or so this season."

Added Haughey, "Thanks to the support and partnership of our parents, families and communities, our band has quickly become a destination for musicians throughout our region."

In May 2023, members of the Concert Band will attend the Music in the Parks competition at Hershey Park, PA. Students are looking forward to their four-day trip, and community members are invited to support the program through upcoming fundraising opportunities.

Additionally, a spring musical, Willy Wonka, is being planned for April 2023.

School officials thank all student-musicians and their families for their

leadership through a challenging time. Upperclassmen have endured several unprecedented adversities since the pandemic began in March 2020, with multiple concerts and performances canceled or held remotely. Through it all, students have stayed resilient and honed their talents, with the seniors stepping up to mentor younger students.

"I am so proud of our seniors. They have set a standard that is now expected each season, and I add a humble thank-you for all they have done and achieved in their time at David Prouty High School. They will be deeply missed," Superintendent Haughey said.



Photo Kevin Flanders

David Prouty High School student-musicians perform during a recent community event outside the school.

PERSON
of the
WEEK

DIANA PROVENCHER, LEICESTER, MA

I would like to nominate Diana Provencher for her years of service to the town of Leicester, as a member of the select board and a member of the Leicester Lions Club. Also for her work as an environmentalist on the Little Bit Farm.

She is a mighty force in a small package and a role model for many young girls.

Thank you, Diana, for all you do for your community.

— Submitted by Margaret Darling

If you would like to nominate a PERSON OF THE WEEK, please email your suggestion to jsima@stonebridgepress.news. Thank you.

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It is with much sadness that I write this final Ad Libs column as my 22-year sales career ends; I am retiring this month. December 16 will be my final issue.

On August 25, 2000, I walked into the Spencer New Leader office at 369 Main Street in Spencer for the first time to work part-time with absolutely no sales experience. It was at that time that I first met the incredible Jeannette Durant who would become a great friend and mentor over the years. I was hired as the sales assistant to Fran Leppanen who taught me the ins and outs of sales and marketing, to whom I owe a great deal of gratitude. Unfortunately, both Jeannette and Fran have since passed away and with them went a piece of my heart. Fran left the Spencer office in 2001 and it was at that time that I took over the role as a full-time sales representative, covering the towns of Spencer, Leicester and the Brookfields, where I met and worked with so many dedicated business owners. I loved being out and about meeting with these people and also would take an occasional photo, some of which even made the front page!

I left the Spencer New Leader in 2006 to pursue selling at The Landmark and Worcester Magazine, being promoted to Classified Sales Manager in 2009. However, in 2011, I felt pulled back to my roots. During this

Ad Libs
by June

time, the Spencer office moved to Southbridge, and I returned in June 2011 to cover not only the Spencer New Leader, but also the Charlton Villager and the Auburn News. In 2020 after the pandemic hit, I picked up the Blackstone Valley Tribune as well, now covering and meeting business owners from 14 towns in Central Mass!

My 22 years in sales have been very rewarding; the best part has been meeting so many wonderful people who have trusted me to represent their life's work. From the bottom of my heart I thank you for this trust and am proud to call you friends. I've enjoyed producing special pages and appreciated the autonomy from Stonebridge Press publisher, Frank Chilinski, to create these. I've also worked with so many amazing individuals... too numerous to mention.

My territories will be turned over to the very capable hands of East Brookfield resident, Mikaela Victor. Her email is Mikaela@stonebridgepress.news and phone 508-909-4126. I wish nothing but the best for Mikaela as we have been working together for the past several years, and I think the world of her.

In closing, thank you all for always making me feel welcome into your businesses. Best Wishes for a very Merry Christmas and good health and prosperity in the New Year.

— June Simakauskas

Brookfield community celebrates the season

BROOKFIELD – Families celebrated the holiday season last weekend with several events in town, highlighted by Santa’s arrival and the lighting of the town tree.

On Dec. 4, guests from throughout the area bundled up on the Town Common, eagerly awaiting a special visitor from the North Pole.

Meanwhile, local volunteers and youngsters handed out beverages and other treats to help keep guests warm.

Event organizers thank everyone who helped out and attended the community celebration.

Kevin Flanders



Families eagerly await the annual lighting of the tree.



Local families are bundled up and ready for a fun night on the Common.



Beverages and other treats were available to guests throughout the evening.

Elijah Barrett of West Brookfield sworn in as corrections officer

WORCESTER — On Friday, Dec. 2, Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis proudly administered the Correctional Officers Oath to the 20 graduating recruits of the Sheriff’s Office’s 58th Basic Recruit Training Academy (B.R.T.A) at Anna Maria College. Among the twenty graduates was West Brookfield resident Officer Elijah Barrett.

The Worcester County Sheriff’s Office has remained committed to hiring a diverse workforce to better meet the needs of the population they serve. The graduates of B.R.T.A. #58 are a well-rounded group of recruits. The newly sworn-in corrections officers represent 12 towns in Massachusetts and 1 in Connecticut. Nearly 50% of the class is composed of veterans or reservists. Moreover, there are at least 4 different languages spoken by various members of the recruit class.

The Sheriff’s Office Academy is a 12-week paid program that consists of both classroom and hands-on instruction in which recruits are taught how to handle and maintain the care, custody, and control of inmates incarcerated at the Worcester County Jail & House of Correction. Important topics such as de-escalation, duty to intervene, fire safety, defensive tactics, first responder training, suicide prevention, mental health, and substance abuse are covered in the classroom. Hands-on training consists of physical fitness, CPR/first responder, firearms, skid school, and many other scenario-based exercises.

“Our new officers have just completed 12 weeks of rigorous training and are now among the best and brightest in corrections



today,” stated Worcester County Sheriff, Lew Evangelidis. “Each has demonstrated great strength and resolve, as they have navigated the academy, and will now continue our mission to serve, protect, and create a better, more safe community for all.”

Since taking office, Evangelidis has made significant changes to the hiring standards to professionalize the department. All correctional officer applicants must have, at minimum, an associate degree, two years of military service, or two years of relevant work experience. They must also pass a written exam, physical fitness test, background check, and psychological screening test. Evangelidis has also implemented a policy

that prohibits the submission of letters of recommendation from politicians and gives preference to hiring those who have served our country.

CLUES ACROSS

1. Chop up
5. Ones who utilize
10. Sings with closed lips
14. South American hummingbird
15. Serves as a coxswain
16. Liquor distilled from coconut or rice
17. Spur
18. Senile
19. Tanzanian people
20. Cruel
22. Boxing’s “GOAT”
23. Yokels
24. London soccer team
27. Chinese chess piece
30. Supervises flying
31. 007’s creator
32. Shaft horsepower (abbr.)
35. A spider makes one
37. Liquefied natural gas
38. Opaque gem
39. Brazilian palm
40. Periodical (slang)
41. You might step on one
42. Marvin and Horsley are two
43. Partner to cheese
44. Unpleasant smell
45. Field force unit (abbr.)
46. Fashion accessory
47. Cool!
48. Time zone
49. Songs to one’s lover
52. German river
55. Go bad
56. Sword
60. Very eager
61. Leaf bug
63. Italian seaport
64. Napoleon Dynamite’s uncle
65. Member of Jamaican religion
66. Large wading bird
67. Carries out
68. Eternal rest
69. It holds up your headwords

CLUES DOWN

1. Not low
2. Small water buffalo
3. A mark left behind
4. Archaic form of have
5. Fiddler crabs
6. Popular Hyundai sedan
7. Deport
8. Making over
9. Midway between south and southeast
10. Arabic masculine name
11. Type of acid
12. Popular 1980s Cher film
13. Outdoor enthusiasts’ tools
21. Chinese city
23. “Star Wars” character Solo
25. The bill in a restaurant
26. Old, ugly witch
27. Burn with a hot liquid
28. To claim or demand
29. “A Doll’s House” playwright
32. Involuntary muscular contraction
33. Pea stems (British)
34. Double or multiple fold
36. No longer is
37. Lakers’ crosstown rivals (abbr.)
38. S. American plant cultivated in Peru
40. Cloth or fabric
41. Flanks
43. Disfigure
44. Angry
46. Baltic coast peninsula
47. Large, flightless birds
49. Plants of the lily family
50. Medieval Norwegian language
51. Polio vaccine developer
52. Not soft
53. Exchange rate
54. Voice (Italian)
57. Baseball’s Ruth
58. Famed guitarist Clapton
59. Take a chance
61. Wife
62. Elaborate handshake

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\$141,000, 104 Quaboag St, Farrow, Melissa, and US Bank NA Tr, to US Bank NA Tr.

EAST BROOKFIELD
\$355,000, 105 Baker Hill Rd, Zdunczyk, Richard E, and Zdunczyk, Michelle A, to Goodwin, Susan A.

\$144,606, 133 Lane 5, Hanigan, Marie H, and Hanigan, Maurelia A, to Hanigan, Marie H, and Hanigan, Marietta.

\$144,606, S Pond Rd, Hanigan, Marie H, and Hanigan, Maurelia A, to Hanigan, Marie H, and Hanigan, Marietta.

LEICESTER
\$398,000, 20 Tobin Rd, Dandurand George D Est, and Dandurand, Richard A, to Brennan, Thomas C, and Brennan, Marie T.

\$341,000, 3 Maple St, Rodriguez, Ricardo J, to Martinez, Luis, and Martinez, Alexandra.

\$294,712, 184 Pleasant St, US Bank NA Tr, to Wheeler RE Group LLC.

NORTH BROOKFIELD
\$800,000, 56 Ward St, Sanford RT, and Sanford, Michael W, to Torvella 56 LLC.

\$285,000, 125 S Main St #B, Bukland RT, and Anderson, Robert W, to Cloutier, Christine M.

SPENCER
\$375,000, 115 Charlton Rd, Jubinville, Matthew, and Jubinville, Michael, to Rogers, Stacey, and Oneill, Kiernan.

\$345,000, 14 Ashview Dr, Fausek, Jessica L, to Walker, Walter, and Walker, Chelsea.

WARREN
\$288,000, 71 Summer St, Rozzen, Kenneth M, and Rozzen, Deborah A, to Vanvalkenburg, Larisa.

\$265,000, 47 Summer St, Rusk, Erich, to Allende Jr, Carlos L.

West Brookfield celebrates White Christmas event

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

WEST BROOKFIELD — In a town-wide celebration of the season, the community came together last weekend for a White Christmas in West Brookfield.

Held on Dec. 4, the 30th annual event featured activities throughout the town center. More than 30 open houses took place across town, including events at businesses, municipal departments, churches, and the elementary school.

Additionally, local kids were thrilled to meet a special visitor arriving from the North Pole. Pictures with Santa were available at Town Hall, and guests of all ages enjoyed decorating gingerbread houses during the afternoon.

The Toe Jam Puppet Band performed at this year's event, and several other programs took place throughout the day. These included carriage rides around the Town Common; roasted chestnuts; hot cocoa

with the Boy Scouts; strolling with Frosty and Father Christmas; and a concert held at the bandstand.

White Christmas in West Brookfield also featured its 30th annual craft and vendor fair held at the elementary school. With nearly 70 crafters signing up this year, the fair provided the perfect opportunity for shoppers to cross items off their holiday lists while supporting local artisans.

Additional entertainment and refreshments were available at the fire station; Sacred Heart Church; Whitefield Methodist Church; and First Congregational Church of West Brookfield. Local church officials are proud that their churches have long been part of the fabric of the event.

"When White Christmas started, our church was one of the first [community partners] to help get it going. It is a tradition that means a lot to people," said Terry Hall, the clerk of First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, where a

dinner and baked goods were offered in the evening.

After two years of activities that were either canceled or limited by pandemic restrictions, guests were thrilled to get back to a normal schedule of programs. Many families have made White Christmas in West Brookfield an annual tradition, and even though Mother Nature didn't cooperate with a layer of fallen snow this year, guests still had plenty of fun while celebrating the season.

The program culminated with the town's tree lighting on the Common. Carols were sung by youngsters and families beneath the tree.

Later, guests kept the festivities going with a holiday concert at Town Hall, presented by the Quaboag Choral Society.

Meanwhile, families are thanked for their support of the toy collection drive.

To view more photos of this year's event, check out the White Christmas in West Brookfield social media page on Facebook.



Photo Courtesy

The town tree is illuminated, with a packed crowd of local families looking on.

Catholic Charities invites volunteers to assist on Christmas Day

WORCESTER — Catholic Charities Worcester County announced today that they are still accepting volunteers to deliver and serve Christmas dinner to those in need. Whether delivering meals or serving the noontime meal at St. Paul Cathedral, volunteers will have an opportunity to visit with people who would otherwise be alone this Christmas.

For more than 60 years, the Bishop of Worcester has hosted a dinner provided by Catholic Charities Worcester County to assure a meal and fellowship to homebound elders, people with disabilities, homeless individuals, and those who would otherwise be alone on Thanksgiving and Christmas. Both sit-down dinners at the Cathedral of St. Paul and home-delivered meals are available to those in need on these important holidays. In 2021, the Bishop's Holiday Dinners on Thanksgiving and Christmas provided over 6,000 home-delivered meals to those in need by nearly 1,300 volunteers. This past Thanksgiving, Catholic Charities successfully delivered 3200 meals with the

help of 500 volunteers.

Volunteers are needed at both the sit-down dinner located at the Cathedral of St. Paul, 38 High St., Worcester, and meal delivery from St. Peter's Catholic Elementary School. Sit-down dinner volunteers should arrive between 11:30 a.m. and noon, and can register at this link: <https://www.ccworc.org/cathedralregistration/>. Meal delivery volunteers begin arriving at 7:30 am to receive the meals and delivery route. Meal delivery volunteers should register at this link: <https://www.ccworc.org/bishopsdinnervolunteer/>. Meals will be picked up drive-through style at the gym at St. Peter's Catholic Elementary School, entrance on 10 Hammond St., Worcester.

If you would like to request a meal, call 508-798-0191 or go to the following link: <https://form.jotform.com/222854846678170>.

Most Rev. Bishop Robert J. McManus invites anyone and their family to join him at St. Paul's Cathedral for a Thanksgiving dinner. Catholic Charities provides bus routes

to and from St. Paul's Cathedral and will pick up individuals at: Lincoln Village, Booth Apartments, Seabury Heights, Green Hill Towers, Belmont Apartments, Green Island NOC, Greenwood Gardens, Canterbury Towers, Elm Park Towers, Pleasant Towers, Murray Avenue Apartments, Marble Apartments, and Webster Square Towers

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Family Foundation, Atlas Distributing, DiMeo Schneider & Associates, Leominster Credit Union, Eastern Bank, Machado Consulting, Reliant Medical Group, Rollstone Bank & Trust, St. John's High School, Greater Worcester Community Foundation and more to come!

About Catholic Charities Worcester County

Founded in 1951 by the first Bishop of Worcester, Most Reverend John J. Wright, Catholic Charities Worcester

County offers 21 programs and services across 62 cities and towns located in Worcester County and adjoining counties. The programs are designed to strengthen vulnerable families and individuals, regardless of racial, ethnic, cultural or religious origins, ability to pay, or mental, physical or developmental challenges. For more information about Catholic Charities Worcester County, please visit www.ccworc.org.

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KNOX TRAIL MIDDLE SCHOOL HONOR ROLL

SPENCER — Knox Trail Middle School has released its honor roll for the first quarter of the 2022-2023 school year:

5th Grade

High Honors: Alayna Brien, Karissa Cormier, Thomas Garwood, Dominic Olivo, Omayra Rivera, Leo Wilson

Honors: Zachary Albano, Blessed Asensoh, Taya Barry, Shane Bayard, Zuzanna Gladek, Landon Hoyt, Natalie Lambert, Charles Lawler, Alexander Lugo, Mason Lusignan, Jackson McGill, Ella Monette, Vanessa Morales, Emmarose Njenga, McKenna Padden, Hannah Peterson, Sadie Pike, Jackson Sampson, Jolene Sampson, Jonah Schold, Brayden Theurer, Ayla Touchette, Tristan Trinidad, Daniella Villaverde, Allyson Wilder

6th Grade

High Honors: Connor Cormier, Sophia Delvalle, Jocelyn Fasoli, Landon Kaiser, Sophia Lambert, Kylie Nelson, Daryl Okuku, McKinnon Pacheco, Isabella Perchak, Lillian Perchak, Olivia Roberts, Ava Sandberg, Raegan Tatro

Honors: Aaron Bagrowski, Zoe Barnett, Avery Belton, Jsutin Blaisdell, Hunter Brodeur, Anthony Carofaniello, Hunter Cusson, Elyse DaSilva, Iris DeOliverira, Luciana Edwards, Ella Gary, Christopher Gauvin, Lena Goyette, Sean Haynes, Gabriel Lambert, Connor Martin, Oliver Mayotte, Sheyenne McConnell, Mikayla Moorcraft, Irelyn Padden, Kyleigh Petruzzi, Jadaly Rivera Rodriguez, Joshua Rivera, Elleigh Rubio, J'veyan Santiago, Abigail Sobosik, Julieanna Tong, Mason Toscano

7th Grade

High Honors: Sadie Anifantis, Gianna Bedard, Cassidy Chickering, Paisley Comeau, Marco Estrella-Morales, Gabriel Flannery, Jayden Giwa-Bello, Caleb Goyette, Kylie Hoyt, Veronica Jensrud, Leah Kozak, Emmanuel Lopez, Trityn Masterson, Alyssa Olsen, Alexia Rondeau, Ava Rondeau, Mason Russo, Samuel Schold, Tucker Wolanski

Honors: Davian Alicea Aponte, Morgan Berard, Oliver Bird, Catherine Cowgill, Violet Hanlan, Snake Hissem, Teagan Humphrey, Evan LaFountain, Cody Landry, Hunter Morin, Alejandro Orozco, Ava Rossik, Logan Spahn, Logan Verity

8th Grade

High Honors: Lucas Bastien, Scarlet Busse, Jadyen Goodwin, Alexis Huard, Dylan Monette, Anastasia Nieuwenhoff, Morgan Pelchat, Elena Powell, Julia Simpson, Isabella Vangel

Honors: Jayce Acevedo, Landen Blodgett, Olivia Burgos, Dominic Carofaniello, Livia Deluca, Janica DiBara, Isabella Dixon, Cullen Gardiner, Micah Gariepy, Aliyah Gauvin, Jack Hallihan, Patrick Hart, Nicholas Hintlian, Kaylee Hoffner, Cameron Kittredge, Johnlyn Laventure, Tayven Lewis, Christopher Martin, Joshua McLaughlin, Norberto Murillo, Riley Pelletier, Sophia Ramirez Murphey, Henry Rokes, Jayden Rubio, Amelia St. Peter, Cayden Stewart, Marley Talbot, Keira Tetreault, Cameron Tobin, Travis Tong, Sophia Vigeant

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Friday's Child



Hailey
Age 15

ing. I am also learning to play the piano. I also would be a big help to my family by doing chores, playing with any siblings, and making everyone laugh. I would also love a visiting resource.

I hope to speak with you soon!

Sincerely, Hailey

<https://www.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/child/5454>

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

To learn more about adoption from foster care, call the Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) at (617) 964-6273 or visit www.mareinc.org. Start the process today and give a waiting child a permanent place to call home.



QCC selected by Amazon as education partner for career choice program

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College announced it has been selected as an education partner for Amazon's Career Choice program, providing Amazon's hourly employees access to QCC's programs which include over 120 associate degrees and certificates.

"QCC offers students access to higher education through a myriad of partnerships and pathways designed to facilitate student success," said QCC President Luis G. Pedraja, Ph.D. "Our educational partnership with Amazon is a new and exciting way to engage more people in the powerful, life-changing impact of higher education."

Amazon employees attending QCC will receive high-quality education and hands-on training to upskill in an existing career or prepare them to enter a career in one of today's high-demand

industries. To bolster students' ability to be successful, QCC offers a wide range of academic resources and support services such as individualized academic advising, tutoring, mentoring, career coaching, and counseling. Courses are offered days, nights, and weekends in multiple modalities such as in-person, fully online, and a combination of in-person and online.

Amazon's Career Choice program is an education benefit that empowers employees to learn new skills for career success at Amazon or elsewhere. The program meets individual learners where they are on their education journey through a variety of education and upskilling opportunities including pre-paid college tuition, industry certifications designed to lead to in-demand jobs, and foundational skills such as English language proficiency, high

school diplomas, and GEDs. In the U.S., the company is investing \$1.2 billion to upskill more than 300,000 employees by 2025, to help move them into higher-paying, in-demand jobs.

Amazon's Career Choice program has a rigorous selection process for third-party partner educators, choosing partners that are focused on helping employees through their education programs, assisting them with job placements, and overall offering education that leads to career success.

"We're looking forward to Quinsigamond Community College coming on board as an education partner for Career Choice, adding to the hundreds of best-in-class offerings available to our employees," said Tammy Thieman, Global Program Lead of Amazon's Career Choice program. "We're committed to empowering our employees

by providing them access to the education and training they need to grow their careers, whether that's with us or elsewhere. We have intentionally created a partner network of third-party educators and employers committed to providing excellent education, job placement resources, and continuous improvements to the experience. Today, over 90,000 Amazon employees around the world have already participated in Career Choice and we've seen first-hand how it can transform their lives."

For more information on Amazon's Career Choice, visit: <https://www.aboutamazon.com/news/workplace/career-choice>.

For more information on QCC, visit: <https://www.qcc.edu/amazon-career-choice>.

Country Bank announces promotions

Patrons have several options for supporting Haston Library

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — Country Bank, a full-service financial institution serving Central and Western Massachusetts, is pleased to announce recent promotions.

Lisa DiMarzio and Scott Emerson have been promoted to First Vice Presidents. DiMarzio oversees the bank's Compliance and Community Reinvestment Area. She has worked in various positions as a long-tenured team member with 36 years at Country Bank. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Anna Maria College. In addition, she is a graduate of The New England School for Financial Studies and the American Bankers Association-Stonier Graduate School of Banking, where she also earned a Wharton Leadership Certification.

Scott Emerson has more than 20 years of experience in the technology industry and has been an essential part of the Innovation and Technology team at Country Bank for the last 17 years. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from UMass Amherst and has completed several technology-related certifications throughout the course of his career.

Dianna Lussier, who oversees the Risk Management area, has been promoted to Vice President. Lussier has been with Country Bank for 18 years. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration

from Worcester State University with a concentration in Finance and Accounting. Dianna is also a graduate of The Massachusetts Bankers New England School for Financial Studies. She is currently attending the American Bankers Association-Stonier Graduate School of Banking and completing her Wharton Leadership Certification.

Jason Bourbeau was promoted to Technology Architecture Officer. He has been with Country Bank for eight years, earned an Associate's Degree in Computer Systems Engineering from Springfield Technical Community College, and is certified as a Cisco Network Professional.

"We are excited to announce these promotions, not just in recognition of these team members' contributions to the bank's success but also because each individual's history with the bank demonstrates the various career paths available in community banking. We are committed to helping each team member identify their career goals and work with them to reach those objectives. Their actions contribute to the bank's overall success, and we're pleased to be able to promote these individuals for their dedication to the organization," said Miriam Siegel, Chief Senior Vice President, First Culture and Development Officer of Country Bank.

NORTH BROOKFIELD — For residents looking to support their local library during the season of giving, there are plenty of ways to assist Haston Free Public Library as it prepares for a new year of programming for all ages.

If you would like to support the library while getting your holiday shopping done, visit Smile.amazon.com. Simply select "Friends of the Haston Free Public Library" as your charity when purchasing gifts online, and the library will receive the benefits.

"It's amazingly easy to do, and you get to give twice—Christmas presents and also to this library," read a library-issued statement promoting the program.

There are several other ways to give back to the library, including volunteering your time. This month, the library is spotlighting volunteer Judy Zalansky,

who has helped out in countless ways since she started volunteering at the library last November. Officials have been thrilled to work with her on the team.

"As a volunteer, Judy has been helping patrons at the circulation desk, reshelving books, pulling books to send out to other libraries on interlibrary loan, and anything else that she's asked to do," read a statement released by the library.

Having retired after 31 years in the trust and estate division of a large regional bank, Zalansky has plenty of experience in volunteering over the years.

"My first experience volunteering at a library was when we lived in Holden. Unfortunately, the pandemic put that on hold," Zalansky said. "I've been volunteering at the Haston Library for the past year and love every minute of it. Dawn, Gabby, and Brianna welcomed me from the first day and have had the patience to both train and answer questions for this newbie. I have

always been an avid reader, and this is my happy place."

On Monday, Dec. 12, at 5:30 p.m., Brianna Lamb will show guests how to make jezyki (Polish Christmas paper star ornaments). All supplies will be provided. Space is limited, so please call 508-867-0208 to register for this workshop.

Meanwhile, young readers and their families should mark their calendars for December story-time sessions on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. in the children's room.

Finally, members of the library's Book Group have a little extra time to prepare for their next session, as the group is taking December off. Members will discuss "Falling Man" by Don DiLillo on Jan. 31 at 7 p.m. in the library and via Zoom. Copies of the book are available in the library, so feel free to stop by and get one.

For more information about the program, or to sign up for other library events, call the library at 508-867-0208.

Robin Foley joins Michelle Terry Team, EXIT Real Estate Executives in Spencer

SPENCER — EXIT Real Estate Executives in Spencer today announced the addition of Robin Foley to its team of real estate professionals.

"We're excited to welcome Robin to EXIT Realty," says Michelle Terry, Broker & Owner of EXIT Real Estate Executives. "EXIT is growing and attracting quality business people like Robin each and every day."

Robin has been an agent for 5 years and recently became a member of the Realtor Association of Central Massachusetts. Her

foundation for becoming a realtor is her passion for helping people. Throughout her life, Robin's work experience has always revolved around helping people and is looking forward to continuing that passion through real estate.

About EXIT Realty EXIT Realty is a company founded and built on human potential. A full service, forward-thinking, real estate franchisor with offices across North America, EXIT has to-date paid out more than a half a billion dollars in sin-

gle-level residual income to its associates. A portion of every transaction fee received by EXIT Realty Corp. International is applied to its charitable fund, and to-date, \$7 million has been allocated to charity. For more information, please visit www.exitrealty.com and www.joinexitrealty.com.

EXIT Real Estate Executives is located at 130 W Main, Spencer, MA 01562. For more information, please call 508-885-5555.

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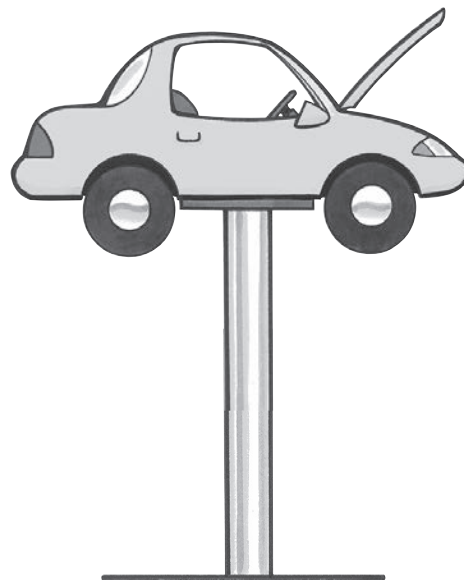
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BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Holiday traditions

Did you ever wonder where the tradition of the Christmas stocking came from, or why traditional Christmas colors are red, green, and gold or why Kentucky Fried Chicken in Japan is so busy on Christmas? There are endless myths and fables surrounding the Christmas holiday, but there are even more interesting facts. While researching Christmas, and digging deep, we found a plethora of fun and thought-provoking facts worth sharing with our readers. The first one notes that early images of St. Nicholas depict him as a strict disciplinarian rather than the overweight, jolly man in the red suit we see today. Way back when, a common Christmas eve tradition was to tell scary ghost stories by the fire, boo! In 1914, during the First World War, a truce between the United Kingdom and Germany was held. They decorated their shelters for the holiday and exchanged gifts and even played a game of football with each other. When a child drops a letter in the mail to Santa in America, the mail is sent to Santa Claus, Ind. Thanks to the province of Nova Scotia, who since 1918 have been sending the city of Boston an enormous Christmas tree as a thank you for supporting them during the Halifax explosion. Pope Julius I, bishop of Rome, proclaimed December 25 as the official day to celebrate the birth of Jesus in A.D. 350. For the past 40 years, people in Japan eat Kentucky Fried Chicken for Christmas dinner and must make their orders two months in advance.

British illustrator John Callcott Horsley invented the first Christmas card in 1843. In England from 1649-1660, Puritan head of state Oliver Cromwell outlawed Christmas celebrations and carols. The first artificial Christmas trees were made in Germany out of dyed goose feathers, (we're still trying to picture this one). X is the Greek letter "chi," which is an abbreviation for the word "Christ" in Greek hence the abbreviation X-mas being used so often. Several European countries thought that good and evil spirits were active during the Twelve Days of Christmas. These 'spirits' then became known as Santa's elves. Have you ever wondered what a 'Yule' log actually is? We have as well. It is a large log that is burned during the Twelve Days of Christmas as a symbol of health, fertility, luck and is said to ward off evil spirits. In Bolivia, there is a celebration called the 'Mass of the Rooster' that takes place on Christmas Eve. Some folks bring roosters to the mass to symbolize the thought that a rooster was the first animal to announce the birth of Jesus. In 2010, the Columbian government hung lights on jungle trees. When the FARC guerrillas sauntered by, the trees lit up and released banners asking the terrorists to lay down their weapons. As a result, 331 guerrillas peacefully re-entered into the community. Here's an interesting one, the 'Bicycle' card company created playing cards during WWII that revealed an escape route for POWs in Germany. In the song "The Twelve Days of

Turn To **EDITORIAL** page **A9**

Letter submission policy

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

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

VIEWPOINT

OPINION AND COMMENTARY FROM SPENCER, LEICESTER AND THE BROOKFIELDS

FRIENDS OF THE NORTH BROOKFIELD TOWN HOUSE HOSTS WORKSHOP AT BEMIS NURSERY



Photo Courtesy

The Bemis Nursery building was a bright welcoming sight on the dark rainy night of Nov. 28 as people gathered to support the efforts of the Friends of the North Brookfield Town House. Materials had been set out by Tina Bemis and her staff and soon the festive crowd was heard at work creating one of a kind Porch Pots and Wreaths. The Friends want to thank the folks at Bemis and the workshop attendees for making the evening such a success. Proceeds from this event will go directly toward the restoration of the North Brookfield Town House and the cre-

ation of ROAR programs for residents of North Brookfield and surrounding towns. If you would like information about upcoming Friends of the North Brookfield Town House activities and ROAR classes, or if you wish to donate toward the restoration of the Town House as a center for art and entertainment, please contact us at nbtownhouse.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR


History is repeating itself before our eyes

To the Editor:
I've wondered for many years what it was like when Hitler began his push to be a brutal dictator:
Erase the foundation of the government, change the rules, put people in place who will echo your beliefs. Most important is for alleged "leaders" to stay silent, thereby approving the insanity. So, this pompous, bigot-

ed, misogynistic, sociopath takes over and using fear, anger, lies and bigotry of immense proportions changes the world forever. He brings out the worst of who we are.
Oh, wait, I don't have to wonder; it is playing out before my very eyes in my lifetime. God help us.

JUDY ROSE
EAST BROOKFIELD

Learning as you go



POSITIVELY SPEAKING
TOBY MOORE

Google became my best friend.
I was learning, growing, and making progress; the best part was that I didn't have to learn to code!
A few months later, when all was running smoothly and according to plan, we lost our developer! Quickly, I realized that I was going to have to learn to code.
In many ways, this was my worst nightmare. Still, after enrolling, I daydreamed that after graduation, I'd be an expert computer programmer, knowing everything there was to know about computer languages.
On my first day of school, I was surprised to learn that instead of teaching me everything there was to know about writing code, they would teach me just enough so that I knew how to teach myself.
The field of computer programming is so vast that my school's only objective was to teach me enough so that I knew how to find the answers I needed on my own. In other words, they wanted me to start coding, even though I didn't know everything I needed to know.
Using Google efficiently is a core job skill in computer programming, but it's not just for programmers. With the internet, we all can learn as we go, looking up whatever we need to know at a moment's notice.
Some of you are still evaluating whether or not you should move forward with your dreams and goals because you don't feel that you have the proper schooling, connections, or money to make it happen.
There are probably people out there who are not as bright as you and not as talented as you but are making things happen because they started doing what they could and figured the rest out along the way.
Jump in and get started; don't be afraid. You'll always be learning. You don't have to know everything about what you want to do to start moving in that direction. Be excited to learn, grow, and maybe, just maybe, you won't have to learn to code!

COLA is sweet for Social Security recipients

If you receive Social Security, you've probably already heard that your checks in 2023 will be bigger – considerably bigger, in fact. How can you make the best use of this extra money?
Here's what's happening: For 2023, there's an 8.7 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for Social Security benefits – the largest increase in 40 years. Also, the monthly Medicare Part B premiums are declining next year, to \$164.90/month from \$170.10/month, which will also modestly boost Social Security checks for those enrolled in Part B, as these premiums are automatically deducted.
Of course, the sizable COLA is due to the high inflation of 2022, as the Social Security Administration uses a formula based on increases in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). So, it's certainly possible that you will need some, or perhaps all, of your larger checks to pay for the increased cost of goods and services. But if your cash flow is already relatively strong, you might want to consider these suggestions for using your bigger checks:
Reduce withdrawals from your investment portfolio. When you're retired, you will likely need to withdraw a certain amount from your portfolio each year to meet your expenses. A boost in your Social Security may enable you to withdraw less, at least for a year. This can be particularly advantageous when the markets are down, as you'd like to avoid, as much as possible, selling investments and withdrawing the money when investment prices are low. And the fewer investments you need to sell, the longer your portfolio may last during your retirement years.
Help build your cash reserves. When you're retired, it's a good idea to maintain about a year's worth of the amount you'll spend from your portfolio in cash, while also keeping three months' of your spending needs in an emergency fund, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account. Your higher Social Security checks could help you build these cash reserves. (Also, it's helpful to keep another three to five years' worth of spending from your portfolio in short-term, fixed-income investments, which now, due to higher interest rates, offer better income opportunities.)
Contribute to a 529 plan. You could use some of your extra Social Security money to contribute to a tax-advantaged 529 education savings plan for your grandchildren or other family members.
Contribute to charitable organizations. You might want to use some of your Social Security money to expand your charitable giving. Your generosity will help worthy groups and possibly bring you some tax benefits, too.
While it's nice to have these possible options in 2023, you can't count on future COLA increases being as large. The jump in inflation in 2022 was due to several unusual factors, including pandemic-related government spending, supply shortages and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. It's quite possible, perhaps even likely, that inflation will subside in 2023, which, in turn, would mean a smaller COLA bump in 2024.
Nonetheless, while you might not want to include large annual COLA increases as part of your long-term financial strategy, you may well choose to take advantage, in some of the ways described above, of the bigger Social Security checks you'll receive in 2023. When opportunity knocks, you may want to open the door.



FINANCIAL FOCUS
TREVOR NIELSEN

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.



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Shotgun season opens

The opening of the shotgun deer season in Mass. had a low turnout of hunters locally, although the Douglas state forest had cars lined up on Route 16 on Monday and this past Saturday. Some impressive bucks were weighed in at the Webster check station last week, and had 113 deer checked in at Webster as of this past Saturday. Listening to deer stories from hunters this year make you laugh, and some almost make you cry from laughter. My son, Ralph, Jr., harvested a nice eight pointer after sitting in his tree stand in Uxbridge for only five minutes. It seems the deer may have followed him to his tree stand and watched him climb into it. He barely had time to sit

down before he spotted the big buck, and dropped him with a single shot from his shotgun. Another hunter harvested a nice buck while ground hunting. The eight pointer walked right into his path, and never spotted him. He dropped the buck right in his tracks. Listening to hunters that missed deer because of a gun malfunction, or a scope that for some reason had moved, had you laugh as they told their stories, with most excuses totally outrageous. Of course, could it have been the shooter making a bad shot? When the shotgun season ends Dec. 10, deer hunters will have one last chance to harvest some venison for the freezer during the primitive arms



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season which opens Dec. 12 and runs through to Dec. 31. A little bit of snow is sure to bring the deer harvest up before the season ends. There have been reports of multiple deer spotted close to homes during the shotgun season. Hopefully, they will split up and go looking for better feeding areas, but do not plan on them leaving. With the acorn crop very

spotty this year, deer will continue to feed on grass, and when the snow covers the grass they will start to feed on many ornamental bushes that homeowners have paid substantial sums of money to plant. Fruit trees can also become a meal for deer, with farmers suffering the most damage. Residents should not be feeding deer just to watch them in their backyards. It is sure nice to watch deer in your backyard during the winter months, but it could also cost you big money when they start to feed on your bushes and trees. With the Christmas season just around the corner, many friends and family members are often undecided what to get the sportsmen

for Christmas. The best thing is a gift card at their favorite sporting goods store; cash is also the best way to go. The Eastern States Expo will be held on Feb. 24-26 at the Big E in Springfield, Mass. this year. The Boxborough, Mass. New England Fishing Expo will open their doors on Jan. 27. Capt. Mel True will hold his annual Tried & True Fishing show at Whites of Westport, 66 state Rd., Westport, Mass., on Feb. 4 & 5. Check his planned show at his Web site fishing charters for more information. Be sure to put the dates on your calendar.

Take A Kid Fishing & Keep Them Rods Bending!

Ode to Soups!

Soup, whether it's simple or fancy, is steeped in memories, and many a long, cold New England winter has been cheered by bowls of soup that warm both body and soul. While fast food and quick fix suppers often win out over slow simmering stews and soups for busy weeknight meals, soups still have a place in today's suppertime scramble. Soups are not only deliciously filling, they're typically made with fresh, healthy ingredients. Add in the money saving factor, the convenience of one pot cooking and the opportunity for unbridled culinary creativeness, and it's easy to see why America is rekindling its love affair with soups and stews.

Read on for a dose of inspiration to cook up a pot of soup this season! ***

Heirloom Soups: A generation or so ago soup suppers were not uncommon. Many of these diverse dishes reflected the ethnic background of the family at the dinner table. A hearty bowl of Pasta Fagioli and crusty bread was a familiar supper in Italian neighborhoods, as Jewish families enjoyed chicken matzo ball soup with braided challah, and those of French Canadian decent baked Johnny cake to go with a pot of green pea soup. Today, many of these family recipes have been passed down to new generations. While the recipes may be tweaked by enthusiastic TikTok inspired cooks, the tradition of preparing a soup supper, whether it's made from chicken or beans, remains the same. As most cooks will attest, something magical happens when a big pot of water begins filling up with ingredients. Kids stop their homework to peek into the pot; spouses sneak in for a quick taste; and like the classic French fable "Stone Soup," a dash of this and a handful of that contributed by family members add up to not only scrumptious soup, but precious memories as well.

Tip: why not start a "soup tradition" by preparing a pot of soup to honor an ethnic tradition once a month. ***

Inspirational Ingredients: In some cultures it is believed a cook's mood, good or bad, can ultimately affect the taste and enjoyment of the meal he or she has prepared. Some claim this to be

particularly relevant to soups, simply due to the many chopping and cutting tasks required for soup and stew preparation. "Spiritual cooking" has become a buzz word in the culinary world as mindfulness and love, as well as chanting and prayer are being integrated into cooking chores in the belief it will heighten both flavor and awareness.

Tip: Make it a habit to de-stress before cooking, take a few deep breaths, smile and think positive thoughts as you prep and cook in the kitchen. ***

Food for Thought - Fun Soup Facts: *The earliest evidence of humans eating soup was 6000 BC. The main ingredient was hippopotamus.

*The ladies of the French court of Louis XI subsisted mainly on soup because they believed that chewing would cause them to develop facial wrinkles.

*The story goes that in the late 1700s, French royal chefs created a clear broth (called consommé) because the king wanted to see his reflection in his bowl. *Soup is a breakfast food in Japan. The day is often started with a bowl of fish broth with rice.

*There is an old Yiddish saying, "Troubles are easier to take with soup than without."

*Frank Sinatra's contracts often specified that chicken and rice soup be in his dressing room prior to performances.

*Andy Warhol said he painted soup cans because he had soup for lunch every day for 20 years. ***

Crock Pot Tomato Soup

Whole tomatoes and basil bring freshness to this classic, healthy soup. Best of all, it cooks while you're at work (or busy doing other things)!

Ingredients: 8 medium tomatoes; 1medium onion, chopped; 2 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced; 1 garlic clove, crushed; 1tablespoon brown sugar; 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil; 1 tablespoon chopped parsley; 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce; 1/2 teaspoon salt; 1/8 teaspoon pepper; 3 cups chicken

TAKE THE HINT

KAREN
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broth or bouillon.

Directions: Drop tomatoes in a pan of boiling water for 15 to 20 seconds; immediately rinse with cold water. Remove skins. Cut in half crosswise; squeeze out and discard seeds. Combine in slow-cooker with onions, carrots, garlic, brown sugar, basil, parsley, Worcestershire sauce, salt, pepper and broth (or bouillon). Cover and cook on low 5 to 6 hours or until vegetables are very soft. Puree in blender or food processor fitted with metal blade. ***

Easy Tomato Soup

I make this at least once a month, because it is super easy and always delicious!

Side note: Once you make this, you many never buy tomato soup in a can again.

Ingredients: One medium onion; one stick of butter; two 28 ounce cans of diced, crushed, or whole tomatoes; half can of water; spices: salt; pepper; turmeric and cayenne (optional).

Directions: In a medium pan, melt the butter with an onion cut into quarters. When butter melts, add two cans of tomatoes and some water if it looks like it needs thinning. Cook until it starts to boil, then simmer slowly for 40 minutes, stirring occasionally. Using an immersion blender, puree the soup to desired consistency. Add salt, pepper, and turmeric and cayenne to taste.

Giada De Laurentiis' Italian Wedding Soup

This homemade recipe comes from the kitchen of the famous food network cook.

Meatball Ingredients:1 small onion, grated; 1/3 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley; 1 large egg; 1 teaspoon minced garlic; 1 teaspoon salt; 1 slice fresh white bread, crust trimmed, bread torn into small pieces; 1/2 cup grated Parmesan; 8 ounces ground beef; 8 ounces ground pork; Freshly ground black pepper

Soup Ingredients: 12 cups low-sodium chicken broth; 1 pound curly endive,

EDITORIAL

continued from page A8

Christmas," the verse referring to "true love" is a reference to God. A "partridge in a pear tree" represents Christ and the "two turtledoves" represent the Old and New Testaments. Did you ever wonder why the colors red, green, and gold are affiliated with Christmas? Green is a symbol of life and rebirth, red symbolizes the blood of Christ and gold is a symbol of light, wealth, and royalty. Christmas trees are grown for roughly 15 years before they are purchased. In Poland spider webs are a common decoration for trees because a spider, according to legend, wove a blanket for baby Jesus. In 1836, Alabama was the first state in the country to officially recognize Christmas. Mistletoe is considered sacred to the Druids because it produces fruit and remains green throughout the winter. The Druids never let the plant hit the ground and believed that it was a cure for infertility and warded off evil spirits. Environmentalist Teddy Roosevelt banned Christmas trees from the White House in 1901. Apples were the first Christmas tree decorations. Why do we hang stockings by the chimney with care? Apparently, there were three sisters who were too poor to afford a marriage dowry and were bound to end up on the streets. Bishop Saint Nicholas filled their stockings with gold coins, and their lives were forever changed. We hope you enjoyed these fun Christmas facts and hope that you have a happy holiday season filled with endless laughter and memories to last a lifetime.



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Spencer Police Union serves breakfast at Howe Village



Local seniors recently enjoyed breakfast provided by the Spencer Police Union.

SPENCER — The Spencer Police Union recently provided a pancake breakfast for the residents of Howe Village. The community event took place on Nov. 29. After the breakfast, Spencer Police Lt. Michael Befford delivered a presentation to help seniors avoid becoming the victims of scams. “We enjoyed our time this

morning, providing both safety tips and a delicious breakfast,” read a statement released by the Spencer Police Department. Police are thanked for their continued presence at community events. Scams are on the rise this holiday season, and it means a lot for local seniors to have an opportunity to learn about current trends.

Christa Tuft joins EXIT Realty in Spencer

SPENCER — EXIT Real Estate Executives in Spencer today announced the addition of Christa Tuft to its team of real estate professionals. “We’re excited to welcome Christa to EXIT Realty,” says Michelle Terry, Broker & Owner of EXIT Real Estate Executives. “EXIT is growing and attracting quality business people like Christa each and every day.” Tuft is a member of the National Association of Realtors (NAR), Massachusetts Association of Realtors (MAR), and Central Massachusetts Association of Realtors (CMAR). She was born and raised in

Central Massachusetts where she also raised her own children. She is the Director of Residential Services for a local human service agency, overseeing 43 group homes across the state. She brings a skillset that includes knowledge of the needs and regulations of home purchases and sales for human service agencies. She carries the values of hard work, integrity, and outstanding client service into everything she does. About EXIT Realty EXIT Realty is a company founded and built on human potential. A full service, forward-thinking, real estate franchisor with offices across North America, EXIT has to-date paid out more than a half a billion dollars in single-level residual income to its

es across North America, EXIT has to-date paid out more than a half a billion dollars in single-level residual income to its associates. A portion of every transaction fee received by EXIT Realty Corp. International is applied to its charitable fund, and to-date, \$7 million has been allocated to charity. For more information, please visit www.exitrealty.com and www.joinexitrealty.com. EXIT Real Estate Executives is located at 130 W Main, Spencer, MA 01562. For more information, please call 508-88-5555.

Santa to visit EXIT Real Estate

SPENCER — EXIT Real Estate Executives will be hosting Santa photos Friday, Dec. 9. Santa will be at our office, 130 W Main St., Spencer, from 4-7 p.m. This is a free event! For more information about EXIT Real Estate Executives, please call Michelle Terry. EXIT Real Estate Executives is located

at 130 W Main St., Spencer. About EXIT Realty EXIT Realty is a company founded and built on human potential. A full service, forward-thinking, real estate franchisor with offices across North America, EXIT has to-date paid out more than a half a billion dollars in single-level residual income to its

associates. A portion of every transaction fee received by EXIT Realty Corp. International is applied to its charitable fund, and to-date, \$7 million has been allocated to charity. For more information, please visit www.exitrealty.com and www.joinexitrealty.com.

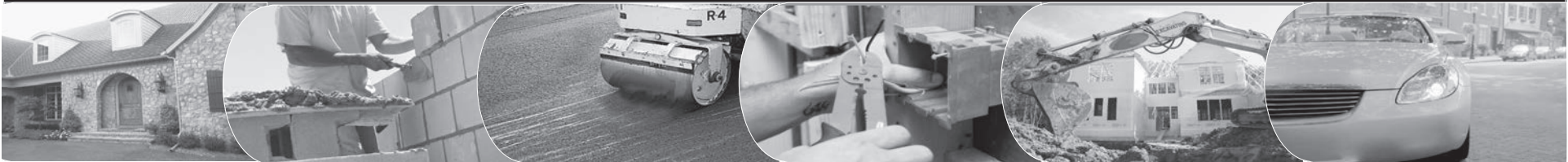
St. Joseph Pius X hosting holiday bazaar

LEICESTER — St. Joseph-St. Pius X invites guests to check out its second annual holiday bazaar. The event will take place on Saturday, Dec. 10, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the St. Joseph’s campus (759 Main St., Leicester). Extended hours for the thrift shop will provide great offerings for holiday shopping, and you can spin the wheel for added discounts. Guests will also be able

to enter to win a holiday centerpiece, and 20 percent off furniture purchases will be offered. The event will also include face painting; kids’ games with prizes; children’s shopping opportunities with free gift wrapping; Christmas caroling with the Leicester High School chorus; a toy raffle table; and a silent auction. Included among the raffles will be \$500 worth of scratch tickets.

A bake table will also be provided, and guests won’t want to miss an opportunity to meet Santa Claus (11 a.m. to 1 p.m.). Guests are also invited to stay for lunch, which will include chicken nuggets, homemade fries, meatball subs, popcorn, and more. The event is being organized in partnership with the New 2 You Thrift Shop.

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donnaflannery@erakey.com or call 508-885-6336. If you are in need of assistance, applications can be picked up at: Spencer Post Office, Mary Queen of the Rosary Food Pantry or ERA Key Realty Services (outside mailbox). You can see updates on Facebook at Spencer Toys for Kids.

DONATIONS AS OF 12/2/2022

| | | |
|------------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 11/25/2022 | In Memory of Arthur (Pete) Lapierre | \$50.00 |
| 11/25/2022 | Gifted Hands | \$50.00 |
| 11/25/2022 | Spencer FireFighters Association | \$500.00 |
| 11/25/2022 | Houston Builders | \$100.00 |
| 11/25/2022 | Stuart and Sandra Milner | \$50.00 |
| 11/28/2022 | Richard and Donna D'Amato | \$100.00 |
| 11/28/2022 | Audettes Towing & Recovery Inc. | \$500.00 |
| 11/29/2022 | Adrea Gordon | \$100.00 |
| 12/1/2022 | Steven and Carol Crozier | \$50.00 |
| 12/1/2022 | John and Eileen Prizio | \$100.00 |
| 12/1/2022 | Jonathan and Diane Bazaz | \$100.00 |
| 12/1/2022 | Robert and Deborah McNamara | \$50.00 |
| 12/1/2022 | First Congregational Church | \$100.00 |
| 12/1/2022 | St. Joseph's Abbey | \$300.00 |



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OBITUARIES

Dorothy S. Hamel, 102

LEICESTER- Dorothy S. (Kenny) Hamel, 102, Leicester's oldest living resident and holder of the Old Boston Post Road Cane, died Thursday, Nov. 24th, in Rose Monahan Hospice Home, Worcester.



She was the wife of George A. Hamel, who died in 2005. She leaves several nieces and nephews.

Dorothy was a member of St. Joseph-St. Pius X Parish, the Leicester Senior Citizen Club, Friends of the Elders, a volunteer driver for F.I.S.H. and a 50 +

year member of United Commercial Travelers.

She was born in Worcester, the daughter of Josephine (Swirbliss) Kenny and later graduated from the former Commerce High School in Worcester.

Private services and burial will be held in Notre Dame Cemetery, Worcester. The MORIN FUNERAL HOME, 1131 Main St., Leicester is assisting the family with funeral arrangements. Donations in Dorothy's name may be made to the Leicester Senior Center, 40 Winslow Ave., Leicester, MA 01524.

www.morinfuneralhomes.com

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LEGALS

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
Docket No. WO15P2870GD
CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR RESIGNATION OF A GUARDIAN OF AN INCAPACITATED PERSON
In the matter of:
William H Lubas
Of: Brookfield, MA
RESPONDENT
(Incapacitated Person/ Protected Person)

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by Evelyn B Lubas-Webster of Brookfield, MA in the above captioned matter requesting that the court: Accept the Resignation of the Guardian. The petition asks the court to make a determination that the Guardian and/or Conservator should be allowed to resign; or should be removed for good cause; or that the Guardianship and/or Conservatorship is no longer necessary and therefore should be terminated. The original petition is on file with the court.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **12/27/2022**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the abovenamed person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.

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

Date: November 25, 2022

Stephanie K. Fattman
Register of Probate

December 9, 2022

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate and Family Court

Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO22P4054EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate of:
Peter Morin
Date of Death: 12/13/2019

To all interested persons:
A Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by **Andrea Morin of Newton 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 **Andrea Morin of Newton MA** and 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 12/27/2022**. 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: November 30, 2022

Stephanie K. Fattman,
Register of Probate

December 9, 2022

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. WO22C0553CA
CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME

In the matter of:

Victoria Lauren Merlo

A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by **Victoria Lauren Merlo of West Brookfield MA** requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to: **Victoria Lauren Cross**

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Worcester Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 12/20/2022. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.
WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: November 16, 2022

Stephanie K. Fattman
December 9, 2022

(SEAL)

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT
Docket 22 SM 003494
ORDER OF NOTICE

TO:

Sarah B. Dube, Individually and as Personal Representative of the Estate of Darren Scott Dube and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act: 50 U.S.C. c. 50 § 3901 (*et seq*):

PennyMac Loan Services, LLC claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Spencer, numbered 5 Smithville Road, given by Darren Scott Dube to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Mortgagee, as nominee for PennyMac Loan Services, LLC, dated October 1, 2020, and recorded at Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 63397, Page 377, and now held by the plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before **January 2, 2023** or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the grounds of non-compliance with the Act.

Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief

Justice of this Court on November 17, 2022.

Attest:

Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
20-006439
December 9, 2022

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Division
Docket No. WO22P3989EA
Estate of:
Pauline C. Blodgett
Date Of Death: October 19, 2022
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above-captioned estate by Petition of Petitioner **Michael G. Blodgett of Webster MA**

a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

Michael G. Blodgett of Webster 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.

December 9, 2022

THE TOWN OF EAST BROOKFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing will be held in the Memorial Town Complex, 122 Connie Mack Drive, East Brookfield on Monday, December 19, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. on the application made by Country Corner Citgo, Inc. 232 East Main Street for a Common Victualer All Alcoholic Package Store License. All interested parties are invited to attend.

Joseph Fish, Chairman
Robert Button, Clerk
Andrew Lynch, Member
December 9, 2022
December 16, 2022

SPORTS

Bay Path returns to championship form, wins State Vocational title

MINUTEMEN DEFEAT MONTY TECH, 28-20, BEHIND 366 RUSHING YARDS



From left, Bay Path head coach Cody Giampa and co-captains Casey Gallagher, Jonathan Nussey, Anthony Catino and Georgios Pirperis proudly pose with the State Vocational Large School Championship trophy following the Minutemen's 28-20 victory over Monty Tech on Thursday, Dec. 1 at Shepherd Hill Regional.



Defenders Gabriel Espinosa (20) and Casey Gallagher bring down Monty Tech ball carrier Logan Quinn.

BY NICK ETHIER
SPORTS EDITOR

DUDLEY — The always proud Bay Path Regional football program is synonymous with winning. But the recent past has brought with it some mediocre seasons. That was until now, as the Minutemen captured the State Vocational Large School Championship on Thursday, Dec. 1 at Shepherd Hill Regional's Carmignani Field.

The eight-team bracket saw Bay Path earn the No. 3 seed. The Minutemen then defeated No. 6 Greater New Bedford (47-21) and No. 7 Northeast Regional (28-6) — last year's champion and runner up — to set up the final against No. 4 Monty Tech.

And, against the Bulldogs, the offensive line was superb. The hard-nosed linemen allowed for Bay Path to run for a staggering 366 yards which led to a 28-20 victory.

"Bay Path's always been a winning program and it's good to see our kids get back to that. They're winners again. It hasn't been acceptable for us," head coach Cody Giampa said of the recent past on Muggett Hill. "This is the level this program should be at."

Regarding the immense amount of rushing yards, Giampa put it simply. "We're a physical team and we run the ball hard," he said. "They just want to run the ball, play aggressive defense, hurt people and win football games. The fact that they're doing that, it's awesome."

On the defensive front, stopping Monty Tech in general, and the Quinn brothers in particular — quarterback Logan and fullback Ryan — played a huge role in the victory.

"They've scored 40 points in almost

every game they've played. They have really good players and the Quinn brothers are both unbelievable," said Giampa, and the Minutemen knew that first hand after defeating the Bulldogs back on Sept. 30 in a shootout, 43-36.

Bay Path jumped out to a 7-0 lead early when the defense forced a turnover on downs and the offense needed two plays to score. Following a 72-yard gain by Kaiden Brochu, Casey Gallagher punched the ball into the end zone from 2 yards out. Quarterback Anthony Catino, who doubles as the place kicker, added the extra point.

Another defensive stop turned in by the Minutemen led to a 14-0 lead midway through the second quarter. There, Gallagher added his second touchdown of the game, this one from 3 yards and Catino added another extra point.

Logan Quinn had a 4-yard rushing score next to trim Monty Tech's deficit down to 14-6. But, with the Bulldogs trying to tie the score later in the quarter, Jonathan Nussey picked Logan Quinn off for the lone turnover of the contest. That led to Bay Path points 22 seconds before halftime, with Catino executing a 2-yard QB keeper into the end zone. Gallagher added the two-point rush and the Minutemen led 22-6.

After a scoreless third quarter, Monty Tech pulled themselves to within 10 points, 22-12, when Ryan Quinn scored from a yard out with 5:43 remaining.

Once again, showing their toughness and desire to become champions, Bay Path needed less than a minute to put another touchdown on the board. Brochu took an end-around to the right and scampered 61 yards to pay dirt, extending the lead to 28-12.

The Bulldogs made things interest-



Bay Path players can't contain their excitement in the final seconds of the Minutemen's 28-20 win against Monty Tech in the State Vocational Large School Championship game.



Kaiden Brochu of Bay Path runs the ball through the would-be tackle of a Monty Tech defender.

Bay Path's Casey Gallagher turns the corner and runs the ball past Monty Tech's Logan Quinn.



ing when Logan Quinn scored on a 3-yard touchdown and Ryan Quinn tacked on the two-point rush with 2:32 remaining, but the Minutemen finished it off when Brochu ran for nine yards and a first down in the final minute, hurdling over a defender in the process. With Monty Tech (9-4) out of timeouts, the game was essentially over.

"My coaches said that all we needed was a first down to win and I was willing to put my body out there for my team because I love all these kids, they're like family to me," said Brochu.

Brochu (15 carries, 210 yards) and Gallagher (20 carries, 137 yards) were the workhorses that gained the yards, with linemen like center Georgios Pirperis providing the blocking.

"In the beginning of the season we were a little sloppy and every game we got better and better," said Pirperis. "Those kids were running. They hit the hole really hard."

Giampa was proud of the work both Brochu and Gallagher put in.

"Both of those kids have been animals for us all season," he said. "Brochu is one of the best players in the state. I would challenge anybody to find a better player than him. He just knows football, he's aggressive, he's physical and he's had close to 2,000 yards as a sophomore this year."

In regard to Gallagher, Giampa added,

"Gallagher is a Bay Path football player. He's tough, he's hard-working, he's a welder, so he welds all week and then he comes to practice. He's not looking to juke people out, he's looking to run through people."

Bay Path, which finished 8-5, has won the State Vocational Championship for the first time since 2008. They also captured the Central Mass. Division 6 Super Bowl in 2011.

"I'm happy that we're the people to break it. I'm super, super excited. Playing football in December, it's the best feeling," said Pirperis.

"It means everything to the program," added Brochu. "Hopefully we can continue it going on next year and even the years after," added Brochu.

"These kids are champions. For a long time, putting on a Bay Path uniform meant you were going to be a winner and a champion, and we kind of got off of that a little before I came here," Giampa, the third-year head coach, concluded.

Cornerstone Bank offers new home heating assistance loan program

WORCESTER — With temperatures dropping and home heating costs on the rise, Cornerstone Bank has committed \$100,000 in funding to a new home heating assistance loan program designed for households who have been hit the hardest due to rising inflation.

"Inflation and the rising costs of fuel are combining to make the coming winter season especially challenging for many households in our communi-

ty," said Cornerstone Bank CEO Todd Tallman. "We developed this special loan program to help ease the burden by allowing residents to spread out their fuel costs over a longer period instead of having to pay all at once."

The home heating assistance loan program is specifically for low- to moderate-income households. The loan amount is up to \$1,000, with terms up to 10 months at a fixed low interest rate of

3 percent. Applicants who don't qualify for the home heating assistance loan may be eligible for a standard unsecured consumer loan.

Local residents can apply for the home heating assistance loan through Feb. 28 at any of Cornerstone Bank's branches throughout Central Massachusetts or online at bit.ly/3GYTZQc.

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STUFF THE BUS
continued from page A1

toys for families as part of the Stuff the Bus campaign. This year's program took place on Nov. 26 in Spencer, Leicester, and North Brookfield.

"This year, we will have some very happy children. This community effort was very successful," said Melody Miller, a division manager for AA Transportation.

In Leicester, both the AA Transportation school bus and a Leicester Fire Rescue truck were filled with toys for local families. Santa even made a surprise visit to the toy drive in Leicester, appearing in the bucket of the ladder truck.

"The Leicester Police, Firefighters, and Teachers Association really pulled out all the stops this year. Three fire trucks, several firefighters, teachers, and our AA Transportation volunteers really did a great job," Miller added. "We collected toys and food for the Leicester Food Pantry. We want to thank Walmart for the use of their parking lot and their help with our toy drive."

In North Brookfield, the toy collection drive was assisted by members of the police department, AA Transportation volunteers, and generous donors from the community. Guests also brought snacks to volunteers as they collected toys outside the Hannaford store.

In Spencer, AA Transportation volunteers teamed up with the David Prouty High School band for a fun event outside the school. The band

performed several holiday tunes as donors stopped by with plenty of donations.

"I have been doing this since I started working for AA. It means a lot for us to be able to help out and give back to the community," said AA Transportation driver Leslie Burgos.

Added fellow driver Randi Larose, "I love collecting toys for the kids. A lot of parents aren't able to buy many gifts for their kids, and it's great for us to help where we can."

Community donations are always valued each year, but the financial burdens facing families make the 2022 giving season especially important. With several local parents struggling with high prices and employment challenges caused by the pandemic, community toy collections have taken on added significance.

"We want to thank everyone for their donations. All of us at AA Transportation want to wish everyone a happy holiday season," Miller added.

Residents, local businesses, and municipal departments are thanked for their strong support of the program each year. Thanks to the teamwork of everyone involved, local kids of all ages will wake up to special gifts on Christmas morning.

"Over the years, AA Transportation has been an outstanding community partner. In partnership with AA, Stuff the Bus is one of many events we are proud to be a part of," said Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District Superintendent Paul Haughey.

MURRAY
continued from page A1

nosed with a large brain tumor. He has spent the last year-plus battling cancer, first undergoing a procedure to remove the tumor before completing chemotherapy.

"He has persevered and overcome all obstacles and now has a clean bill of health," read a statement released by the fire department.

Town officials are thrilled to have Murray back on duty. After 474 days between shifts, Murray is once again helping to keep his community safe.

"I am very happy for him and his family that he is able to return. We have a great fire department, and our firefighters always amaze me with what they're able to do," said Selectman Ralph Hicks. "We are very lucky to have the men and women of the Spencer Fire Department."

Added Town Administrator Jeffrey Bridges, "We are all pleased and relieved

that Firefighter Murray can rejoin the department. He is an important member of the Spencer family, and we look forward to many more years of dedicated service."

Community support poured in for Murray over the past year. A Go Fund Me page was set up to assist Murray and his family, with nearly 75 percent of the \$50,000 fundraising goal reached within a few days of the page's creation.

In August 2021, Murray and his father were on a family trip in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, when he began to experience a severe headache. He was rushed by ambulance from his hotel to the hospital, where a CT scan determined that he had a fist-sized tumor pushing against his brain.

Doctors decided that Murray required emergency surgery to remove the tumor off his brain. Surgery took place at a hospital in York, Pennsylvania. Days later, he was transported to Dana-Farber Cancer

Center in Boston.

Murray is no stranger to battling adversity. Diagnosed with Ewing sarcoma at the age of 21, he previously received treatment and chemotherapy for about two years.

For the SFD family, it was moving to see such strong community support for one of their own. SFD firefighters also put together their own fundraisers for Murray, who has served the department for almost five years.

"He is one of those great all-around guys. He is such a nice person and works hard every day," said SFD Chief Robert Parsons in a previous interview.

Even though Parsons wasn't able to be there in person for Murray's first shift back, he maintained regular contact with Murray and his family while he was away. Along with the rest of the SFD team, Parsons is eager to get back to work with a beloved member of the department.



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CLOSING SOON



WEBSTER LAKE - PATTISON RD

LAND - Terrific opportunity 14,798 Sq. Ft. of LAND. CONSERVATION APPROVAL for proposed Building, MASS DEP# 313-1167. 248+/- Road Frontage, 279+/- Water Frontage. Town Water & Sewer accessible. **\$250,000.**



THOMPSON - 266 POMPEO ROAD

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DUDLEY - 18 WARSAW AVE



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3 bedroom ranch has gleaming hardwood floors, Corian countertops, 3 season porch. Many updates! New shingle roof, Buderus boiler, Roth Tank + New Hot Water Heater. Central Air! Heated lower level. **\$279,900.**

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ON DEPOSIT

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LAND: WEBSTER/OXFORD/PUTNAM

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OXFORD - LAND - General Business Zoned! Marijuana OVERLAY DISTRICT! LAND with 4,095 SF Metal Building! 124 SOUTHBRIDGE RD (RTE 20). Town Sewer Project Plans are Approved. 22,884 sq. ft. Level Lot. 140 ft. of road frontage. **EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES! \$795,000.**
OXFORD - LAND - RTE 20 General Business Zoned! Marijuana OVERLAY DISTRICT! Vacant LAND, Level & cleared. 39,549 SF **\$419,000.**
PUTNAM - LAND Zoned General Business .29 acre 103' frontage. Water, Sewer, & city gas available. 2 street entrances. **\$125,000**
OXFORD - 2 Merriam Rd 80+/- Wooded Acres in Oxford & Charlton **ON DEPOSIT \$329,000**

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Webster Lake 13 Loveland Rd

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Webster Lake - 27 South Point Road

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Webster Lake 13 Bates Point Road

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POLICE REPORTS

Spencer Police

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23
12:06-1:44 a.m.: parking violations/4 (Deer Run Road, Briarcliff Lane, Mechanic Street, Collier Circle), flyers issued; 12:38 a.m.: mv complaint (Meadow Road), investigated; 1:26-2:05 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 4:39 a.m.: accident (Clark Street), report taken; 7:35 a.m.: accident (West Main Street), report taken; 8:02 a.m.: juvenile matter (Main Street), wants charges filed; 8:03 a.m.: lost/found (West Main Street), diamond lost; 9:10 a.m.: mv lockout (Pleasant Street), assisted; 9:27-9:37 a.m.: parking violations/2 (Adams, Chestnut streets), tickets issued; 9:40 a.m.: 911 call (Chestnut Street), hang-up; 10:18 a.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 10:28 a.m.: fire/rescue (Church Street), stuck in elevator; 11:59 a.m.: 911 call (Lincoln Street), hand-up; 12:06 p.m.: mv complaint (West Main Street), speeding; 12:11 p.m.: officer wanted (McDonald Street), welfare check; 12:11 p.m.: parking violation (Main Street), ticket issued; 12:25 p.m.: juvenile matter (High Street), no parent home; 12:52 p.m.: DPW call (Old Farm Road), low-hanging wire; 4:12 p.m.: animal complaint (South Spencer Road), loose dog; 4:20 p.m.: fraud (Spring Street), re: scam; 5:18 p.m.: medical/general (Pearl Street); 5:34 p.m.: parking violation (West Main Street), ticket issued; 6:02 p.m.: odor of gas (Crestview Drive), referred; 7:10 p.m.: medical/general (North Spencer Road); 9:22 p.m.: abandoned 911 call (Mechanic Street), open line; 9:35 p.m.: building checked, secure; 10:38 p.m.: suspicious mv (West Main Street), investigated; 10:42 p.m.: 911 call (Chickering Road), child w/phone; 11:07 p.m.: medical/general (Lloyd Dyer Drive); (total daily mv stops – 2).

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24
12:25-12:34 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 12:44 a.m.: 911 call (Greenville Street), hang-up; 1:07-1:24 a.m.: parking violations/5 (Chestnut, Mechanic, Elm, Church, Cherry, streets), flyers issued; 1:21-1:24 a.m.: parking violations/2 (Cherry, Adams streets), tickets issued; 1:56 a.m.: medical/general (Howe Village), lift assist; 3:13 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), Jakob S. Bowse, 24, 90 Blackstone River Road, Worcester; OUI drugs, negligent operation, uninsured mv, number plate violation to conceal ID, marked lanes violation, speeding, arrest; 3:23 a.m.: medical/general (McDonald Street); 4:12 a.m.: officer wanted (Wall Street), son took mv; 6:27 a.m.: medical/general (Greenville Street); 7:06 a.m.: explosion (Cooney Road), loud noise/power outage; 7:27 a.m.: animal complaint (Woodside Road), re: animal acting strangely; 9:11 a.m.: fire alarm (Howe Village), referred; 10:56 a.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), req. escort/retrieve belongings; 10:58 a.m.: officer wanted (Vista Lane), re: restraining order; 12:42 p.m.: officer wanted (South Spencer Road), computer possibly hacked; 1:10 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Charlton PD bolo; 1:27 p.m.: 911 call (South Spencer Road), accidental; 1:33 p.m.: fire alarm (Main Street), referred; 1:37 p.m.: animal complaint (South Spencer Road), loose dog; 2:21 p.m.: officer wanted

(Mechanic Street), req. welfare check/son; 4:47 p.m.: building checked, secure; 6:16 p.m.: medical/general (North Brookfield Road), lift assist; 6:30 p.m.: officer wanted (Wall Street), someone rang doorbell; 6:31 p.m.: suspicious mv (North Spencer Road), investigated; 6:41 p.m.: disabled mv (North Spencer Road), resolved/AAA; 9:55-10:04 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; 10:41 p.m.: abandoned 911 call (Main Street), child w/phone; (total daily mv stops – 2).
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25
2:00 a.m.: medical/general (Pearl Street); 2:21-2:26 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 2:27 a.m.: suspicious mv (West Main Street), investigated; 9:00 a.m.: juvenile matter (Sullivan Street), female acting out; 9:10 a.m.: officer wanted (Maple Street), req. welfare check; 9:40 a.m.: juvenile matter (West Main Street), re: custody issue; 10:44 a.m.: DPW call (Old Farm Road), low-hanging wire; 10:45 a.m.: animal complaint (South Spencer Road), missing cat; 12:07 p.m.: fire (Wilson Avenue), referred; 2:44 p.m.: officer wanted (Ash Street), accidentally hit emergency button; 3:10 p.m.: medical/general (Condon Drive); 6:26 p.m.: building checked, secure; 6:36 p.m.: fraud (West Main Street), info taken; 6:39 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operator; 9:49 p.m.: parking complaint (Valley Street), mother blocking mv; (total daily mv stops – 0).
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26
12:01 a.m.: fire alarm (High Street), referred; 12:27-1:50 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 12:53 a.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Millbury PD bolo; 1:53 a.m.: suspicious persons (Main Street), unwanted party; 3:05 a.m.: disturbance (Bixby Road), rep. fight; 6:32 a.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), services rendered; 6:59 a.m.: officer wanted (Maple Street), info given; 8:30 a.m.: officer wanted (Mechanic Street), req. assistance/invol. commit; 8:51 a.m.: medical/general (Bixby Road); 10:11 a.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), cyclist stopped in traffic/yelling; 10:34 a.m.: mv lockout (Paxton Road), assisted; 10:38 a.m.: officer wanted (Adams Street), male missing/2 days; 11:06 a.m.: mv lockout (Howe Village), assisted; 11:16 a.m.: officer wanted (Wall Street), info taken; 3:41 p.m.: disabled mv (Meadow Road), assisted; 4:15 p.m.: disabled mv (West Main Street), resolved/AAA; 4:19 p.m.: medical/general (Paxton Road); 4:20 p.m.: medical/general (Valley Street); 4:20 p.m.: disturbance (Wall Street), disruptive female; 4:43 p.m.: mv complaint (Wire Village Road), cars doing burnouts; 4:54 p.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), req. file report; 7:02 p.m.: mv complaint (Bacon Hill Road), failure to stop for Enviro Police; 7:09 p.m.: officer wanted (Adams Street), req. welfare check; 7:38 p.m.: medical/general (Lincoln Street); 7:49 p.m.: 911 call (West Main Street), fem. screaming/hang-up; 8:12 p.m.: disturbance (Maple Street), noise complaint; 10:59 p.m.: medical/general (Chestnut Street); (total daily mv stops – 2).
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27
12:33 a.m.: officer wanted (Smithville Road), boyfriend took mv; 12:56 a.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Charlton PD bolo; 2:49-2:58 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 3:18 a.m.: parking complaint (Main Street), re: long-term pkg;

4:05 a.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), services rendered; 4:46 a.m.: 911 c all (West Main Street), no contact; 5:01 a.m.: medical/general (Charlton Road); 8:05 a.m.: fire alarm (Wall Street), referred; 11:49 a.m.: officer wanted (East Charlton Road), spoken to; 12:05 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), re: item found in storage unit; 1:38 p.m.: medical/general (Prospect Street); 2:53 p.m.: disturbance (Charlton Road), re: contractual issue; 6:04 p.m.: 911 call (Crestview Drive), accidental; 7:37 p.m.: suspicious persons (Main Street), investigated; 7:58-9:27 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; 9:13 p.m.: medical/general (Pleasant Street); 9:29 p.m.: 911 call (Pleasant Street), no contact; 11:04 p.m.: fire (Main Street), stuck in elevator; 11:58 p.m.: medical/overdose (Chestnut Street); (total daily mv stops – 2).
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28
12:16 a.m.: arrest warrant service (Chestnut Street), Kenneth MacCartney, Junior; 38, 8 Chestnut Street, Spencer; warrant, possession Class E drug/2 counts, possession burglar tools, entering dwelling at night, larceny of drugs/2 counts, threatening to commit a crime, att. to influence or intimidate witness/juror/police/court officer; arrest; 6:46 a.m.: animal complaint (Route 49), owl hit by car; 8:53 a.m.: medical/general (Clark Road); 9:29 a.m.: mv complaint (Northwest Road), trailer doors open; 9:42 a.m.: entire incident redacted from police log; 9:44 a.m.: officer wanted (Cherry Street), req. welfare check/children; 10:15 a.m.: animal complaint (Paxton Road), raccoon in dumpster; 10:58 a.m.: 911 call (G.H. Wilson Road), accidental; 11:18 a.m.: officer wanted (Prospect Street), req. escort/retrieve belonging; 11:44 a.m.: medical/general (Pleasant Street); 11:58 a.m.: officer wanted (Paxton Road), issues w/sister; 12:20 p.m.: disturbance (Wall Street), argumentative female; 12:32 p.m.: weapons/illegal (Hastings Road), heard gunshots behind house last night; 1:15 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), mv riding brakes; 1:48 p.m.: animal complaint (McDonald Street), loose dogs; 2:39 p.m.: medical/overdose (Howe Village); 2:41 p.m.: medical/general (Wire Village Road); 3:05 p.m.: accident (West Main Street), report taken; 3:09 p.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), not letting son in; 4:34 p.m.: fraud (Cherry Street), re: online scam; 4:41 p.m.: lost/found (Chestnut Street), wallet lost; 4:42 p.m.: restraining order service (West Main Street); 5:04 p.m.: larceny (Pleasant Street), theft of electric bike; 5:33 p.m.: accident (West Main Street), report taken; 6:12 p.m.: medical/general (R. Jones Road); 9:02 p.m.: animal complaint (North Brookfield Road), lg. moose in area; 9:40 p.m.: medical/general (Lincoln Street); 10:48 p.m.: animal complaint (Brown Street), dog left in mv; (total daily mv stops – 0).
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29
1:03-1:55 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:08 a.m.: medical/general (Church Street); 6:35 a.m.: accident (West Main Street), report taken; 7:13 a.m.: odor of gas (Brown Street), referred; 7:14 a.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 7:44 a.m.: hit/run accident (Mechanic Street), report taken; 7:58 a.m.: commercial alarm (West Main Street), services rendered; 8:31

a.m.: animal complaint (Wall Street), skunk in yard; 11:16 a.m.: medical/general (Meadow Road); 12:01 p.m.: weapons/illegal (Wire Village Road), hunters shooting too close to barn/horses; 12:23 p.m.: animal complaint (Highland Street), re: stray cat; 12:38 p.m.: officer wanted (Church Street), re: issue w/ex; 1:24 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), harassment/cyberbullying; 2:12 p.m.: juvenile matter (Adams Street), youth kicked door; 2:16 p.m.: accident (Briarcliff Lane), report taken; 3:32 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 3:40 p.m.: accident (North Spencer Road), report taken; 4:23 p.m.: animal complaint (West Main Street), dogs missing; 4:24 p.m.: medical/general (Thompson Pond Road), lift assist; 4:27 p.m.: medical/general (West Main Street); 5:09 p.m.: suspicious persons (West Main Street), req. welfare check; 5:10 p.m.: fire alarm (Howe Village), referred; 6:00 p.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 6:57 p.m.: disabled mv (East Charlton Road), services rendered; 6:59 p.m.: medical/general (Pearl Street); 7:40 p.m.: medical/general (Buteau Road); 7:59 p.m.: accident (Maple Street), report taken; 8:14 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Barre PD bolo; (total daily mv stops – 0).

Leicester Police

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23
3:19 a.m.: assist other agency (Stafford Street), unable to locate; 9:11 a.m.: debris in road (Henshaw Street), referred; 9:54 a.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 10:23 a.m.: ambulance (Winslow Avenue), transported; 10:31 a.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 11:10 a.m.: parking complaint (Folsom Street), services rendered; 12:04 p.m.: ambulance (South Main Street), transported; 1:22 p.m.: debris in road (Mannville Street), referred; 2:08 p.m.: summons service (Mulberry Street), served; 2:58 p.m.: ambulance (Sterling Street), transported; 3:15 p.m.: debris in road (Main Street), referred; 7:40 p.m.: welfare check (West Street), unfounded.
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24
1:28 a.m.: suspicious mv (Paxton Street), resolved; 11:04 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 1:54 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 4:35 p.m.: assist citizen (Deer Pond Road), report taken; 6:20 p.m.: parking complaint (Westminster Street), peace restored; 9:13 p.m.: family problem (Marshall Street), spoken to; 9:17 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 9:27 p.m.: disturbance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), spoken to; 10:53 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported.
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25
11:17 a.m.: harassment (King Street Extension), resolved; 1:24 p.m.: ambulance (Park Lane), transported; 3:29 p.m.: disabled mv (Main Street), assisted; 7:32 p.m.: ambulance (Winslow Avenue), transported; 10:30 p.m.: erratic operator (South Main Street), resolved.
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26

Turn To **POLICE** page **A18**

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CONTEST

continued from page A1

Facebook page, as well as an online voting form.

Voting is set to take place on the weekend of Dec. 17-18.

One grand prize winner will receive a \$200 gift card. Additionally, first-place and second-place winners will be announced in three different categories: Traditional Elegance, Creative Inflatables, and the Clark W. Griswold Award. These winners will receive gift cards as well.

All gift cards are to local businesses, and residents are encouraged to support area shops and restaurants this holiday season.

Meanwhile, looking back on a year

of celebration that was postponed since 2020 due to pandemic restrictions, officials and residents have plenty of unforgettable memories.

“The two major events—a 1920s themed dance at the Spencer Country Inn and a huge parade followed by family-friendly events and an old-time baseball game—were extremely well-attended and received rave reviews,” said East Brookfield 100th Anniversary Committee member Heather Gablaski.

The State Police Mounted Unit also participated in the Sept. 17 Family Fun Day event, along with antique fire trucks and tractors. More than 30 community groups and local businesses were

involved as well.

Additionally, several historical talks were held over the course of the year. Guests also enjoyed a narrated bus tour through town, with stops at Evergreen Cemetery, Camp Frank A. Day, and Podunk Chapel. Later, guests attended a dinner catered by EB Flatts.

Other historical presentations focused on ice harvesting, the American Revolution, the settlement of the area, and a history of the town itself. The goal for organizers was to offer fun, educational events throughout the year to celebrate the town’s rich history.

Organizers thank everyone who came together to make the festivities happen

this year, as well as the residents who patiently waited for the celebration through the pandemic. Even though the yearlong program ended up being a 102-year celebration instead of a centennial, it was that much more meaningful with the extra years of history, officials said.

For more information about the holiday light contest and other news, check out the East Brookfield 100th Anniversary Celebration’s Facebook page. The site also features several pictures of local holiday lights for visitors to check out.



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POLICE

continued from page A1

12:03 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 1:54 a.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 1:57 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), name and address redacted from police log, op w/suspended license, no inspection sticker; citation issued; 2:40 a.m.: mv stop (McNeil Highway), spoken to; 4:45 a.m.: ambulance (Virginia Drive), transported; 6:48 a.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), services rendered; 8:27 a.m.: debris in road (Siani Road), referred; 8:35 a.m.: abandoned 911 call (Chapel Street), services rendered; 9:20 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), written warning;

11:26 a.m.: animal complaint (Pleasant Street), referred to ACO; 1:07 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 4:28 p.m.: ambulance (Valley Street, Spencer), transported; 5:38 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 6:12 p.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), citation issued; 6:42 p.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), verbal warning; 7:50 p.m.: suspicious person (Forest Street), investigated; 8:02 p.m.: assist other PD (Birchwood Drive), services rendered; 8:12 p.m.: mv stop (King Street), verbal warning; 11:29 p.m.: disturbance (Crestwood Road), resolved; 11:49 p.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), spoken to.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27

12:16 a.m.: suspicious mv (Stafford Street), spoken to; 2:47 a.m.: disturbance (Main Street), resolved; 9:38 a.m.: restraining order service (Paxton Street), served; 9:49 a.m.: summons service (Boyd Street), served; 9:55 a.m.: summons service (Main Street), unable to serve; 9:58 a.m.: summons service (Stafford Street), served; 10:37 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), resolved; 12:00 p.m.: investigation (Marshall Street), report taken; 12:52 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), resolved; 1:08 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 5:20 p.m.: arrest warrant service (Town Beach Road), unable to serve.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28

12:54 a.m.: suspicious mv (Mannville Street), resolved; 1:53 a.m.: suspicious mv (Main Street), resolved; 7:09 a.m.: accident (Main Street), name and address redacted from police log, op w/suspended license, marked lanes violation, criminal application issued; 7:58 a.m.: assist citizen (Marshall Street), assisted; 8:05 a.m.: ambulance (Grand Street, Worcester), transported; 8:31 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 10:44 a.m.: larceny (Main Street), services rendered; 11:35 a.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 11:56 a.m.: welfare check (Auburn Street), spoken to; 1:02 a.m.: assist other agency (Auburn Street), spoken to; 1:32 p.m.: ambulance (Paxton Street), transported; 2:06 p.m.: debris in road (Rawson Street), services rendered; 2:30 p.m.: accident (Stafford Street), report taken; 2:44 p.m.: ambulance (Wire Village Road, Spencer), transported; 3:15 p.m.: lar-

ceny (Main Street), report taken; 4:30 p.m.: harassment (McCarthy Avenue), spoken to; 4:57 p.m.: investigation (Main Street), report taken; 5:06 p.m.: disturbance (Pleasant Street), transported to hospital; 7:37 p.m.: investigation (Main Street), unfounded; 9:03 p.m.: family problem (Main Street), spoken to; 10:13 p.m.: family problem (Main Street), spoken to; 11:20 p.m.: mutual aid (Mayside Lane, Worcester), transported to hospital.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29

12:50 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), spoken to; 8:02 a.m.: mv stop (Burncoat Street), verbal warning; 8:43 p.m.: disabled mv (Breezy Green Road), spoken to; 8:45 p.m.: investigation (Main Street), report taken; 11:17 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), name and address redacted from police log, op w/suspended license, uninsured mv, op w/suspended registration, criminal application issued; 12:07 p.m.: ambulance (Walnut Street, Worcester), transported; 12:37 p.m.: welfare check (South Street), services rendered; 1:06 p.m.: ambulance (Paxton Street), transported; 3:09 p.m.: accident (South Main Street), report taken; 3:43 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 6:47 p.m.: investigation (Peter Salem Road), report taken; 11:06 p.m.: assist other PD (Salminen Drive), services rendered.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30

1:17 a.m.: ambulance (Rawson Street), transported; 7:34 a.m.: ambulance (Scott Lane), transported; 8:14 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), citation issued; 8:26 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), spoken to; 8:34 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), spoken to; 8:41 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), citation issued; 8:53 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), citation issued; 9:34 a.m.: summons service (Main Street), served; 9:57 a.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), no action required; 11:19 a.m.: welfare check (Deer Pond Road), services rendered; 3:03 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 3:30 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 11:35 p.m.: ambulance (Pleasant Street), transported.

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