

SPENCER NEW LEADER

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Friday, December 29, 2023

LHS student selected for district band



Courtesy

Leicester High School junior musician Ryan Delage was selected to participate in a distinguished regional band.

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

LEICESTER — The school community congratulates LHS junior musician Ryan Delage for being selected to represent his school at Senior Central Districts.

Delage specializes in mallet percussion, which consists of the xylophone, bells, and marimba, among other instruments. Having spent three years as a member of the Junior Central Districts Band, this year's selection

marked his debut in the decorated Senior Central Districts Band.

"Being selected to Central Districts is an honor to me because music is important to me and is a big part of my life," Delage told the New Leader. "I am proud to be the only representative of the Leicester Music Department to have made the Central District Band. I worked very hard each year, and I am happy that my hard work paid off."

The audition process for the band is always a

major challenge for students, as only the most accomplished performers from throughout the region are chosen.

"I stayed after school every day for two weeks with my amazing band teacher, Ms. Phillips, to practice my music on the marimba and to practice the auxiliary percussion (triangle, tambourine, crash cymbals, suspended cymbal, bass drum)," Delage added. "I also got a lot of help from my music lessons instructor, Samantha Raillo."

Even though Delage wasn't able to warm up in advance of his audition, he quickly gained momentum through the performance.

"I thought I started off terrible with my scale, but after that I felt really

confident with my other scales, my solo, and the auxiliary percussion parts," Delage said. "I felt relieved to learn that I was selected to be in the Central Districts Band."

In preparation for the upcoming Senior Central Districts performance, Delage will attend two practice rehearsals next month, followed by a dress rehearsal on Jan. 13 prior to the concert that day at Mechanics Hall.

"I am going to prepare for the rehearsals and concert by practicing all of the instruments I am going to play. This includes the glockenspiel, claves, cowbell, triangle, and crotales," Delage said. "I will practice and make sure I am prepared to play my parts perfectly at the rehearsals. I plan to work hard and prove that selecting me to be a part of the Central Districts Band was an excellent choice."

School officials are thrilled to see Delage continue to excel and represent LHS at major functions. In recent years, the school's Music Department has seen several young musicians progress through its programs and perform alongside the best talents the region has to offer.

"Ryan put in so much work to prepare for his audition. We spent countless hours reading through the music, changing tempos, and staring at the music until it made sense," said LHS music teacher Alexis Phillips. "Ryan is one of the most hard-working students at LHS. Between AP classes, soccer, track, and homework, he finds time to practice something that truly means so much to him. I am so proud of all the work Ryan puts into our music program."

Investigation continues into bomb threat at LHS

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

LEICESTER — Police continue to investigate the bomb threat that caused Leicester High School to be evacuated earlier this month.

On Dec. 14 at approximately 10:10 a.m., a written bomb threat was reported to the high school administration. Posted to a web chat, the threat indicated that a bomb would go off in the men's bathroom within 30 minutes, school officials said.

All high school students were evacuated from the LHS campus to the Winslow Ave School. Local first responders worked quickly to sweep the campus.

"The Leicester Police and Fire Departments were immediately notified," read a statement released by Leicester Public Schools Superintendent Brett Kustigian. "The Leicester Police Department conducted a primary and secondary sweep of all bathrooms. Nothing was found and the building was cleared for occupancy."

Troopers from the Massachusetts State Police were also called to provide canine assistance.

By the middle of the day, LHS students were able to resume their normal schedules. The Leicester Police Department remained on site to assist students and staff members.

"The administration will continue to investigate all possible leads, and we encourage any students who have information to talk to a staff member or trusted adult," Kustigian's statement read. "The safety of our students and staff is our number one priority, and we will do everything possible to provide a safe learning environment. Thank you to the Leicester Police and Fire Departments for their continued partnership."

The Dec. 14 bomb threat occurred just over two months after a bomb threat was emailed to LHS on Oct. 2. That message contained a threat to the high school cafeteria, which caused students to be evacuated from the Fuller Academic Building.

After investigators were unable to immediately determine the source of the Oct. 2 threat, LHS saw an increased police presence over the next few days.

Following a full investigation, charges were filed in connection with the Oct. 2 incident, police said. As of press time, information on the suspect(s) had not been released.

Leicester Police Chief Ken Antanavica told the New Leader investigators do not believe the two bomb threats are related. A preliminary review of the Dec. 14 threat indicated a likely swatting incident, but the investigation is ongoing, police said.

"Detectives are following up on every lead," Antanavica said.

The Leicester Police Department, Massachusetts State Police, and the FBI are all involved in the investigation. If you have information on the incident, please contact the LPD.

New Principal settles in at Knox Trail

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

SPENCER — Following last month's resignation of the Knox Trail Middle School principal, SEBRSD leaders didn't need to look very far to find an accomplished successor. In fact, they didn't even need to look beyond the district.

In his first few weeks since assuming the role of KTMS Principal while retaining his existing position at the helm of East Brookfield Elementary School, Ron Tomlin has enjoyed a seamless transition.

Just before Thanksgiving, EBES educator Christine Lavin was promoted to "Lead Teacher" to help lighten the load on Tomlin as he manages dual administrative positions.

"When he steps away from EBES, Mrs. Lavin as Lead Teacher will look after any operational needs and reach out should Mr. Tomlin or I be needed," said Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District Superintendent Paul Haughey.

For Tomlin, the most exciting part of assuming the KTMS position is seeing plenty of familiar young faces from last year at EBES. Now seventh graders at KTMS, the students were thrilled to see their former principal join them at the middle school level.

"It's been really cool to see them in a different school. They are excited that I'm over here now," Tomlin told the New Leader.

It's no easy task to handle any two positions concurrently, especially those involving the demands of educational leadership. Tomlin has benefited from strong staffs at both schools that have helped reduce the workload.

Looking ahead, Tomlin is eager to continue meeting new KTMS family members while working with the staff to ensure continuity. On Nov. 3, former KTMS principal Gina Fasoli resigned her position, leaving a void that required an experienced successor to fill.

"It's a great staff, and the kids are here to learn every day," Tomlin said.

SEBRSD officials thank all staff members at both schools who have stepped up to make the best of a

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EBES students present winter concert



Courtesy

East Brookfield Elementary School students recently performed a winter concert.

EAST BROOKFIELD — Students at East Brookfield Elementary School celebrated the holiday season with a special event this month.

Ahead of the holiday break, EBES parents and families packed the gym to watch a winter concert performed by students on Dec. 14. Several favorite holiday and winter-themed songs were performed.

"We had a packed house, filling the gymnasium with families and

friends to enjoy the fantastic show put on by our students," said EBES Lead Teacher Christine Lavin.

The concert was led by EBES music teacher Stacy Simonson and accompanist Amy Story.

The event began with selections performed by the school band, which features students in grades 4-6. Pre-K and kindergarten students then performed for guests, followed by students representing each level from grades 1-6.

Chorus students in grades 4-6 offered three songs, and the event concluded with an all-school song: "Have a Holly, Jolly Christmas."

"The winter concert at East Brookfield Elementary was a spectacular event," Simonson said. "The students worked very hard for this event, and I am extremely proud of all of them. They shined like bright stars and lit the room up. What a special night." EBES families are

thanked for their support of the event, which never would have been possible without the hard work of students and staff members.

"Many thanks to [Principal] Mr. Tomlin, the staff, custodians, and teachers at EBES for all their support in making this concert possible. Special thanks to Ms. Ouellette for the wonderful artwork created by the students," read a statement released by event organizers.

Grandparents raising grandchildren find support in one another

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Several children crowd around Santa (Dan Chauvin).



Susan Neslusan hugs her grandson Adrian.



Santa (Dan Chauvin) and GRG organizer Kim Rockwood are in the center of a crowd of grandparents.

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BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

OXFORD — Six years ago, Susan Neslusan's life took a turn back to something she knew quite well, but didn't really intend to revisit.

Her son's opioid crisis gave her custody of her grandchildren, and she's been raising them ever since.

"You have to make a choice to save your child or your grandchild," she said. "If they won't get help, you do what you have to do."

She spoke while cradling six-year-old Adrian at last week's Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) holiday party in Oxford. Neslusan said she wouldn't identify her other grandson, now 15, because of friction with his mother.

did. The biggest ones come from technology, she said.

"The cell phone is the worst thing that ever happened to them. They're overloaded with information that's not age-appropriate, grow up too fast and don't go outside and play like we did," she added.

Former School Committee member September Forbes knows what that's like. She raised her granddaughter for 13 years until the girl went back to her parents last year. To her, the biggest challenge is "finding the support they need" when pensions often exceed aid programs' income eligibility but aren't enough to actually raise a kid. Beyond that, she noted, mental health services for youth have "long, long waitlists that are getting longer."

That's where Kim Rockwood came in. Because she was "raising three grandchildren and had no help" back in 2018, she started trying to find resources for older people in the same situation. The quest led her to found a local branch of GRG in Oxford with members from several area towns. She's now working with the Webster schools to establish a group there.

"I don't mind yelling loud to get people's attention," she said. "That's what these people need, and ultimately, it's the grandchildren who benefit."

Webster Superintendent Monique Pierangeli agreed, noting her schools have "so many families where parents have struggled," and some are grandparent-led. She's hoping to start GRG meetings there in January, and has so far been sending such grandparents to Oxford's group.

"We'll do anything we can do to support our community," she said. "It's definitely a different world for grandparents, very different from raising children 10 or 20 years ago."

According to the AARP Web site, "U.S. census data shows that 7.1 million American grandparents are living with their grandchildren under 18. Some 2.3 million of those grandparents are responsible for their grandchildren. About a third of grandchildren living with grandparents who are responsible for them are younger than six."

This kind of parenting goes by at least two names – "kinship care" and "grandfamilies." The site notes there are many causes, and it tends to rise during periods of crisis, but two big ones stand out in recent years: covid, which left at least 140,000 children without parents, and opioid addiction.

In a sense, it's a variant of something that's been known for millennia – extended families. But through most of human history, the grandparents in the picture were providing assistance to functional parents, usually with a whole community or clan around them. Today, they have the role of being the parents in a culture that lauds nuclear family "independence," which can be isolating.

"It's so late in life to be all of a sudden faced with youngsters again," said Dan Chauvin, who was playing Santa that day. "It's a challenge when you're young, but how can you not say yes? My hat's off to these grandparents. They're really special people."

Chauvin said he hasn't had to raise his grandchildren, so he saw the event as a chance to "watch kids be kids. There's nothing better, especially in this world where there's so much negativity."

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

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Cornerstone Bank recognizes 21 employees for dedicated service

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank, a community bank with 10 locations throughout Central Massachusetts, recently honored 21 employees who hit a landmark in their tenure in 2023. The Years of Service Awards were presented on December 6 in Sturbridge. Cornerstone employees are honored for every five years of service.

“The dedication of these 21 employees is inspiring,” said CEO of Cornerstone Bank Todd Tallman. “We work to foster a culture of growth and development within our institution, and it is a true testament when we see the longevity of some of our team members. I congratulate them for their years—and some for their decades—of loyalty and commitment to our customers.”

The following 21 employees were recognized at the event:

- 25 Years
 - Heather Goguen
 - Kyle Hill
 - James Sandagato
 - Todd Tallman
- 20 Years



Michael Sullivan
15 Years
Jessica Johnson
10 Years
Scott Auen
Daniel D'Amico
Valerie Korzec
Thomas Langmeyer
Kerri Lee

Maria Martinez
Meredith Nordstrom
Stacie Partlow
5 Years
Alexandria Dickson
Andrea Fournier
Brian Grady
Tracey Jeffries
Maria Salvatore

Lisa Stone
Julia Westwell
Cornerstone has branches in Charlton, Holden, Leicester, Rutland, Southbridge, Spencer, Sturbridge, Webster and Worcester.

About Cornerstone Bank
Cornerstone Bank was formed in 2017, born of a long history of supporting the community, and providing a strong foundation to help people and businesses

thrive. Serving Worcester County, Massachusetts, Cornerstone Bank's local presence and community-based banking model enables a unique ability to deliver outstanding service, with a personal touch. Cornerstone provides the highest level of service and expertise for individuals, businesses, and community organizations with branch locations throughout Central Massachusetts. Cornerstone works to connect customers with opportunities, through a broad range of deposit and loan products, and services. Built on Trust is not just a tag line, but also one of our guiding corporate values. Whether a business or personal partnership, Cornerstone stands on the foundation that relationships are built on trust. To learn about Cornerstone Bank's personal and business banking offerings, please visit cornerstone-bank.com or call 800-939-9103.

QCC's Adult Community Learning Center receives increased funding

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College's Adult Community Learning Center (ACLC) has received more than \$1.8 million per year for five years in its latest funding from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, up from their 2022 funding which was approximately \$1.2 million. The increase has enabled the hiring of more instructors and support staff to accommodate ACLC's high-demand programs. This increase in funding has led to approximately 140 additional students being able to enroll in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program in fall 2023.

The ACLC also runs a GED/HiSET program for adult learners and between the two programs, the ACLC has approximately 500 students enrolled monthly. According to Director of

the Adult Community Learning Center Kim White, the need for adult education programs, especially ESOL, has been high, with more than 400 people currently on the waitlist.

“One of our major attributes is that we provide classes during the day and night as well as in person, remote and hybrid,” said White. “We provide these different time options and multiple modalities for the student that's working several jobs and taking care of a family. Our program reflects our community and the community's need.”

White also noted that ACLC students have access to the same QCC supports as students in credit programs, such as the Homeplate Food Pantry and Resource Center and accessibility services.

Joselyn Suero, a Worcester resident who is originally from the Dominican Republic, has

been in the United States for over a decade. Due to an unexpected illness, Suero found herself in the doctor's office frequently and grew frustrated from her inability to fully communicate with the medical staff. This was the impetus she needed and in 2020, she enrolled in QCC's ACLC to work on her English skills. After several years in the program, Suero said she no longer needed an interpreter for her medical appointments.

“This is the best program in the world. I am so grateful,” Suero added.

ESOL Instructor Jay Villagómez is in his second year of teaching at the ACLC and has experienced what it is like to learn English firsthand. Villagómez was born in the Philippines and grew up in Saipan, where he began studying English at the age of 14 with the goal of attending an American university.

“It's not just learning

the language but learning to live in a new country and a new culture. The privilege of being a teacher is seeing my students realize they can empower themselves. It's really fun to teach adult students and it's a way of paying it forward, the way people helped me learn English,” Villagómez said.

According to Villagómez, another important feature of the ACLC's adult education program is the case managers, who connect students with support for both academic and personal needs.

“The case managers help bridge the needs of English learners. When a student is absent, they reach out to see how they can help,” Villagómez continued. “It makes a world of difference, especially for students who are separated from their home cultures and could be floundering during their initial years in the country.”

White noted that the

ACLC program strives to empower students to gain employment with self-sustaining wages or progress to better paying positions through English proficiency in speaking, reading, writing and civics. Additionally, many students continue on to higher levels of training and higher education.

“I have a bachelor's degree from the Dominican Republic, but I want to keep studying in college. I discovered I love to do community service,” said Suero, who owns a barber-shop in Worcester with her husband.

Suero also runs a group for

mothers studying English. “I say to the other moms, ‘Don't give up. Here in the United States, you have so many opportunities. You're going to get there if you keep going.’”

To learn more, visit www.QCC.edu/ACLC.

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EAST BROOKFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HONOR ROLL

EAST BROOKFIELD — The Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District is a community committed to teaching and learning with purpose. To these ends, we wanted to celebrate our East Brookfield Elementary School scholars who earned honor roll for the first trimester of the 2023-2024 academic year.

The honor roll for East Brookfield Elementary School will be calculated at the conclusion of each marking period for Grades 5 - 6. All courses in which students earn credit and receive a numerical grade will be used in determining honor roll. The honor roll is based on the average a student achieves each marking period. The following averages will be used to calculate honor roll:

High Honors - an average of 90 percent or greater

Honors - an average of 85 percent or greater

First trimester Honor Roll- 5th grade- Mrs. St. George

M c K e n z i e

Estabrook

Jackson Green-Cayer

Elise Jenkinson

Grace Pattee

First Trimester

Honor Roll 6th Grade - Mrs. Lavin

Ryder Bayer

Kenzie Berard

Addison Bibinski

Victoria Mulrain

Shelby Parsons

Aleena Patchen

Brayden Roldan

Zachary Rossi

East Brookfield Elementary School utilizes an unweighted average, which is the exact numerical average a student receives for each class in a marking period will be used to determine honor roll.

Please join us in extending heartfelt congratulations to all of our Knox Trail Middle School scholars who made the 2023-2024 Q1 High Honors and Honor Roll!



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openskycs.org/stonebridge-spencer



Assessor Clerk-Full Time Town of Dudley

The Town of Dudley seeks qualified applicants for the position of Assessor's Clerk. The position is a 39 hour per week position. A minimum of a high school degree or an equivalent apprentice level of knowledge with an Associate's degree preferred. One to three years related experience in an office environment with skills and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job. Basic knowledge of common policies and state laws/regulations pertaining to property assessment and valuation techniques and practices, working knowledge of office procedures. Knowledge of assessing software (Vision Government Solutions) pertaining to property valuations and office software (Word and Excel) as well as social media and internet support of department operations. Knowledge of the provisions of the State Open Meeting Law. Ability to follow and understand oral and written instructions. To develop and maintain public confidence and respect, work independently and to interact effectively with disgruntled members of the public and other department personnel. This is a grade 2 position with a starting range of \$39,555.59 to \$41,632 with a 90-day review for increase. A copy of the job description is available on the town's website. Resumes accepted until the position is filled. The Town of Dudley is an AA/EEO employer.

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First responders honored for reuniting missing boy with family



Courtesy

First responders from several local departments were recently honored for finding a missing Oakham boy in February.

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

their efforts in reuniting a missing Oakham boy with his family earlier this year.

led to the location of missing five-year-old Owen Goderre and his dog.

Massachusetts State Police. "I commend all the rescuers honored today for responding to Owen's day of need, including the 28 members of the MSP from various units."

REGION — Worcester County District Attorney Joseph Early, Jr., recently recognized several first responders and civilian search team members for

More than 60 first responders and civilian search team members were honored on Dec. 5 for their rapid response in February, which

Honorees include members of the North Brookfield Police Department, Massachusetts State Police, Oakham Police Department, Oakham Fire Department, Massachusetts Environmental Police, Rutland Fire Department, Rutland Police Department, Fitchburg Police Department, Rutland Regional Emergency Communications Center, Barre Police Department, Central Massachusetts Search and Rescue Team, and the Hampden County Sheriff's Department.

Honorees included the State Police Special Emergency Response Team, who specialize in search and rescue operations in challenging environments.

Owen, who has autism and is non-verbal, left his Edson Road home with the family dog, Tika, during the morning hours of Feb. 20. He was able to wander off just before the home's alarm was set, officials said.

The home is surrounded by thick woodlands and the Ware River watershed. After failing to find Owen during an initial search, family members called 911 and received instructions from the Rutland Regional Emergency Communications Center while police responded.

"It was incredible how fast they responded. Within a half hour, there were drones; and within an hour, police lined the roads. They were amazing," Owen's mother, Samantha Kendall, said.

As the urgent search continued, additional law enforcement officials and civilian search team members flooded the area. Less than three hours after Owen was reported missing, officers informed the family that the boy and Tika had both been found safe.

"A sense of peace came over me. The relief was 1,000 pounds coming off my shoulders," Kendall said.

The Team Excellence and Merit Award was created by Early in 2019 to recognize public safety officials who go above and beyond the call of duty to assist those in need.

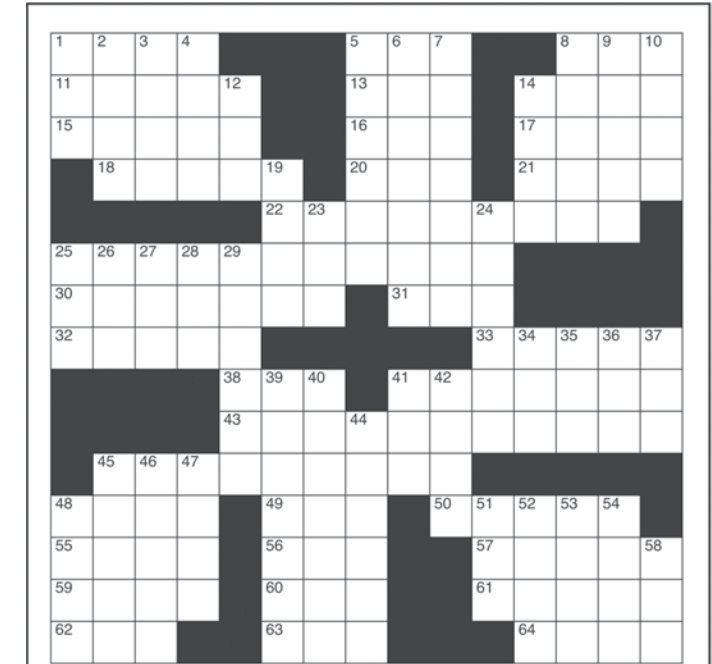
If you would like to nominate an individual for the award, contact the Worcester County District Attorney's Office at 508-755-8601.

Honorees were each presented with the District Attorney's Team Excellence and Merit Award for their efforts during the Feb. 20 search and rescue mission.

"On that February day, Owen's family was filled with dread and fear when they realized he'd walked out the door. It is every parent's nightmare," Early said. "The law enforcement officers, firefighters, first responders, and civilian search team members who responded quickly to find Owen have families, too. That day, they treated Owen like he was part of their family and they brought him home safe."

State Police leaders were thrilled to play a role in the successful outcome. Recognizing the hazardous conditions of a February rescue mission in the woods, officials knew they had to work quickly.

"There is, perhaps, no type of call to which a police officer, firefighter, or search volunteer responds that carries a greater urgency than a child lost in a dangerous place. With a young life possibly in the balance, the dozens of first responders and civilian searchers who raced to find Owen and his dog that February day truly epitomized the core purpose of these callings—to help the vulnerable," said Colonel John Mawn, Jr., Superintendent of the



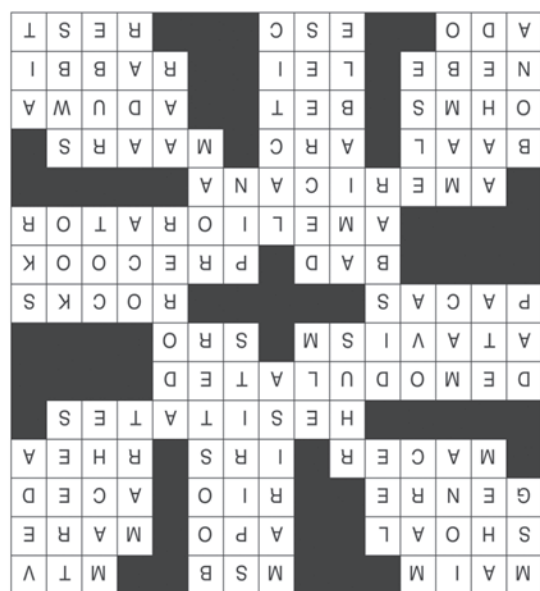
CLUES ACROSS

- 1. A way to injure
- 5. Mutual savings bank
- 8. Rock TV channel
- 11. Large number of fish swimming together
- 13. Military mailbox
- 14. Female of a horse
- 15. Category
- 16. City
- 17. Breezed through
- 18. Officer who bears a mace
- 20. Tax collector
- 21. "Cheers" actress Perlman
- 22. Pauses before acting
- 25. Extracted information from a wave
- 30. Tendency to revert to something ancestral
- 31. No seats available
- 32. Nocturnal rodents
- 33. Moves gently to and fro
- 38. Not good
- 41. A way to ready
- 43. One who makes something better
- 45. Things associated with American history
- 48. Ancient Phoenician fertility god
- 49. A continuous portion of a circle
- 50. Volcanic craters
- 55. Units of electrical resistance
- 56. Gamble on
- 57. Ethiopian town
- 59. One point east of northeast
- 60. Polynesian garland of flowers
- 61. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
- 62. State of fuss
- 63. Keyboard key
- 64. Partner to relaxation

CLUES DOWN

- 1. "The world's most famous arena"
- 2. Polite interruption sound
- 3. Private school in New York
- 4. Refuse of grapes
- 5. Tomei, actress
- 6. Adult beverages
- 7. Supporter
- 8. Papier-__, art material
- 9. Forests have them
- 10. Most ancient Hindu scriptures
- 12. Downwind
- 14. Marketplace
- 19. Flowering plant genus
- 23. Street where nightmares happen
- 24. Admirer
- 25. Dip lightly into water
- 26. When you hope to get there
- 27. Partner to cheese
- 28. Eggs
- 29. A way to disqualify
- 34. South American plant
- 35. Fold-away bed
- 36. Debbie Harry album "___ Koo"
- 37. Swedish krona
- 39. Displaying warmth and friendliness
- 40. Official orders
- 41. Bowling alley necessity
- 42. Stray
- 44. About milk
- 45. Expressed pleasure
- 46. Caribbean dance
- 47. If not
- 48. ___ fide (Latin)
- 51. Swiss river
- 52. Hebrew calendar month
- 53. One easily swindled
- 54. Point that is one point south of southwest
- 58. Small island (British)

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\$60,000, 86 Town Farm Rd, Cloutier, Mathieu L, and Cloutier, Monica, to Lumb, Craig.
\$60,000, 90 Town Farm Rd, Cloutier, Mathieu L, and Cloutier, Monica, to Lumb, Craig.

EAST BROOKFIELD

\$633,000, 180 Lakeview Ave, Gatto, John P, and Gatto, Amy J, to Orszulak, Thomas R, and Orszulak, Kathleen T.

LEICESTER

\$520,000, 37-39 Church St, Garcia, Miguel, and Mejia, Evelyn J, to Church St Acquisition LLC.
\$490,000, 1 Sabina Cir, Caravella, Stephen G, and Caravella, Donna M, to Duffy, Amanda R, and Almeida, Cesar F.
\$470,000, 52 Virginia Dr #52, Desforges, Eileen D, and Desforges, Paul R, to Thurlow, James H, and Thurlow, Irene J.
\$400,000, 26 Rawson Dr, Pickett, Daniel H, and Pickett, Susan J, to Murray, Justin, and Murray, Elizabeth.

\$362,500, 14 Crestwood Rd, Case, Nathaniel S, and Case, Natalia L, to Oconnell Jr, Thomas, and Douglas, Elizabeth.

\$300,000, 197 Main St, Poirier Ft, and Poirier, Thomas J, to Lambert, Linda.

\$300,000, 82 Lake Ave, Leong, Jill, to Huynh, Duc N, and Nguyen, Hoa T.

\$275,000, 141 White Birch St, Mallozzi, Sharon A, and Mallozzi, Peter V, to C Lopez Investments LLC.

\$250,000, 16 Mill St, Sixteen Mill Street Rt, and Gabriel, Jonathan S, to Mr Care Realty LLC.

\$232,000, 75 Huntoon Memorial Hwy #1-11, Wong, Lily, to Menard, Alexis.

\$210,000, 75 Huntoon Memorial Hwy #4-6, Sauvageau, Barbara L, to Livingston, Timothy.

\$191,000, 329 Main St, Tirrell, Herbert, and Midfirst Bank, to V & J LLC.

NORTH BROOKFIELD

\$465,000, 12 Collins Rd, Helen B Blalock Ft, and Custer, Lou A, to Attella, Nathaniel M, and Broman, Katie E.

\$315,000, 5 Nursery Ave, Carney, Bryan J, to Nelson, David W, and Nelson, Janet L.

\$70,000, 85-A Brookfield Rd, A R Belli Development LLC, to Kieman, Craig.

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\$585,000, 10 Nottingham Cir, Foley, Lori A, and Foley, Katrina A, to Dudek, Robyn, and Dudek, David.

\$555,000, 16 Marble Rd, Ronald Brault Prop LLC, to Nguyen, Binh, and Nguyen, Dina.

\$525,000, 3 R Jones Rd, Mayhew, Bruce N, and Mayhew, Amy, to Douglas, Laura M, and Clark Jr, James.

\$512,000, 120 E Charlton Rd, Bertrand, Thad J, and Gonzalez, Sarrina E, to Mcgrail, Sean, and Cicero, Nicole.

\$490,000, 102 Hastings Rd, Dyer, Lloyd L, and Dyer, Wanda L, to Porter-Devriese, Joel E, and Cash, Kelly M.

\$460,000, 27 Wilson Ave, Conner, Grace G, and Conner, Scott M, to Bishop, James W.

\$460,000, 29 Wilson Ave, Conner, Grace G, and Conner, Scott M, to Bishop, James W.

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\$410,000, 37 Paxton Rd, 37 Paxton Road LLC, to Obrien, Shauna.

\$149,000, 16 Irving St, Johnson, Nancy J, and Bk Of Ny Mellon Tr, to Jebola Properties Inc.

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\$135,000, 40 Hillside Ave, Razzak, Fallah, to Marston, Kevin, and Marston, Greth.

WEST BROOKFIELD

\$495,000, Rodman St, Chisco Realty LLC, to Nichols, Gerald, and Nichols, Susan.

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\$66,000, 112 Tucker Rd, Kiernan, Amy J, and Kiernan, Terrence, to Dwinell, Timothy.

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Local police team up to purchase gifts for students



Courtesy
Local police leaders recently gave back to kids with a special holiday season event.

SPENCER — Local first responders recently held an annual program to benefit kids this holiday season. The Spencer Police Union and the East Brookfield Police Department teamed up to purchase a gift for every student in the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District from grades pre-K to four. “This is a yearly tradition that we love just as much as the kids do. They were treated to a magic show, and then Mr. and Mrs. Claus came to help hand out all the gifts,” read a statement released by the SPD. “We would like to thank everyone who has donated to our association this past year, as it assists us with being able to give back to the community in ways such as this.”

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DAVID PROUTY HIGH SCHOOL HONOR ROLL

SPENCER — The Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District is a community committed to teaching and learning with purpose. To these ends, we wanted to recognize and celebrate our David Prouty High School scholars who earned honor roll for the first quarter of the 2023-2024 academic year.

The honor roll for David Prouty high school will be calculated at the conclusion of each marking period for Grades 9 - 12. All courses in which students earn credit and receive a numerical grade will be used in determining honor roll. The honor roll is based on the average a student achieves each marking period. The following averages will be used to calculate honor roll:
High Honors - an average of 90 percent or greater
Honors - an average of 85 percent or greater

David Prouty High School utilizes an unweighted average, which is the exact numerical average a student receives for each class in a marking period will be used to determine honor roll.

High Honors
Grade 12: Eliana Barnett, Ava Marie Bergeron, Madison Deborah Ethier, James William McNicol, Layne Michael Perchak, Sarah Anellia Young

Grade 11: Grace Elizabeth Kates, Morgan Elizabeth Kates, Emilee Elizabeth Larson

Grade 10: Marina Lora Ethier, Geoffrey George Gardiner, James Liam Harlan, Lilyan Kathleen Mateucci, Matthew Eric McNicol, Michael Zeyed Naji, Christopher Joseph Pinkowski, Lauren Avery Tutlis, Victoria Zheng

Grade 9: Landen James Blodgett, Scarlet Belle Busse, Isabella Margaret Dixon, Cullen Ramsey Gardiner, Patrick Joseph Hart, Alexis Marie Huard, Hannah Cathleen Kennen, Max Robert Wesley Kirouac, Emma Faith LaPan, Johnlyn Rose Laventure, Hanna Elizabeth Mansoor, Dylan Richard Morette, Morgan Irene Pelchat, Elena Grace Powell, Henry Michael Rokes, Keira Marie Tetreault

Honors
Grade 12: Isabella Marie Costello, Kailey Marie Dutter, Jordan Delaney Lyon, Ayla Margaret Messier, Liyah Mey Nguyen, Stephanie Nyambura Njenga, Jenna Lynn Oberg, Rhianna Leigh Ortiz, Alexander Peter Pinkowski, Jett Jerome Reilly, Carlvinstein Kiarie Wangaru, Greenly Sandra Waugh

Grade 11: Allison Diane DeCelle, Colleen Ann Hart, Marianeliz Maily Murillo, Jeremias Leonardo Rivera, Brooke Nicole Turner, Benjamin Marshall Wytas

Grade 10: Heather Rose Bartolomei, Paige Lee Fritze, Caitlin Ann Kennen, Sampson Lee Mahan, Lillian Audrey Spahn, Brenna Ann Stanley, Zackery William Wadden

Grade 9: Lucas Apostol Bastien, Michael Conner Fitzpatrick, Sophia Lynne Iannucci, James Michael MacArthur, Riley Marie Pelletier

SPENCER — The Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District is a community committed to teaching and learning with purpose. To these ends, we wanted to celebrate our Knox Trail Middle School scholars who earned honor roll for the first quarter of the 2023-2024 academic year.

The honor roll for Knox Trail Middle School will be calculated at the conclusion of each marking period for Grades 5 - 8. All courses in which students earn credit and receive a numerical grade will be used in determining honor roll. The honor roll is based on the average a student achieves each marking period. The following averages will be used to calculate honor roll:
High Honors - an average of 90% or greater
Honors - an average of 85% or greater

Knox Trail Middle School utilizes an unweighted average, which is the exact numerical average a student receives for each class in a marking period will be used to determine honor roll.

W O R C E S T E R — Hometown Mortgage recently hired Francisco Valdés as community mortgage loan originator, based in bankHometown's 1001 Millbury St., Worcester office.

Hometown Mortgage is a division of bankESB, a Hometown Financial Group company that also includes bankHometown and Abington Bank. In this newly created role at Hometown Mortgage, Valdés will be a trusted financial advisor to qualifying low- and moderate-income communities and will guide prospective home buyers through the process of

KNOX TRAIL MIDDLE SCHOOL HONOR ROLL

5th grade
High Honors: Aiden Doyle, Allison Granger, Abigail Granger, Caiden Hathaway, Carleigh Huard, Hezekiah Kabbah, Shaylie Moore, Logan Pelchat, Katherine St. Laurent, Isaiah Vegao, Cailyn Verity

Honors: Patrick Bauce, Jackson Brown, Trente Bulak, Avianna Cardoso, Rylee Cusson, Keegan Day, Emmett Edwards, Maeley Ellis, Landyn Forget, Lucy Frongillo, Mason Garipey, Annabel Gillespie, Griffin Grenier, Jaxson Huard, Caleb Kozak, Luis Mackenzie, Kyle McCabe, Johnathan Navarro, Tommy Pantojas, Brian Parker, Gavin Parker, Haley Racicot, Stella Racicot, Emma Reilly

6th grade
High Honors: Taya Berry, Brendan Bartone, Lydia Clark, Karissa Cormier, Emma Graves, Landon Hoyt, Ella Morette, Emmarose Njenga, Brayden Rodriguez, Jonah Schold, Brayden Theurer, Leo Wilson

Honors: Blessed Asensoh, Andre Collette, Emma Coolick-Sarita, Zahraliz Esteras, Eliander Feliz, Rylee

Gibbons, Zuzanna Gladek, Charles Lawler, Frank Leblanc, Lexander Lugo, Mason Lusignan, Mason Marrier, Jackson McGill, Erik Noel, David Orozzo Gonzales, Sadie Pike, Omayra Rivera, Jackson Sampson, Jolene Sampson, Brayden Tetreault, Lily Walker, Allyson Wilder, Abigail Wilson, Christopher Worster

7th grade
High Honors: Aaron Bagrowski, Hunter Brodeur, Connor Cormier, Johnathan Dehner, Sophia Delvalle, Iris Deoliveira Tebo, Aubree Donaldson, Jocelyn Fasoli, Camila Garcia, Christopher Gauvin, Tyler Josti, Landon Kaiser, Sophie Lambert, Madelyn MacDonald, Lucas Mateucci, Mikayla Moorcraft, Kylie Nelson, McKinnon Pacheco, Isabella Perchak, Lillian Perchak, Kyleigh Petruzzi, Avianna Roberts, Olivia Roberts, Jackson Roode, Kinley Sauvageau

Honors: Goodness Asensoh, Zoe Barnett, Logan Barre, Justin Blaisdell, Alaina Boutotte, Anthony Carofaniello, Divino Colon, Ashlyn Consiglio,

Hunter Cusson, Elyse DaSilva, Luciana Edwards, Cody Forand, Madilyn Foresteire, Lena Goyette, Sean Haynes, Stella Hitchner, Xander Hultquist, Joseph Larson, Sienna Lewis, Dimitri McDermott, Anna Messier, Irellyn Padden, Matthew Paquette, Jadaly Rivera Rodriguez, Joshua Rivera, Ava Sandberg

8th grade
High Honors: Cameron Barry, Gianna Bedard, Morgan Berard, Cassidy Chickering, Gabriel Flannery, Jayden Giwa Bello, Kylie Hoyt, Veronica Jensrud, Tristiyn Masterson, Alyssa Olsen, Alexia Rondeau, Ava Rondeau, Samuel Schold

Honors: Sadie Anifantis, Elizabeth Barrington, Oliver Bird, Collin Burt, Kaden Case, Xzavier Charest, Alyssa Cuevas, Marco Estrella Morales, Autumn Gatto, Caleb Goyette, Violet Hanlan, Teagan Humphrey, Mara Ingalls, Leah Kozak, Evan Lafountain, Cody Landry, Ava Rossik, Jacob Vigeant, Collyn Walker, Tucker Wolanski

Hometown Mortgage hires Valdés as Community Mortgage Loan Originator

reviewing credit, assets, and income information to provide mortgage financing options that match their financial capacity. In this role, his services are available to communities throughout Massachusetts, with a primary focus on the Worcester area. Valdés is proficient in Spanish, English and Portuguese.

Valdés, of Worcester, has 10 years of banking and mortgage experience. Most recently, Valdés was the senior mortgage loan officer at Guaranteed Rate. Prior to that, he was a mortgage loan originator at Webster Five Cents Savings Bank, and before that, a credit ana-

lyst at Wells Fargo Dealer Services.

Valdés has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Becker College and completed coursework at the Kinnix Mortgage Academy. He currently serves on the board of the Worcester Affordable Housing Trust Fund; is a committee member of the Corridor 9/495 Regional Chamber of Commerce; and is an ambassador of the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce.

About Hometown Mortgage At Hometown Mortgage, we help potential borrowers

unlock the right home financing solution for their unique needs. As a division of bankHometown, a Hometown Financial Group company that also includes bankESB and Abington Bank, we leverage our combined strength coupled with shared services and technology to work with homebuyers across Massachusetts, Connecticut, and neighboring states to make homebuying simple and stress-free. At the same time, our commitment to community banking and local roots mean we can focus on the unique needs of those who live and work in the communities we serve

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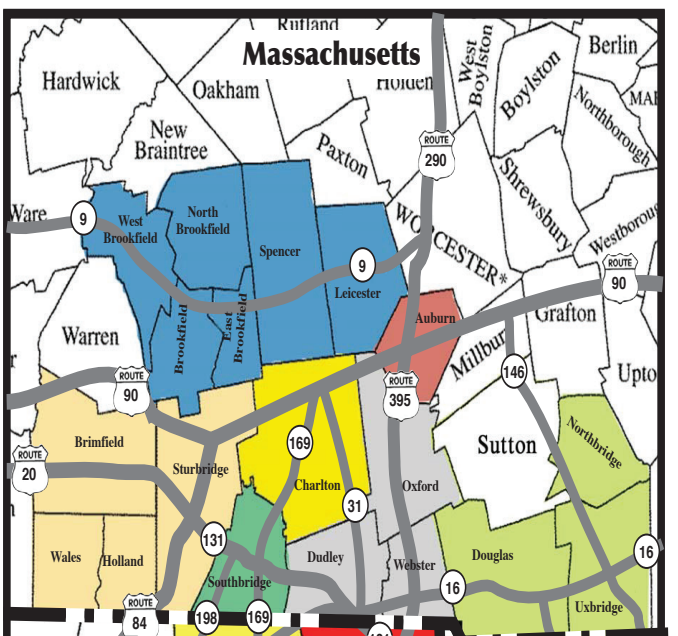
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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
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BRENDAN BERUBE
 EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Navigating New England's winter blues

Winter time in New England is undoubtedly beautiful. Yet, beneath the postcard-perfect veneer lies a challenge known all too well to its residents: the winter blues. The seasonal shift in daylight, frigid temperatures, and seemingly endless gray skies can bring anyone down.

New England's winters are marked by shorter days and less sunlight, often leading to seasonal affective disorder (SAD) or simply feeling a bit down. Combat this by soaking in every ray of sunshine. Whenever the sun graces us with its presence, soak it in. Whether it's a brisk walk in the park or basking in a sunbeam by your window, these precious moments of sunlight can make a world of difference.

On those days when the sun is elusive, consider harnessing the power of artificial sunlight. Sunlight lamps, designed to mimic the spectrum of natural sunlight, have proven effective in mitigating the symptoms of SAD. Spend some time each day in the glow of one of these lamps to boost your mood and energy levels.

Rather than hibernating, embrace the winter season. Skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, or a walk in the woods can prove impactful. The secret is to view the snow as an opportunity for adventure, not an obstacle.

Let's face it — New Englanders are masters of creating cozy environments. Invest in soft blankets, indulge in hot cocoa, and light scented candles to create a warm and inviting atmosphere at home. The Danish concept of "hygge" (coziness and contentment) is a perfect remedy for winter blues.

Social isolation can exacerbate feelings of melancholy during the winter months. Fortunately, New England communities offer numerous opportunities to stay connected. Join local clubs or meetups, attend community events, or simply invite friends over for dinner. A sense of belonging and connection is a potent antidote to winter blues.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

May your holiday season be filled with hope

To the Editor:

The world seems to be unravelling. Hatred and evil seem to be getting the upper hand everywhere. There is war and killing all over the globe. "For hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to men," say Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's words in the Christmas carol "I Heard the Bells."

But for Christians, the Advent and Christmas seasons are seasons of

hope. Jesus, the Messiah, rules. No matter what is happening around us, Christ rules. This is our hope. God will save his people. He will save all who belong to him. May it also be true for our Jewish brothers and sisters, for they are God's chosen people.

May you have a beautiful, hope-filled Christmas season.

NANCY J. NOWAK
 SPENCE

New Year's financial resolutions



FINANCIAL FOCUS
 TREVOR NIELSEN

Now that we've reached 2024, you might be thinking about your goals and hopes for the new year. But in addition to whatever personal resolutions you might make — volunteering, going to the gym more, learning a new language and others — why not make some financial resolutions, too?

Here are a few to consider:

Boost your retirement savings. If you can afford it, try to increase your contributions to your IRA and 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan. The more you put away in these accounts, the greater your chances of reaching your retirement goals. At a minimum, contribute enough to your 401(k) to earn your employer's match, if one is offered. And whenever your salary goes up, consider raising the amount you put in to your 401(k).

Reduce your debts. It's not always easy to reduce your debts — but it's worth the effort. The lower your debt load, the greater your monthly cash flow. So, look for ways to consolidate debts or find other, possibly more productive, ways of using credit. And if you truly can't afford something that's nonessential, don't go into debt for it. "Live within your means" is an old piece of advice, but it's just as valid now as ever.

Build an emergency fund. If you suddenly needed a major home or car repair, or received a large medical bill not fully covered by insurance, would you have the funds available? If not, you might be forced to dip into your retirement accounts or other long-term investments. To avoid this possibility, try to build an emergency fund containing several months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account that's separate from the ones you use to meet your daily expenses. It can take a while to build such a fund, but if you make it a priority and contribute regular amounts each month, you can make good progress.

Avoid emotional decisions. Too many people overreact to events in the financial markets because they let their emotions get the better of them. If the market is temporarily down, it doesn't mean you need to sell investments to "cut your losses" — especially if these investments still have good fundamentals and are still appropriate for your portfolio. It can be hard to ignore market volatility, but you'll be better off if you focus on the long term and continue following an investment strategy that's designed to meet your needs.

Review your goals. Over time, your goals may have changed. For example, while you once might have wanted to retire early, and planned for it, you may now find that you'd like to work a few more years. If that's the case, you may also need to adjust your financial and investment strategies.

Revisit your estate plans. If you've married, divorced, remarried or added children to your family within the past few years, you may need to review the account titling and beneficiary designations on your 401(k) and other retirement assets, along with your estate-planning documents, such as your will or living trust. You might also need to revise these documents in other ways.

Of course, you may not be able to tackle all these resolutions at one time, but if you can work at them throughout the year, you can potentially brighten your financial outlook in 2024 — and beyond.

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.

Recurring questions

To the Editor:

Recurring questions while driving around Spencer.

With the spread of road construction throughout Spencer, I have to wonder if there are any police officers available to respond to emergencies, or are they all directing traffic at construction sites?

With our roadways dug up and patched and resembling a durability test track used by car manufacturers, is this Spencer's way of curtailing speeders?

I wonder:

BERNARD NOWAK, JR.
 SPENCE

Come together right now

To the Editor:

As we approach a time when peace and joy should be the dominant focus of the season, it is time to pare the wish list of gifts down to those that would mean the most. We really do not need the theatrics associated with impeachments that have zero chance of success, musical chair Speakers who feel constrained to take political positions designed as gotchas for 2024 election ads. How does a country that got attacked by 24 mainly Saudi terrorists, so proceeded to go kill many thousands of Afghans and Iraqis in retribution for the 3,000 we lost on 9/11 preach to Israel, who lost 1,700 on Oct. 7, for having collaterally eliminated 19,000 Palestinians? War is bad business, and should be avoided every chance, but some things going unpunished will encourage repetition. We really must sort through the chaff and become that once upon a time "United" States of America.

Leadership, that was earned and used to be inherited, no longer happens unchallenged. Making right and smart choices, standing behind them and setting examples for things we promote, will bring peace and consensus. Among the issues is participation with our allies, by being more parochial about keeping their secrets, supporting the positions that we have sold them, whether on Ukraine, Iran, the climate or defending Taiwan.

I do not for one minute believe we can actually claim a representative government. We are smart enough to know that most of the immigrants jumping our border or claiming asylum, are liars, not willing to wait their turn in line and overburdening a struggling citizenry to house, feed, educate and sustain them, while facing hard times of its own. Fix it. Hear asylum appeals now, not in two years. If we cannot reauthorize the Equal Rights Amendment that we used to renew at 96 percent and make it permanent (justice), why can't we get the

most active SCOTUS ever to invalidate the 13th Amendment's birth citizenship for illegals? Granting green cards to family members to care for babies born to illegals is the mark of stupidity. Like section #3 of the 14th Amendment that bans government service after supporting an insurrection. Why not just void any and all laws we refuse to enforce in the intent of their creation?

I understand and support the GOP move to attach Ukraine and Israel aid to actual border resolutions. One difference is, like the frequent extensions we do to fund the government, if we believe funding Ukraine and Israel to be in our national interest (I do), the arms that we are actually producing cannot wait for political correctness, and should be in the pipeline. Make no mistake, like that old GM commercial, "You can pay me now, or you can pay me later." Delay and misjudgment at this juncture will hold highest probability of committing US troops sooner, rather than later.

Playing climate against economic issues is showing poorly. Fossil fuels are the key to costs and inflation. Sadly we have proven too dumb to not find ways to overuse \$2 gas in pickups, ATVs, bikes and cruising, so supply for trucking, work commuting and heat and power generation.

Did I just read they are recalling most of the Teslas? Conservation is the better answer. Let's start acting like we are the same team. A real democracy should be able to poll its wishes and make them reality.

Give women back their choices, support our allies, secure our borders, enforce our laws and promote our economy- Merry Christmas.

KEN KIMBALL
 BROOKFIELD

Another successful year for Operation Undercover!

To the Editor:

Thanks to the residents of Spencer, whose generous donations of underwear and socks have made Operation Undercover achieve and exceed our goals for Christmas 2023. Nearly 800 items have been collected for distribution to the Veteran's Shelter, Abby's House and Jeremiah's Inn, making this holiday season a little warmer for those in need.

Special thanks to the Richard Sugden Library and the Town Clerk's Office for providing collection boxes. With their help, our project has surpassed all previous year's collections.

Happy Holidays!

BETH AND CAROL MCPHERSON
 LAURA AND MARCUS TORTI
 SPENCE

Our politicians need to recognize the threat of China

To the Editor:

It's taken the politicians long enough to know the Chinese are our enemies. Back in 1958, my economics teacher said the Chinese said they were going to take over America.

What happened to the urgency that was to only see where the people running this country get their outside

money from. The Supreme Court members should also be included in this.

The politicians should have an age limit of 70 years old to hold office. Also limited to no more than two terms, four years each.

K. HARKINS
 NORTH BROOKFIELD



Courtesy

Phil Harper with his big buck.

Deer hunting with black powder guns

The primitive arms deer season in Mass. opened Dec. 11, and will run through the end of the month. There are numerous black powder guns available on the market today, and they are extremely accurate. Some deer hunters claim that their black powder guns are more accurate than their shotguns, and they are more than likely correct. Most all black powder guns are rifled today, which can make a big difference in their accuracy. Most shotguns are smoothbore,

unless you purchased a rifled barrel for deer hunting.

Today's black powder guns also can be loaded with 50 grain pellets that are simply dropped down the barrel. Most hunters use two 50 grain pellets before the projectile of their choice is loaded into the barrel.

Back in the early days (30 years or more) of deer hunting with black powder, Mass. only allowed smoothbore guns for hunting. Thompson Arms made a 56 cal. gun that required a ball and

patch to be loaded into the barrel. It was a bit clumsy, but they worked!



THE GREAT OUTDOORS
.....
RALPH TRUE

Many deer have become nocturnal, traveling and feeding mostly at night because of hunting pressure during the archery and shotgun deer

season.

The warm weather before Christmas allowed some anglers to do some late trout fishing at Wallum Lake & Webster Lake. Unfortunately, the action was a bit slow, but fishing from their boat in the middle of December made the winter months a bit shorter.

Anglers fishing at Wachusett Res. are enjoying some great fishing for lakers and large rainbow trout. Wachusett Res. will close at the end of this month.

Ice fishing may be a

thing of the past! Climate change has put a damper on ice fishing in the valley area. Hopefully, we will get a few weeks of ice fishing in the next few weeks but the season will be a short one again this winter. Unfortunately, Maine had their first ice fishing fatality last week. Do not let it be you! Stay off of thin ice.

Take a Kid Fishing & Keep Them Rods Bending!



TAKE THE HINT

KAREN TRAINOR

Timely Tips for the New Year

best if you have it. Skip the coffee - the caffeine can cause further dehydration and misery. And sports beverages or a cup of bouillon can help replace depleted salt and potassium.

Resolution Rules: Are you tired of making New Year resolutions each year only to break them one after another? Here are some solutions: Target a specific ambition that is trackable. And break resolutions up into smaller goals. If you want to walk three miles a day for example, make three resolutions, one for each mile. That way, when you tackle one resolution, you can go on to the next one. And allow for "rewards" when you stick to a resolution. Pick something you love or love to do for each year-quarter.

Weight Watching: Losing weight is a top contender in the resolution ratings. If cravings

are your dieting downfall, take note: Craving chocolate? Eat a banana. Believe it or not, a fresh banana has been known to halt a chocolate craving. If you seem to be always craving chocolate, you could be lacking magnesium, so try a supplement. Crave fatty foods? Studies show fish or flaxseed can control cravings.

Eye Test: January is National Eye Care month. In case you missed it last time, here is a quick vision test to gauge whether or not it's time to have those glasses upgraded: A person with good vision should be able to read the numbers and letters on a license plate 80 feet away. If not, it's time to get a vision check up! To give eyes a rest, try hold a pencil up and focus on an object behind it for a few seconds, blink, focus on the pencil and repeat.

Cut the Credit: If financial freedom is on your list

of new year resolutions, cutting credit card debt is a good place to start. Charging fast food can supersize your credit card bill. Studies show people using credit cards in fast food restaurants spend up to 50 percent more than when they pay cash! Here's another eye opener: A typical credit card purchase ends up costing 112 percent more than if cash were used!

Look in the Fridge: If your night sight isn't what it used to be - improving night vision can be as close as your refrigerator! Did you know foods containing beta-carotene help you to see better in dim light? Cantaloupe, carrots, collard greens, kale and chicken all help deliver vision boosting Vitamin A.

Turn Back the Clock of Time: Looking for the fountain of youth? Try your pillow! Good, deep sleep helps turn back the

clock because it sharpens your mind and defuses stress. It also rejuvenates your body. During sleep, your body secretes melatonin, cortisol, and other hormones that help you repair cells and burn fat.

H2O for Back Pain: Do you suffer from frequent backaches? Try drinking lots of water! It helps prevent dehydration that can contribute to muscle aches. By drinking eight 8-ounces of water daily, you'll also flush out acidic wastes that can build up in the tissues and muscles - another contributor to back pain.

Win Dinner for Two at the Publick House

Your tips can win you a great three course dinner for two at the historic Publick House Historic Inn in Sturbridge! Simply send in a hint to be entered into a random drawing. One winner per month (or whenever enough tips are

received) will win a fabulous three course dinner for two at the renowned restaurant, located on Route 131 across the town common in historic Sturbridge. Because I'm in the business of dispensing tips, not inventing them (although I can take credit for some), I'm counting on you readers out there to share your best helpful hints!

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

Include gardening in your New Year's resolution



Melinda Myers

Microgreens are fast-growing, easy-to-grow, nutrient-dense greens that can be grown indoors and do not require much space or special equipment.

The New Year is filled with resolutions that usually involve dieting and exercise. Gardening is a great way to help accomplish those two resolutions, while also improving your mood, reducing blood pressure, managing anger, maintaining flexibility and more.

Start the new year with a plan to incorporate healthy vegetables into your containers, gardens, and meals. Growing

vegetables encourages you to eat more fresh produce and maximizes the benefits. You'll be able to harvest the vegetables at their peak of ripeness for the best flavor and maximum nutritional value. Plus, you control what, if any, chemicals are used in your gardens and containers.

Involve family and friends during the planning process and continue supporting each

other in this healthful endeavor throughout the year. Research has found that making gardening a more social experience can intensify the physical and mental health benefits. Even sharing your surplus produce with others can reap greater health benefits.

Begin by growing a few microgreens this winter. These fast-growing nutritious greens are easy to grow and do not require much space or special equipment. Just repurpose some fast-food containers, fill them with a seed starting mix or quality potting mix, and plant the microgreen seeds. Many garden centers, catalogs, and organic food coops sell microgreen seeds and sprouting seeds.

Grow a few pots of herbs in a sunny window or under artificial lights. Herbs are a healthy way to add flavor to winter meals. Start them with seeds or purchase transplants to shorten the time to har-



GARDEN MOMENTS
.....
MELINDA MYERS

vest. Plant these in a container with drainage holes filled with a quality potting mix. Follow the directions on the seed packet or plant tag for planting and care information. Once they are at least four to six inches tall, you can begin harvesting. Just make sure there will be enough leaves left on the plant to support new growth.

Look for new ways to prepare and incorporate vegetables into your diet. You'll find lots of recipes online and in cookbooks available from your library.

Start a list of vegetables you want to include and those that are suitable to grow in your location. Your state's extension

service has information on what vegetables will thrive in your area and tips on when and how to plant and care for them.

Take stock of your current seed inventory. Make a list of any seeds and transplants you'll need to buy to boost the nutrition of your garden harvest. Greens like spinach, collards, Swiss chard and kale, carrots, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and red cabbage are among the most nutritionally dense vegetables.

Consider growing those plants that are most productive and cost-effective for the available space. Look for vegetables like tomatoes and sweet peppers that produce an abundance of fruit from just one plant. Adjust your harvest techniques to keep plants like broccoli and greens producing beyond the first harvest.

Once your list matches your gardening space, it is time to draw up a garden plan. If you are new to gardening, consider start-

ing small and expanding over time. You will need sufficient time for planting and throughout the growing and harvest season to maintain, harvest, and utilize all the vegetables you grow.

Starting your nutritional gardening practices inside this winter will help generate momentum and keep you focused on your nutrition goals throughout the growing season.

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* radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine. Myers' Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Comments on recent letters that could add fear, anger & division among us

To the Editor:

1. The ongoing "Vote for Trump' in 2024" letters

These numerous angry, hateful and intended to divide letters have recently been well addressed in the "I'll take Biden's world over Trump's" (Dec. 8).

Here, let's just focus on a couple of terrible Trump facts

First, Trump and his close advisors, etc. have clearly indicated that they have no regard for our 250 year old democracy. Instead, beginning say with the mob attack on Congress and continuing since then Trump and they have shown they intend to replace it. A good example of this is Trump's statement that he would only be a dictator for

a "Day" To begin, our Constitution etc. does not allow "Dictators for a day." To end, in the real world, dictators do not stop being dictators after a day.

Then, as is well documented in video and audio, Donald Trump has used Hitler words and ideas to indicate who and how he would go after his enemies and "others." Hitler was a fascist dictator if there ever was one. He and his advisors and supporters locked up and then murdered not only six million Jewish people, but thousands of those who opposed his dictatorship

So when you see letters, that say "Vote for Trump in 2024" understand what this means.

2. "Yes, who and what should one believe" (Nov. 17)

sets out the challenge "The difficulty is sorting out truth from altered reality

In the next paragraph in the letter says that in October 2020, a gallon of gas was \$2.16 a gallon. The reality of this statement is that in October 2020, the price of gasoline was the lowest since 2008-09. Then we in the middle of a financial crisis. Why was it so low in 2020? Because we were in the midst of the Covid crisis and our ability to travel was greatly limited. So demand for gasoline was extremely low. Since the supply of gasoline far exceeded demand, its price was unusually low

One could argue that the letter "alters" reality by comparing the then current price with this unusably low one.

(The current national

price of gasoline continues to fall from the letter's price of \$3.74 per gallon, to the current national of \$3.26.)

Moving on, I agree with the letter that, for multiple reasons, the cost of housing has too strongly risen and become less affordable for we of the middle and less fortunate classes.

However, here the letter again "cherry picks" or alters reality by again changing a time of Covid low mortgage interest point for comparison to the present day. In fact, since 1971, when mortgage interest rates have been tracked, the median 30 year mortgage rate has been 7.41 percent. This mortgage rate has steadily and happily gone downwards over time. As a result, over the last 10 years it has averaged a bit below 4

percent. Currently, the rate is 7.2 percent, but falling. Recently, the Trump appointed and very competent chairman of our Federal Reserve Banking system said it intended to make three overall interest cuts, so mortgage rates should continue to fall.

The letter goes on to criticize people at excellent long standing organizations who, with real facts show, despite challenges, that the economy is doing well.

However, for some reason, this letter seems to want to "play down" reasonable economic success and negatively "play up" our challenges.

3. "The population of Leicester..." (Dec. 15)

Among other things this letter first says "a new daily record has

been set". This means that something has never happened before.

Then in the very next paragraph the letter says "12,000 illegal aliens a day (the record) are entering our country... Think about it. That's every day times 365 days a year!"

Logically a one day "record" of 12,000 has not and cannot happen every day of the year.

It then concludes by sarcastically blaming one person, "Joe Biden." Immigration has not been well controlled before Biden and may not be after him. What is needed is a well thought out sensible "system," not untrue statements than produce anger, fear, and division.

KEVIN KANE
SPENCER



What's the Difference?

There are four differences between Picture A and Picture B. Can you find them all?



THIS DAY IN...



HISTORY

- 1871: THE OPERA, "AIDA" PREMIERES IN CAIRO, EGYPT.
- 1929: A FOUR-ALARM FIRE BREAKS OUT IN THE WEST WING OF THE WHITE HOUSE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.
- 1951: LIBYA BECOMES AN INDEPENDENT NATION AND IDRIS I IS PROCLAIMED KING.



STEVE NELSON AND JACK ROLLINS WROTE THIS SONG ABOUT A CHILLY DUDE WITH "TWO EYES MADE OUT OF COAL."

ANSWER: "FROSTY THE SNOWMAN"

Answers: 1. Front glass has juice 2. Cherry in pie on candle
3. Extra olives in dish at right 4. Missing flame

New Word

FESTIVE

cheerful and jovially celebratory

How they SAY that in...

- ENGLISH:** Family
- SPANISH:** Familia
- ITALIAN:** Famiglia
- FRENCH:** Famille
- GERMAN:** Familie

Did you know?



CHRISTMAS TREES APPEAR TO DATE BACK TO THE MIDDLE AGES IN WHAT IS NOW MODERN-DAY GERMANY.

GET THE PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

ANSWER: GINGERBREAD

⊙ ** ☐ ⊕ ⊗ ~ 0 ⚡ ✨ * ✕ ✖ ✚ ✛ ✞ ✟ ✠ ✡ ☾ ✧ ✨ ✨ ✨ ✨ ✨ ✨ ✨ ✨ ✨ ✨

CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to winter. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 13 = I)

A. 7 12 13 22 22 11 5 9

Clue: Big snow storm

B. 21 16 13 12 12 18

Clue: A bit cold

C. 9 5 13 24 6

Clue: Pile of snow

D. 25 3 10 14

Clue: Frozen precipitation

Answers: A. blizzard B. chilly C. drift D. snow

SUDOKU

				5	9			4
			2					
8				1				
			9		6	7		
		3						2
				4				9
	6			2	4			5
		1	7		3			
	5		8			1		

Level: Advanced

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

3	5	4	8	6	9	1	2	7
2	8	1	7	5	3	4	9	6
7	6	9	1	2	4	3	5	8
6	7	8	3	4	2	5	1	9
9	4	3	5	7	1	8	6	2
5	1	2	9	8	6	7	4	3
8	9	6	4	1	7	2	3	5
4	3	5	2	9	8	6	7	1
1	2	7	6	3	5	9	8	4

ANSWER:

Blessings can be found even in the worst days

Have you ever had one of those days where life seems to be plotting a comedy at your expense? Each step you take perfectly tees up the next LOL disaster.

POSITIVELY SPEAKING
—
TOBY MOORE

Your morning starts with a misstep that takes you straight to the floor. Like a WWE body slam! A dramatic tumble out of bed that snaps you out of your slumber quicker than a whole pot of coffee. You grumble, "I can already tell this will be an awful day!"

Next, you're playing a game of temperature roulette in the shower. One moment feels like an ice bath, and the next, you feel like a contestant on 'Who Wants to Boil Alive?' "Of course, this would happen to me," you mutter, toweling off.

In the kitchen, as you reach for that saving grace — coffee — you find an unexpected gift from your pet cat: a strategically placed hairball, cold, slimy, squished to the bottom of your foot. Seriously? Even the cat's against me today. What's next? The dog launching a surprise slobber attack just as I sit down to eat?

With coffee in hand, victory seems near, but in a theatrical twist, your significant other bumps into you in a hurry, and the coffee goes all over your shirt. "Oh, wonderful! I'm a walking, talking coffee stain!"

As you change for the second time, you think, 'Really?'

Then, the morning's chaos brigade gets reinforcements — your kids. Breakfast becomes a

food-flinging fest, and your freshly ironed pants become a canvas for maple syrup handprints.

As you usher them out the door for the school bus, their parting gift is a backpack to the gut, a reminder that life's comedy routine now includes slapstick. "What's next, a pie in the face as I walk out the door?"

As if on cue, backing out of the driveway turns into a demolition derby with a speeding car. Every moment screams out, 'Remember this day!'

Each attempt to focus at work is thwarted by life's little pranks — a jammed printer right when you need it most, a mischievous computer choosing the perfect moment to update, or an important call dropped at the crucial second. Every mishap becomes a chapter in today's saga of complaints, a story you're ready to share with anyone willing to listen.

Lunchtime is no reprieve.

That sandwich you so looked forward to? Somehow, it's been squashed into an unrecognizable form, as if life decided to hug it tight. And just as you bite, a bird above decides to contribute its own 'topping.' You can't help but wonder, 'Is life scripting a sitcom where I'm the unsuspecting star?'

The journey home could be smoother. Stuck in traffic, the heavens open up, unleashing a downpour that targets only your car. And just as you pull into

your driveway, relieved that this comedy of errors is finally over, you step out into a muddy puddle. It is the perfect ending to a day, courtesy of life's unrelenting humor.

As you sit on your couch, recounting the day's events, you realize that each annoyance, each little disaster, was met with a sigh, a grumble, a lament of 'why me?' It's been a day fueled by complaints, a symphony of negativity.

And who could blame you after a day like that? Yet, in this whirlwind of chaos, there lie two choices: to perceive yourself as cursed or blessed.

Blessed, you say?

The bed you tumbled out of — yes, it was an ungraceful start, but it was a bed, your bed. A luxury that many, especially during these cold holiday times, can only dream of as they brave the harshness of the streets.

The breakfast food fight and the cat's unwelcome gift on your foot? In that mess lies a profound blessing. Your house is filled with life!

Your car in the shop? Your insurance stepped in, offering a temporary replacement—a setback, but not a derailment.

Then there's your job. Nothing went as planned, but guess what? You're employed.

Blessed? Absolutely! Life, in all of its unpredictable glory — is a gift and a blessing.

So, as the holiday lights twinkle, remember: every day has hidden blessings waiting to be found.

Happy Holidays to you and yours!

OBITUARY

William J. Comeau, "Bill", 63



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of William J. Comeau, "Bill", age 63, on December 1st 2023 after succumbing to a long illness. Bill was a long-time resident of Spencer MA.

He enjoyed skydiving, traveling worldwide, and watching sports with his dad and brothers. His quirky, mischievous yet debonair personality will be missed and remembered by us all.

Bill is the son of Charles J Comeau of Chatham Mass and the late Anne T Comeau. He is survived by six siblings: Nancy Talbot of Blenheim, NY, Charles Comeau of Brimfield MA, Daniel Comeau of South Chatham, MA, Bernadette Perez of West Brookfield, MA, Perry Comeau of South Chatham MA and Patricia Buradagunta of Westboro MA. Bill is survived by many nieces and nephews as well.

A memorial service to honor Bill's legacy will be held privately with his immediate family.

Send all obituary notices to
Stonebridge Press,
PO Box 90, Southbridge,
MA 01550,
or by e-mail to
obits@
stonebridgepress.news

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BAY PATH ANNOUNCES GRADE 12 HONOR ROLL

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School congratulates the following students in grade 12 on being named to the honor roll for the first quarter of the 2023-2024 school year.

High Honors

Sophia Balestracci, Alex Beshiri, Rachel Carpenter, Meredith Clark, Yanieris Colon Vega, Kirsten Congdon, Mariselle Cosme, Dylan DeJesus, Kacey Flanagan, Simon Greening, Tristan Hanson, Patrick Luperchio, Nason Omasta, Noalani Perez, Logan Powers, Caterine Schiappa, Jacob Sirard, Gerald Splaine, Victoria Tinsley, Timothy Welch, Hailey Williamson

Honors

Alexander Adkins, Aidan Anderson, Kaidra Anderson, Kasey Babkauskas, Hailey Benoit, Caleb Bergstrom, Lindsey Berthiaume, Jaden Blake, Luke Boliver, Caroline Borgeson, Andrew Bousquet, Emma Bransky, Ryan Bray, Samuel Brill, Vincent Brink, Kayla Brown, Samantha Buchanan, Caitlyn Burke, Olivia Carrier, Riley Caruso, Natalie Cierpich, Garrett Clardy, Petru Cojocar, Shane Conti, Zachary Cournoyer, Peter Courville, Kyleigh Czechowski, Gabriel Dadah, Daniel Daige, Wyatt Daoust, Emma Davidson, Emma DeJong, Edwin Delacruz Davila, Jeffrey Denham, Sean Derenas, Marissa Dumas, Jayden-James Dunston, Noah Dupont, Jibril Erraihani, Jared Evora, Arianna Flores, Jonathan Forget, Joseph Fritze, Jenna Gajewski, Ethan Gallant, Giovanni Garcia, Triston Gaudette, Devin Gavaletz, Rachel Gormley, Makayla Graham, Lucas Hafner, Renee Hallaman, Bridget Hast, Riley Heenan, Alba Henriquez Baez, James Heywood, Caitlin Hubbell, Carly Impey, Ian James, Stanislaw Janusz, Eva Jerez, Jady Katz, Abigail Kibaru, Madisyn Kozlowski, Alyssa Kutzko, Matthew Lach, Julianna Laforce, Braeden LaPointe, Benjamin LaTour, Anna Lehtola, Emma Levasseur, Kristina Liberty, Miranda Lincoln,

Abigayle Linde, Radiel Lopez, Albert Luciano, Catherine Magnusson, Jadier Maldonado, Sarah Martin, Marissa Masciarelli, Matteo Mastrotoaro, Shaun McLaughlin, Jenna McLeish, Vincent Messier, Macaylah Miller, Cole Mitchell, Leah Monti, Maggie Mullaly, Adrianna Navarro, Christian Nguyen, Kayla Nguyen, Peter Nhan, Madison Nolin, Alix Norman, Avelyn O'Brien, Syllas Perreault, Esteban Pimentel, Colin Plante, Laci Pollone, Nicholas Pollone, Ismael Porrata, Evan Provist, Emily Quental, Wendy Ramirez, Harrison Renaud, Victoria Roberts, Chase Rupert, Margaret Russell, Samantha Russell, Liam Ryan, Luchia Sargent, Amanda Seidler, Paige Seymour, Madison Sibert, Ryan Sinkewich, Catherine Sirard, Adriana Stanley, Ashton Stockenberg, Brady Suprenant, Arthur Surrette, Jack Ugrinow, Christopher Verdolino, Landon Walker, Thomas Wilk, Stone Zink, Gabrielle Zopatti

Principal's List

Jacob Anderson, Avarie Beauchamp, Alyesia Bellamy, Gabriella Cabrera, Jesse Catino, Charles Chivallatti, Jomar Cintron Perez, Karoline Corpes Diaz, LeeAnn Dagnese, Leilani Daniels, Pedro Augusto Dasilva, Deanna Davis, Dylan Dietlin, William Dwyer, Abigail Egan, Janeel Ethier, Robert Fleck IV, Nicholas Gagne, Sabien Gonzalez, Jacob Goodspeed, Kendal Griffin, Valerie Hernandez, Tessa Howard, Lucas Lawendowski, Damon Lopez, Andrew Lunn, Hannah Luukko, Ava Marotta, Kennedy Nom, Megan O'Shea, Noah Okolita, Gianna Pantalone, Brayden Parente, Dominic Pigeon, Jared Powell, Jacob Reed, Jayden Remillard, Colby Richardson, Cody Savary, Kayliana Sevieri, Sydney Seymour, Jason Sinkis, Kyle Sylwanovicz, Alysha Szafarowicz, Natalie Walker, Charlotte Worster

Editor's note: Due to space constraints, the honor rolls for the junior, sophomore, and freshman classes will appear in upcoming editions.

TOYS FOR KIDS DONATIONS

Donations as of 12/15/2023

Monetary Donations may be sent to: Spencer Toys for Kids, P.O. Box 186, Spencer, MA 01562. New, unwrapped toys can be dropped off at: Spencer Fire Dept, Cornerstone Bank (Spencer office), ERA Key Realty Services (415B Main St). If you would like to sponsor a child, please contact Donna at donnaflannery@erakey.net 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, Town clerk's office in the town hall, or ERA Key Realty Services (outside mailbox). You can see updates on Facebook at Spencer Toys for Kids.

12/11/2023	Accurate Medical Cooling Inc	\$100.00
12/11/2023	Richard and Melinda Lineen	\$100.00
12/11/2023	Robert Gobi	\$50.00
12/11/2023	Joseph Zaleckas	\$50.00
12/11/2023	Houston Builders	\$100.00
12/12/2023	First Congregational Church	\$100.00
12/12/2023	Richard and Donna D'Amato	\$100.00
12/13/2023	East brookfield & Spencer Railroad	\$500.00
12/15/2023	Lamoureux Ford	\$1,000.00
12/15/2023	Spencer Exchange Club	\$1,000.00
12/15/2023	George and Melissa Victor	\$1,000.00
12/15/2023	Sean and Paige Burke	\$100.00

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SPORTS

Wolverines win season opener against neighbors from David Prouty



Photos courtesy Dawn Pepka-Jones
Jordan Giggey attempts a 3-point shot for Leicester.



David Prouty's Maria Murillo looks right while being defended by Leicester's Grace Bujak.



Jordan Giggey protects the ball while she dribbles for Leicester.



Leicester's Maeve Nelson breaks down the court after intercepting a pass.

SPENCER — The Leicester Wolverines girls' basketball team opened their 2023-24 season at Knox Trail Junior High playing the hosts from David Prouty on Wednesday, Dec. 13.

The Panthers came into this game with two wins on the season. Head coach Kathy McCaffrey needs her girls to "step it up" for this game, as she said, "We are going to work hard on defense and focus on what we have been doing in practice."

Last season these two neighboring teams split wins. In his third year as Leicester's head coach, Chris Barry said before the game, "we are going to work through the nervousness we have for our first game of the season. I expect the girls to play hard and work together."

The Wolverines shook off the cobwebs and went straight to work, scoring seven unanswered points. David Prouty put up their first point with a free

throw halfway into the first quarter. This ignited David Prouty to keep fighting and kept the scoring close through the first quarter. Leicester only led at the end of the first, 9-6.

Connecting passes became an obstacle for both teams during the second quarter. The Panthers were shut down by Leicester's defensive pressing, unable to put any points on the board in the frame. Leicester found their flow and put up 11 points. Leicester increased their lead to 20-9 at the end of the half.

David Prouty came out of the halftime break with a plan to break through the Wolverines' defense. They were able to quickly sink four points. Leicester pressed even harder forcing the Panthers to run out of room on the sidelines. Leicester came out of the third quarter ahead 33-14.

David Prouty doubled their points in the fourth quarter, but this was no match for the hungry Wolverines. Leicester opened their 2023-24 season with a 42-28 win over the Panthers.



David Prouty's Laney Powell dishes off the ball while being double teamed by Leicester.

for Leicester were Jayda McLeod with 12 points and Maeve Nelson with 10 points. Maria Murillo scored 12 points for David Prouty.



David Prouty's Madison Ethier puts up a shot over Leicester's Kassidy Poce.

Friday's Child



Bacari
Age 17

Hi! My name is Bacari and I can tell you about space and meteorites!

Bacari is a healthy and happy young man described as both active and energetic. He enjoys walking, playing basketball, and participating in other outdoor activities. Bacari warms up to people as he gets to know them and he enjoys socializing with peers and adults. Bacari expresses himself through narrative writing and also uses arts and crafts as a creative outlet. One of Bacari's many interests is space and meteorites; he is able to talk on this topic at great length. People that know Bacari say that he has a great sense of humor. He does well in school, and although he is currently unsure of the type of career he would like to pursue, he enjoys animation and creating cartoons and comics, which may lead to a vocation later in life.

In a poem written by Bacari, he describes himself as nice, energetic, and smart. He prides himself on being a

brother to his sibling and lists his preferred activities as video games, watching TV, and art. Bacari is gratified by beating a number of different video games, which he does on his downtime, but he is also looking forward to getting a job. Although he has experienced anger and fear, Bacari also recognizes the times that he has felt happiness. Writing this poem at a recent event took courage and vulnerability that Bacari handled masterfully.

Bacari is looking for a forever family that he hopes will be loving and structured, but not too strict. All family constellations will be considered, including those with older or younger children in the home. Bacari does have biological connections that an adoptive family would need to help him maintain. He also feels connected to his community and would love to have that fostered, as well.

<https://adopt.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/child/8110>

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

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

To learn more about adoption from foster care, 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.

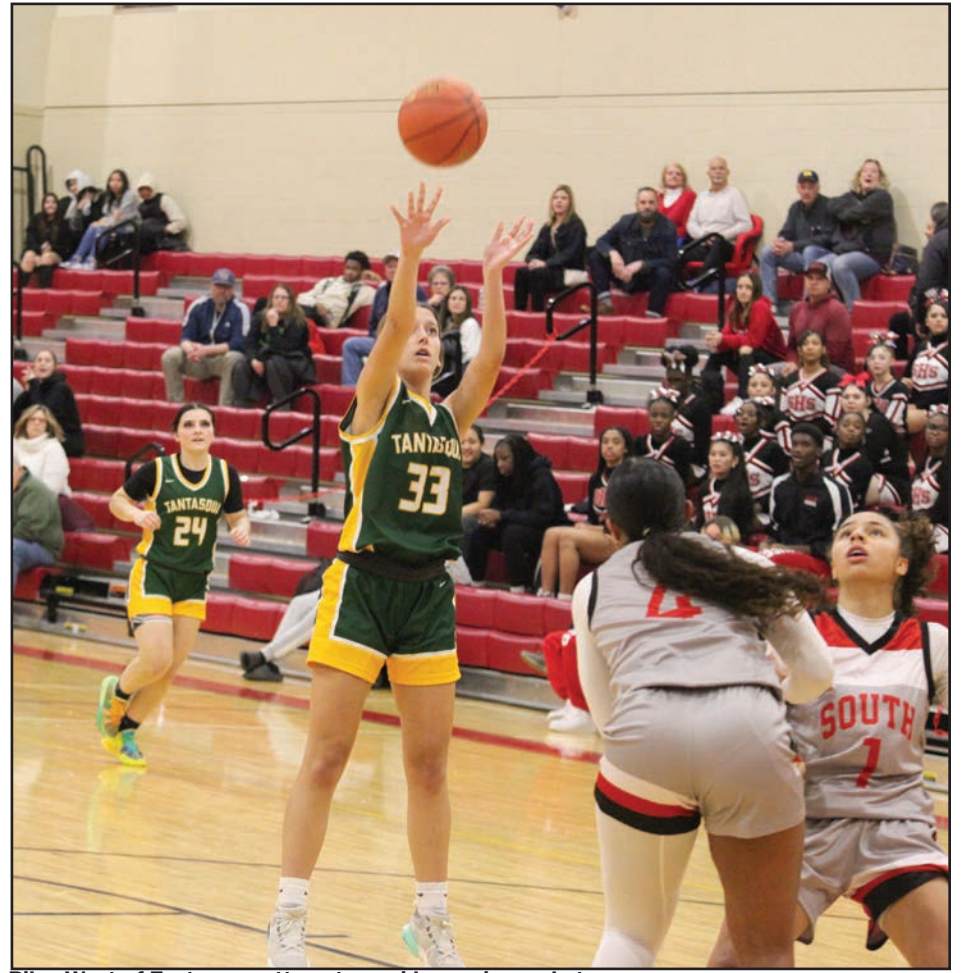


SPORTS

Colonels prove to be too much for Tantasqua in early season matchup



Tantasqua's Sophie Webb competes for the game-opening jump ball with South's Bryan Bascones.



Riley West of Tantasqua attempts a midrange jump shot.



Tantasqua's Nicki Vejak attempts to drive the ball past South defender La-leanna Blount.



Maya Gidopoulos of Tantasqua stares down South's Naima Bleou while deciding where to go with the ball.

BY NICK ETHIER
SPORTS EDITOR

WORCESTER — The Tantasqua girls' varsity basketball team had the tall task of facing off with Worcester South on Thursday, Dec. 14. And, unfortunately for the Warriors, the Colonels proved to be too much.

Behind a 25-point, 8-rebound effort from Bryan Bascones, South led from start to finish before ultimately taking home a 59-27 victory. The Colonels are 3-0, while Tantasqua dropped to 2-1.

"That's a really well-coached team that has a really deep bench and a ton of talent. They're a super disciplined team," Andrew Haley, head coach of the Warriors, said of South.

Of Bascones' play, Haley added, "She had a lights out game. She's a great player. She knows how to get to a spot, she never misses inside, she's an automatic bucket if she touches it."

The Colonels' defense used a full-court press after made baskets, which made life difficult for Tantasqua's guards.

"Mostly it was just the defense. It's hard to beat that full-court pressure. By the time you beat it, it's hard to get in your half-court sets," said

Haley. "They do a really good job of keeping you from doing what you want to do offensively."

Conversely, the Warriors, normally a team that also likes to press, did not employ that defensive tactic against the Colonels.

"I thought tonight with the depth of their bench, if we started handling that pressure and then also trying to apply that pressure, we'd get gassed pretty fast," explained Haley.

South led at all the stops: 17-8 after one quarter, 28-13 at the half and 44-18 through three before winning by 32 points.

Tantasqua's scorers were Gabby Scanlon (9 points), Maya Gidopoulos (6), Sophie Webb (4), Maggie Johnson (4 points, 9 rebounds), Riley West (2) and Sophie Ezzo (2).

"We've got a really tough schedule, so this will help us get ready for a playoff run," Haley said of playing against teams like South before adding that his group won't look too much into this particular result. "This isn't an indicator — you don't worry about a game like this — you just play as hard as you can."

The Warriors hope to eventually make a run

in the Division 3 State of the past two seasons, Tantasqua reached the Round of 16 before falling to Dover-



Tantasqua's Gabby Scanlon drives the ball down the court in between a pair of South defenders.

HIGH SCHOOL NOTEBOOK — TANTASQUA SWIM- MING SPLITS MEETS WITH BROMFIELD

The Tantasqua boys won a close meet against Bromfield at home with a score of 88-87. The Tantasqua girls lost with a score of 55-121. First place finishes for Tantasqua include boys' 200 medley and 400 free relays, Evan Dambly in the 200 free and the 100 back, Ethan Korenda in the 50 free, and Sam Merchant in the 100 butterfly and the 500 free, and Jonah Scherer in the 100 breast. On the girl's side, Abby Korenda placed 1st in the 100 breaststroke.

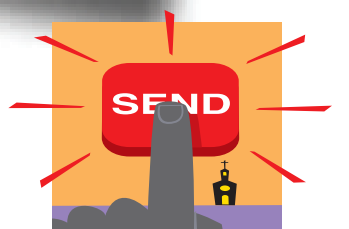
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POLICE REPORTS

Leicester Police Log

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7
 12:08 a.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), verbal warning; 12:31 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 12:48 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 2:25 a.m.: mv stop (Mulberry Street), Carmen Isa Ortiz, 29, 9 Channing Street, Worcester, straight warrant, resisting arrest, possession Class B drug, arrest; 7:29 a.m.: disabled mv (Paxton Street), spoken to; 7:38 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 7:45 a.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), Christina McKay Cruickshank, 36, 328 Henshaw Street, Leicester, op w/license suspended for OUI, speeding, arrest; 8:19 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), spoken to; 8:27 a.m.: mv stop (Winslow Avenue), verbal warning; 8:37 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 8:58 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 8:59 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 9:01 a.m.: accident (Marshall Street), report taken; 9:11 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 9:36 a.m.: mv stop (Paxton Street), written warning; 9:52 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 10:16 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 10:27 a.m.: suspicious person (Main Street), spoken to; 10:45 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 10:55 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 12:09 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 1:13 p.m.: ambulance (Carleton Road), transported; 1:26 p.m.: disturbance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), services rendered; 2:32 p.m.: disturbance (Craig Street), spoken to; 2:37 p.m.: b&e/past (Mt. Pleasant Avenue), report taken; 5:12 p.m.: ambulance (Marshall Street), transported; 6:21 p.m.: animal complaint (Mannville Street), referred to ACO; 6:32 p.m.: welfare check (Pitcairne Avenue), peace restored; 7:02 p.m.: suspicious mv (Peter Salem Road), investigated; 7:04 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 8:07 p.m.: assist citizen (Paxton Street); 11:59 p.m.: assist other PD (South Main Street), services rendered.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8
 12:10 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 12:38 a.m.: mv stop (Wells Street, Oxford), verbal warning; 2:17 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 2:35 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), name and address redacted from police log, unlicensed operation, no inspection sticker, criminal application issued; 3:09 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 4:22 a.m.: parking complaint (Paxton Street), citation issued; 7:54 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 8:22 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), written warning; 8:26 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford

Street), name and address redacted from police log, unlicensed operation, criminal application issued; 8:53 a.m.: investigation (Lake Avenue North, Worcester), report taken; 8:57 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), spoken to; 11:04 a.m.: harassment (Main Street), spoken to; 11:31 a.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), verbal warning; 11:44 a.m.: disabled mv (Marshall Street), assisted; 1:22 p.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), name and address redacted from police log, op w/suspended registration, uninsured mv, criminal application issued; 3:30 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 3:39 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), name and address redacted from police log, no inspection sticker, unlicensed operation, criminal application issued; 4:20 p.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), citation issued; 4:36 p.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), gone on arrival; 4:48 p.m.: missing person (Pine Street), assisted; 5:00 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 5:07 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 5:14 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 5:22 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 5:33 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 5:51 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 6:12 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 6:20 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 6:32 p.m.: disturbance (Main Street), unfounded; 9:04 p.m.: investigation (West Street), report taken; 10:39 p.m.: unknown alarm (Main Street), false alarm.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9
 12:44 a.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), verbal warning; 1:10 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 1:53 a.m.: assist other PD (Auburn Street), services rendered; 2:31 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 10:30 a.m.: erratic operator (Pleasant Street), unfounded; 1:04 p.m.: ambulance (Paxton Street), transported; 1:44 p.m.: lobby service (Main Street), report taken; 2:51 p.m.: ambulance (Henshaw Street), transported; 3:37 p.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), false alarm; 4:25 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 4:29 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 4:56 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 5:06 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 5:12 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 5:19 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 5:22 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 5:46 p.m.: suspicious person (Rawson Street), gone on arrival; 7:00 p.m.: ambulance (Pine Street), transported; 7:33 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 7:42 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 8:16 p.m.: welfare check (Lake

Shore Drive), transported to hospital; 10:02 p.m.: commercial alarm (Pleasant Street), false alarm.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10
 12:09 a.m.: mv stop (Huntoon Memorial Highway), citation issued; 1:54 a.m.: accident (Huntoon Memorial Highway), report taken; 9:47 a.m.: ambulance (Stafford Street), transported; 10:09 a.m.: mv stop (Huntoon Memorial Highway), verbal warning; 10:12 a.m.: animal complaint (Main Street), referred to ACO; 12:38 p.m.: assist other agency (Rawson Street), services rendered; 2:33 p.m.: welfare check (Paxton Street), transported to hospital; 3:27 p.m.: investigation (South Main Street), report taken; 3:28 p.m.: disturbance (Soojians Drive), resolved; 4:21 p.m.: disabled mv (Main Street), assisted; 6:00 p.m.: assist citizen (Main Street); 7:17 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 9:17 p.m.: commercial alarm (Henshaw Street), false alarm; 9:49 p.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), false alarm.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 11
 6:46 a.m.: assist citizen (South Main Street); 7:34 a.m.: wires down (Henshaw Street), resolved; 7:48 a.m.: hanging wires (Bond Street), resolved; 8:41 a.m.: welfare check (Paxton Street), spoken to; 10:40 a.m.: ambulance (River Street), transported; 11:06 a.m.: ambulance (Siani Road), transported; 11:19 a.m.: welfare check (Rawson Street), assisted; 5:39 p.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), investigated; 7:59 p.m.: hit/run accident (Pleasant Street), report taken; 8:25 p.m.: suspicious mv (Henshaw Street), resolved; 8:38 p.m.: shoplifting (Soojians Drive), report taken; 9:35 p.m.: ambulance (Pine Street), transported; 9:47 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 10:13 p.m.: erratic operator (Mt. Pleasant Avenue), Leopoldo Loja-Zamora, 34, 7 Mt. Pleasant Avenue, Leicester, refusal to identify self, operating mv w/license revoked as habitual traffic offender, OUI liquor, negligent operation, marked lanes violation, arrest.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12
 12:19 a.m.: assist citizen (Lake Drive); 2:53 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 8:29 a.m.: fraud (Victor Avenue), report taken; 9:08 a.m.: restraining order service (Main Street), unable to serve; 10:03 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 10:08 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 10:32 a.m.: ambulance (Pleasant Street), transported; 10:52 a.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 11:16 a.m.: mv stop (Olney Street), spoken to; 11:18 a.m.: abandoned 911 call (Main Street), services rendered; 11:35 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 11:52 a.m.: restraining order service (Main Street), unable to serve; 12:02 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 12:04 p.m.: suspicious mv (Watch Street), services rendered; 1:22 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 1:31 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), name and address redacted from police log, op w/suspended registration, uninsured mv, criminal application issued; 1:35 p.m.: ambulance (Winslow Avenue), transported; 2:25 p.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), verbal warning; 2:33 p.m.: mv stop (Huntoon Memorial Highway), spoken to; 4:20 p.m.: restraining order service (Main Street), unable to serve; 4:28 p.m.: accident (Pine Street), report taken; 5:21 p.m.: hit/run accident (Marshall Street), report taken; 6:07 p.m.: welfare check (Main Street), transported to hospital; 6:29 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 8:04 p.m.: restraining order service (South Main Street), served; 9:57 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13
 12:14 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 12:31 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 12:42 a.m.: mv stop (Burncoat Street), verbal warning; 12:47 a.m.: suspicious person (Main Street), investigated; 12:54 a.m.: welfare check (Stafford Street), services rendered; 1:41 a.m.: suspicious person (Main Street), Stephen N. Filewicz, 25, 30 Oberlin Street, Worcester, no charges recorded on police log, arrest;

Street), assisted; 8:09 a.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 10:41 a.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 11:45 a.m.: ambulance (Pleasant Street), transported; 4:12 p.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), verbal warning; 6:00 p.m.: assist citizen (Pine Street); 8:00 p.m.: disturbance (Auburn Street), peace restored.

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Spencer Police Log

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6
 12:10 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 12:15-3:01 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:47-2:51 a.m.: parking violations/4 (Hastings Road, Duggan, Mechanic streets, Old Farm Road), tickets issued; 5:23 a.m.: animal complaint (North Spencer Road), loose horses; 7:21 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 8:05 a.m.: medical/general (Pioneer Valley Drive); 8:36 a.m.: lost/found (West Main Street), cell phone found; 8:59 a.m.: fire/woods/grass (Cherry Street), public assist; 11:09 a.m.: animal complaint (Lakeshore Drive), rep. bite; 11:13 a.m.: mv repossessed (Cranberry Meadow Road), info rec'd; 11:15 a.m.: animal complaint (North Spencer Road), loose dogs; 12:11 p.m.: disturbance (Main Street), unwanted party; 12:41 p.m.: abandoned 911 call (West Main Street), misdial; 1:03 p.m.: illegal dumping (North Brookfield Road), mattress dumped; 2:07 p.m.: medical/general (Bixby Road); 2:30 p.m.: suspicious persons (Main Street), rec'd strange phone call; 6:25 a.m.: officer wanted (Wm. Casey Road), re: trouble w/staff member; 7:11 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), mv in intersection; 10:33 p.m.: medical/general (R. Jones Road); 11:31 p.m.: 911 call (West Main Street), Harrington CT down; (total daily mv stops - 2).

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7
 12:37-1:56 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 2:09 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 6:20 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 9:15 a.m.: animal complaint (Pleasant Street), concerned about neighbor's cat; 9:56 a.m.: mv lock-out (Wall Street), assisted; 11:02 a.m.: officer wanted (Maple Street), spoken to; 11:12 a.m.: sex offender registration (Highland Street), failure to register; 11:22 a.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 11:28 a.m.: medical/general (Mechanic Street); 11:45 a.m.: restraining order service (Browning Pond Road); 12:11 p.m.: accident (Maple Street), report taken; 12:57 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Auburn PD bolo/mv thefts; 1:21 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), req. escort/retrieve belongings; 1:23 p.m.: medical/general (Bixby Road); 1:56 p.m.: restraining order service (Chestnut Street); 2:56 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), LTC change of address; 3:20 p.m.: medical/general (Ash Street), 3:25 p.m.: commercial alarm (West Main Street), services rendered; 5:22 p.m.: suspicious mv (Cherty Street), investigated; 5:31 p.m.: harassing phone calls (Paxton Road), threats rec'd/report taken; 8:03 p.m.: mv fire (Paxton Road), referred; 9:18 p.m.: suspicious mv (North Spencer Road), investigated; 10:38 p.m.: commercial alarm (Water Street), services rendered; (total daily mv stops - 5)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8
 12:03-2:15 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:09 a.m.: suspicious mv (Chestnut Street), investigated; 4:20 a.m.: commercial alarm (Chestnut Street), services rendered; 4:38 a.m.: commercial alarm (Water Street), service rendered; 6:10 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), Todd Richard Hickey, 52, 5 Chestnut Street, Spencer, op w/suspended license, mv lights violation, arrest; 6:45 a.m.: 911 call (Clark Road), resolved; 9:35 a.m.: mv complaint (Pleasant Street), c/o speeding; 9:58 a.m.: DPW call (Olde Main Street), lg. sink hole; 10:00 a.m.: restraining order service (West Main Street); 10:25 a.m.: restraining order service (Hastings Road); 12:28 a.m.: medical/general (High Street); 10:47 a.m.: residential alarm (Wilson Avenue), services rendered; 11:07 a.m.: harassment prevention order service (Maple Street); 11:17 a.m.: sex offender registration (West Main Street), assisted; 11:19 a.m.: suspicious mv (Maple Street), N-Grid wildlife survey; 11:25 a.m.: officer wanted (Vine Street), spoken to; 11:41 a.m.: 911 call (Maple Street), no emergency; 11:51 a.m.: medical/general (Howe Village), lift assist; 12:19 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), assist Leicester PD w/RMV; 12:19 p.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), debris in road; 3:19 p.m.: disturbance (Clark Street), re: neighbor dispute; 4:01 p.m.: juvenile matter (Main Street), rep. harassment via social media; 4:54 p.m.: 911 call (West Main Street), UMass cath lab down; 8:50 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; 9:10 p.m.: suspicious mv (Valley Street), investigated; 11:35 p.m.: medical/general (Lincoln Street); 11:51 p.m.: missing person/juvenile (West Main Street), daughter overdue at home; (total daily mv stops - 10).



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LOGS

continued from page A14

**S A T U R D A Y ,
DECEMBER 9**

12:56 a.m.: medical/general (Church Street); 1:15-2:18 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 3:38 a.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Southbridge PD bolo; 4:15 a.m.: medical/general (Donnelly Cross Road); 6:55 a.m.: residential alarm (Paxton Road), services rendered; 9:11 a.m.: animal complaint (Charlton Road), dead animal in road; 10:00 a.m.: suspicious mv (Charlton Road), water leak; 11:50 a.m.: officer wanted (Chestnut Street), caller needs help; 11:55 a.m.: fraud/confidence game (Wilson Avenue), re: call rec'd by husband; 11:57 a.m.: medical/general (Hastings Road); 11:57 a.m.: medical/general (Charlton Road); 12:57 p.m.: animal complaint (Main Street), rep. abuse of animal; 4:28 a.m.: animal complaint (Pleasant Street), barking dog; 4:38 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 4:58 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), rep. excessive use of horn; 5:36 p.m.: medical/general (Lincoln Street); 6:53 p.m.: commercial alarm

(West Main Street), services rendered; 7:08 p.m.: citizen complaint (Main Street), c/o road blocked for parade; 7:08 p.m.: accident (Donnelly Road), report taken; 7:18 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), UMass cardiac cath lab down; 8:10 p.m.: suspicious mv (Charlton Road), investigated; 8:22 p.m.: disabled mv (West Main Street), assisted; 8:28 p.m.: medical/general (Roys Drive); 11:16 p.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), services rendered; 11:59 p.m.: intelligence/criminal (West Main Street), info rec'd; (total daily mv stop - 7).

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

12:32-2:07 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 9:48 a.m.: RV complaint (Main Street), 4-wheeler stuck in swamp; 10:16 a.m.: medical/general (Charlton Road); 10:53 a.m.: suspicious persons (Meadow Road), investigated; 10:55 a.m.: officer wanted (R. Jones Road), black VW fled from officer; 11:22 a.m.: building checked, secure; 11:29 a.m.: officer wanted (Charlton Road), items falling from truck bed; 11:36 a.m.: medical/general (Maple Street); 12:24 p.m.: medical/general

(High Street); 1:34 p.m.: mv lockout (McCormick Road), assisted; 2:42 p.m.: disturbance (Chickering Road), unwanted party; 4:07 p.m.: mv complaint (West Main Street), erratic operator; 5:00 p.m.: medical/general (Chestnut Street); 5:40 p.m.: officer wanted (Bixby Road), spoken to; 6:24 p.m.: medical/general (Lloyd Dyer Drive); 7:16 p.m.: officer wanted (East Charlton Road), lg. limb in roadway; 7:33 p.m.: elderly matter (Pleasant Street), frightened re: photo left at door; 8:28 p.m.: suspicious persons (West Main Street), heard knocking on kitchen door; 10:16 p.m.: mutual aid (Main Street), tree down w/ bound lane; (total daily mv stops - 1).

MONDAY, DECEMBER 11

12:13-2:39 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:37 a.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 1:40 a.m.: DPW call (Thompson Pond Road), re: road washout; 7:03 a.m.: 911 call (Main Street), accidental; 7:40 a.m.: DPW call (Bond Street), tree down on wires; 9:04 a.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), services rendered; 9:09 a.m.: medical/general (Wire Village Road); 9:19 a.m.: mv

complaint (Main Street), erratic operator/box truck; 9:48 a.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 11:20 a.m.: medical/general (Hastings Road); 11:31 a.m.: animal complaint (Bay Path Road), neighbor's dog killed some chickens; 11:55 a.m.: animal complaint (South Street), re: missing cat; 12:08 p.m.: 911 call (Ash Street), hang-up; 12:17 p.m.: medical/general (West Main Street); 12:39 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), rep. road rage; 12:59 p.m.: medical/general (West Main Street); 2:23 p.m.: officer wanted (Norcross Road), wants advice; 2:34 p.m.: restraining order service (Cherry Street); 2:43 p.m.: juvenile matter (Main Street), re: incident yesterday; 3:21 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Sturbridge PD bolo/erratic operator; 3:40 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), spoken to; 3:48 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Oxford PD bolo; 5:16 p.m.: medical/general (High Street); 5:30 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operator; 6:13 p.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), re: trash left at front door; 7:30 p.m.: mv reposessed (Smithville Road), info rec'd; 8:10 p.m.: mutual

aid (West Main Street), Leicester PD bolo; 11:00 p.m.: animal complaint (Meadow Road), req. check dogs in pound; 11:57 p.m.: building checked, secure; (total daily mv stops - 2).

**T U E S D A Y ,
DECEMBER 12**

12:01-2:41 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 12:16 a.m.: 911 call (Temple Street), hit/run accident; 1:37 a.m.: parking violation (Church Street), ticket issued; 1:56 a.m.: commercial alarm (Water Street), services rendered; 2:43 a.m.: medical/general (Oakland Drive); 2:58 a.m.: fire alarm (Cherry Street), referred; 7:12 a.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Charlton PD bolo/welfare check; 7:53 a.m.: larceny (Main Street), re: stolen pkg.; 8:20 a.m.: animal complaint (Browning Pond Road), re: injured owl; 11:41 a.m.: disturbance (Lake Street), rep. female yelling; 12:21 p.m.: medical/general (Lamoureux Lane); 1:19 p.m.: restraining order service (West Main Street); 1:25 p.m.: mv theft (Crestview Drive), rep. license plates stolen; 1:35 p.m.: lost/found (Maple Street), wallet found; 2:57 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), rep.

possible stolen truck; 3:17 p.m.: animal complaint (Bixby Road), dog always loose; 3:28 p.m.: juvenile matter (Hastings Road), foster son not home from school; 3:47 p.m.: medical/general (Wall Street); 3:58 p.m.: disabled mv (Main Street), assisted; 4:30 p.m.: residential fire (East Charlton Road), referred; 5:11 p.m.: residential alarm (Howe Village), services rendered; 5:22 p.m.: officer wanted (Church Street), re: stolen airpods; 5:45 p.m.: fire/woods/grass (Sherman Grove), fire in barrel; 6:15 p.m.: medical/general (Mechanic Street); 8:08 p.m.: residential alarm (Lake Street), services rendered; 8:19 p.m.: suspicious persons (Park Street), investigated; 8:53 p.m.: juvenile matter (Ash Street), re: DA's referral; 9:27 p.m.: suspicious mv (Pleasant Street), investigated/mv at school; 10:16 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operator; 11:41 p.m.: building checked, secure; 11:56 p.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; (total daily mv stops - 1).

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Courtesy

Spencer held its annual Parade of Lights on Route 9 this month.

TOMLIN

continued from page A1

difficult situation. These include Nancy Manske, the district's preschool and early education director, who helped Tomlin manage EBES while district officials worked to identify a candidate for the Lead Teacher position.

Tomlin will continue to serve as KTMS Principal through the remainder of the year. Meanwhile, Lavin will remain in her role as Lead Teacher at EBES.

"I am extremely grateful to have this opportunity as Lead Teacher at EBES, and I look forward to continued professional growth in this position," Lavin said. "I feel that this opportunity will provide me with leadership responsibilities and experiences to prepare for a school leader position down the road."



Parade of Lights a dazzling celebration of the season

SPENCER — In a dazzling celebration of the season, the community continued a beloved tradition this month at the annual Parade of Lights.

Held on Dec. 9, the event showcased an array of vehicles and floats decorated with seasonal delights. From first responders to local businesses and organizations, the community was well-represented at the parade along Route 9.

"It was a great event for the town, and we loved seeing all the great floats, jeeps, and trucks. There were some real creative ideas," read a statement released by the Spencer Police Department. "Thank you to all of the traveling public for accommodating the detours and delays based on the closure."

The parade began at David Prouty High School before running west along Route 9 to Old Main Street. Families from throughout the area enjoyed the magic of illumination.



LEGALS

Burncoat Pond Watershed District
Please be aware that the Burncoat Pond Watershed District will hold a meeting on January 2, 2024 at Leicester Town Hall, 3 Washburn Square, Leicester, MA 01524 in order to set the tax rate for fiscal year 2024. All proprietors are welcome.
December 29, 2023

At the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting to be held on Tuesday, January 09, 2024, in the McCourt Social Hall of Memorial Town Hall, 157 Main Street, Spencer, MA, a public hearing will be held on the following items starting at 7:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as can be heard:
Notice of Public Hearing – Spencer Zoning Board of Appeals
Special Permit– Applicant: Amanda Chase, Owner: WWB Properties; Location: 152 Main Street (1 Mechanic Street), Spencer Assessor's Map U07-64. The applicant is seeking a Special Permit under Sections 4.2.G.2 of the Spencer Zoning Bylaw to have a Custom print shop business. The property is in the Town Center (TC) zoning district.
December 22, 2023
December 29, 2023

At the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting to be held on Tuesday, January 09, 2024, in the McCourt Social Hall of Memorial Town Hall, 157 Main Street, Spencer, MA, a public hearing will be held on the following items starting at 7:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as can be heard:
Notice of Public Hearing – Spencer Zoning Board of Appeals
Special Permit– Applicant: Francis DeFalco, Owner: Angela DeFalco; Location: 64 Chickering Road, Spencer Assessor's Map U30-21. The applicant is seeking a Special Permit under Sections 5.2.6 (Detached Accessory Structure) and 4.4.1.A (Accessory Uses) of the Spencer Zoning Bylaw to replace an existing shed with a larger shed (12 x 24), free standing/ preassembled. The structure will be 25' from the front property line. The property is in the Lake Residential (LR) zoning district.
December 22, 2023
December 29, 2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
Docket No. WO23P4339GD
CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED PERSON PURSUANT TO G.L. c. 190B, §5-304
In the matter of:
Dante I Lindsay
Of: East Brookfield, MA
RESPONDENT

Alleged Incapacitated Person
To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by **Kelly A Lindsay of East Brookfield, MA** in the above captioned matter alleging that **Dante I Lindsay** is in need of a Guardian and requesting that **Kelly A Lindsay of East Brookfield, MA** (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve **Without Surety** on the bond. The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority. **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 **01/09/2024**. 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 above-named**

person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.
WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: December 15, 2023
Stephanie K. Fattman
December 28, 2023

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. WO23P4308EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate of:
Robert E. Pollier, Jr.
Date of Death: 07/28/2023

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Mary A. Pollier of Ware 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: **Mary A. Pollier of Ware MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 01/16/2023**.

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: December 14, 2023
Stephanie K. Fattman, Register of Probate
December 29, 2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Division
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO22P2935EA
Estate of:
Patricia L Tomer
Also known as:
Patricia Louise Kondratick
Date of Death: 05/20/2020
CITATION ON PETITION FOR ORDER OF COMPLETE SETTLEMENT

A Petition for **Order of Complete Settlement** has been filed by **Mackensy L. Bailey of Erving MA** requesting that the court enter a formal Decree of Complete Settlement including the allowance of a final account, First and Final and other such relief as may be requested in the Petition.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 01/16/2024**. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.
Witness, Hon. Leilah A Keamy, First Justice of this Court
December 14, 2023
Stephanie K. Fattman, Register of Probate
December 29, 2023

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