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Thursday, February 2-Friday, February 3, 2023

# “You can go a long way here”

## MCCALL MUSES ON TENURE AS TOWN MANAGER

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — As he’s trying to button up things for his departure next month, Town Manager Michael McCall took a little time to muse on his two and a half years in Town Hall’s corner office, transitioning to a new manager, going to Wayland, and related issues.

“I didn’t know too much about Southbridge when I came in, so I didn’t have any preconceived notions,” he said. “... You learn from your challenges Southbridge, more than some other communities, has a fair amount of challenges, and working with them has made me a better leader and manager.”

McCall, who is leaving to become the first town manager in Wayland later this month, said he and his team are “working to put a smooth transition in place” by documenting what’s been done and what’s still in process for the next manager, including the budget, charter changes, rail trail and fire station projects, and cable contract negotiations. The Town Council recently appointed five people to be the Town Manager Search Committee, and may need to hire an interim manager to fill the gap between McCall and a permanent replacement.

“It’ll be sad to leave a lot of these people,” he admitted, noting he’s proud of having built “good relationships with



key people in the community” and expanding the diversity of people working in Town Hall.

He said a key factor in his decision to leave was the fact Wayland is far closer to his family in Chelmsford. Likewise, the sheer time commitment Southbridge’s system requires has been an issue, being a city form of government with multiple subcommittee meetings on top of the bimonthly (sometimes more) full Town Council sessions. He and others have tried to streamline those meetings, at least by putting subcommittees on a regular schedule, but it has so far not been implemented. Doing so, he added, “would go a long way toward helping the staff make the best use of their time.”

McCall noted that was a “huge learning curve” when he came here, since his prior experience had entirely been in selectmen/town meeting systems. When he started the job in September

2020, it was his first stint as a town manager anywhere. At the time, he was assistant manager in Chelmsford, where’d he’d also served nine years as a selectman.

Coming here, he said he quickly noticed his time was often occupied with emergency repairs of building systems, water pipes and other infrastructure. That seems fairly common for towns our size, places that “get overshadowed by the bigger cities” in terms of state and federal funding.

But McCall notes he’s proud of the fact his time here has seen some major infrastructure projects come into being, including the fire station and rail trail that have been needed for years. Those were also among the issues that made him a little reluctant to say yes to Wayland – he’d really like to be here to see them completed, he said.

Going forward, McCall said he thinks the next manager needs to have “great people skills” and

be “politically savvy but not necessarily political” to juggle the issues presented by council, staff, department heads and residents. Sometimes, he noted, you can’t give people what they request, but need to explain why and/or how to do it. Doing that, he said, requires maintaining an even keel, personality-wise; “everybody deserves the same amount of attention and respect.”

“A lot of people don’t understand what a Town Manager does,” he said. “You’re CEO of a \$70 million organization” and basically on call 24/7 because “anything can go wrong.”

More generally, he said he can see Southbridge becoming a place that draws crowds to galleries and/or recreational opportunities if it has “reasonably priced housing” and gets out of receivership. While he gives Receiver Jeff Villar credit for doing a lot to change the schools, he noted receivership really doesn’t provide a clear path out. That has been a stumbling block in recruiting residents and businesses to turn around the many neglected and vacant places downtown.

Despite those visible issues, McCall noted, “What’s not always apparent is there’s a deep sense of pride in people who come from Southbridge.” Locals watch changes carefully – sometimes, he

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# Southbridge, Sturbridge look at aggregation

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

REGION — Southbridge and Sturbridge seem to be taking opposite paths when it comes to electricity aggregation.

In Southbridge, the town council on Monday voted on a proposal to have the manager negotiate such a deal with Good Energy, but Sturbridge selectmen indicated (without a vote) they’re not likely to go that route at their most recent January meeting.

Southbridge’s vote was after this paper’s deadline, but the General Government subcommittee’s prior meeting recommended doing so unanimously.

Assistant Town Clerk Julie Pena said her office has been receiving multiple calls from people asking about electricity rates and aggregation, and Councilor Mike Marketti noted it has become “very difficult to pay the bill.” Town Manager Michael McCall said aggregation provides an “economy of scale,” and the town is also looking into doing something to cover town facility power costs. (The latter was also on that agenda.) GenGov citizen member Denise Clemence noted several larger businesses in town already aggregate.

There, Good Energy’s John O’Rourke said the program started in the late 1990s as part of Massachusetts’ deregulation of the electricity industry. Then, the law started giving residents and businesses choice of their electricity supplier, which can be done at the individual or community level. Today, there are three aggregation firms in the Bay State: Good Energy, with 59 member towns including Charlton, Oxford and Millbury; Peregrine, with 28 including Worcester; and Colonial, with many small Berkshire towns and Boston, he said.

Aggregation offers three options, he said: the town can set whatever level of renewable energy it wants as its standard (typically five to 10 percent), use the state’s defined requirement (51 percent as of 2022), or 100 percent renewable. Individual households or businesses can choose which they prefer or can opt-out and find their own supplier, but those that stay in it will get a town-negotiated rate for 2-3 years. Small businesses (those labeled as “G-1” users) can also opt-in to the community program.

Typically, O’Rourke said, they see about 85 percent participation, and National Grid will continue providing the service, although the energy source will be different. The aggregators themselves are not providers and not invested in suppliers; they get paid by the suppliers after the contract launches, not by the town or customers. Towns can negotiate individually or do so in groups; one of their contracts includes 25 towns.

Good Energy’s most recent contracts have been coming in at .16310 cents per KWh, higher than last year’s .10470, but much lower than the present National Grid base rate of .33891, which changes every six months. Aggregation’s purpose is to reduce the customer’s rates, but he noted “we can’t always guarantee that,” a disclaimer required by law, he added.

According to the US Energy Information Agency, the Bay State’s electricity use was 1,098,000 MWh as of 2020, broken down as follows: 67.7 percent natural gas, 16.1 percent hydroelectric, and 26.1 percent “non-hydroelectric renewables” (which includes solar, wind and nuclear by their definition, mostly nuclear). It doesn’t show any “petroleum-fired,” but many gas-run facilities use oil as a backup (including Millennium in Charlton).

Sturbridge’s town administrator Robin Grimm is still looking into it, but said she didn’t like the fact it’s an “opt-out program” which she described as “for

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# Economic growth remains focus for Charlton in 2023

BY JASON BLEAU  
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — As the new year gets underway Charlton is looking to put a major focus on economic growth in 2023.

Town Administrator Andrew Golas spoke briefly with selectmen during a Jan 24 meeting providing an update on some of the business outreach efforts the town

has or will be embracing. Recently, Golas met with a group of local business representatives where he said they discussed numerous issues related to economic development and continued growth in Charlton.

“I did have an opportunity to meet with the Charlton Business Networking Group last month – we discussed some ways that the group

could work with the town to support the community overall and one point of discussion that came up during that meeting was town branding and signage at points of entry around town so I’ll continue to work with them as far as ways we can make that work,” said Golas.

Economic growth has been a prime talking point for town officials

for several years now, especially with the growth of the Route 20 corridor and the welcoming of several new types of businesses including marijuana dispensaries and the under-construction Amazon facility. Golas seemed to solidify continued growth as a priority in the new year indicating that he will continue to work with

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# Sturbridge investigating skimmer scams

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

STURBRIDGE — Local police are warning people to be on the lookout for credit card skimmers, small devices attached to some gas pumps and similar machines that accept credit cards, typically outdoors.

According to Police Chief Earl Dessert at a recent selectmen’s meeting, his department is investigating “four or five of them in two separate incidents,” including at Pilot gas station.

Selectman Ian Dunning noted “A place like Pilot’s a prime target because most users aren’t there more than once.” Many are out-of-state truckers, but the site also sees some semi-regular commuters from Connecticut.

Dessert agreed, saying

“They’re using big-company credit cards, too.”

Skimmers are devices that look very much like real card readers, but are programmed to either store or transmit the users’ credit card information to criminals. Sometimes, the crooks are nearby receiving the data wirelessly; sometimes, they swing by later to collect the devices themselves for it.

According to a Forbes.com Advisor story from last November by Chauncey Crail, they’re “most often found at ATMs and gas stations, but it’s possible for retail stores or restaurants to be involved in a skimming scam as well.”

They’re not easy to identify, but are more likely to be attached to pumps or ATMs in

less-obvious and less-used locations that might be harder to monitor than those pumps visible from the store itself.

“Skimmers are often placed on top of the actual card reader making it stick out at an odd angle or cover arrows in a panel,” Crail wrote. “Compare the card reader to others at a neighboring ATM or gas pump and look out for any differences.” One of the more common ones is broken security tape on gas pumps.

According to the FBI, “Look for anything loose, crooked, damaged, or scratched. Don’t use any card reader if you notice anything unusual.”

“Criminals use the data to create fake debit or credit cards and then

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Courtesy

## THANK YOU, BIG BUNNY

On Jan. 27, Representatives from Quinebaug Masonic Lodge in Southbridge met with Leo Lambert, manager of Big Bunny Market, to present him with a Certificate of Appreciation. This certificate was given to Big Bunny for their contribution in helping the community by allowing nonprofit organizations like Quinebaug Masonic Lodge to set up food drive booths in front of their grocery market. All groceries collected went to the local food share located on Elm St. in Southbridge. This small act of kindness goes a long way in helping so many people in the community. Left to right: Bro. Eric Willard, Store Manager Leo Lambert holding Certificate of Appreciation and shaking hands with Master of Quinebaug Lodge Worshipful Bill Belanger and Bro. Clay Tull.

# Southbridge seniors receive on-the-spot college acceptances at special event

SOUTHBRIDGE — Receiver/Superintendent Dr. Jeffrey A. Villar is pleased to announce that numerous Southbridge seniors were accepted to college during the Massachusetts College Application Celebration (MCAC), hosted in collaboration with MassEdCO.

The event was held on Wednesday, Jan. 11 in the Southbridge High School library. At the event, 52 Southbridge students connected with representatives from Assumption University, Fitchburg State University, UMass Dartmouth, Worcester State University and Quinsigamond Community College.

Students had the opportunity to complete applications to the colleges prior to or during the event. Students completed a total of 150 applications. Participating institutions granted 53 on-the-spot acceptances to 26 students.

Students also used the event as a way to network and learn about the respective colleges. This was Southbridge's



Senior Courtney Dibartolo networks with a representative from Assumption University at the Massachusetts College Application Celebration.

fifth time participating in the MCAC event.

“Congratulations to the participating students on their acceptance to college, which is a great feat. These students should be proud of all the hard work and dedication that helped them to reach this milestone,” Villar said. “I would like to thank all the institutions that attended our MCAC event for taking time out of their day to visit our high school and for showing great support for our students, as well as MassEdCO for helping make this event possible.”

MCAC is a statewide event dedicated to the college application process. The event encourages students to take a significant step toward college by providing assistance and building excitement for the college application process. MassEdCO is a non-profit organization in Worcester that works toward higher education access for students from historically underrepresented populations. Educational Talent Search, a federally funded TRIO program, has allowed MassEdCO to operate in Southbridge for the past seven years.

## DA provides funding for safe student programs

BY KEVIN FLANDERS  
STAFF WRITER

REGION — For the fifth year, Worcester County District Attorney Joseph Early, Jr. is offering funding to support safe programs for students this spring.

Programs will include post-prom and post-graduation activities designed to prevent students from driving impaired and attending unsupervised events. Spring is often the most dangerous season on the roads for young drivers, with an array of celebratory events taking

place from April through early June.

Each year, the DA and his team make it a priority to keep young people safe at supervised local events.

“Prom and graduation are major milestones that deserve to be celebrated, but too often we see these celebrations turn into tragedies,” Early said. “We’ve been proud to help fund nearly 20 different post-prom and post-graduation events for the last five years. We will continue to offer these funds to help pro-

vide students with the fun and safe events they deserve.”

This year’s events, organized and overseen by adults, will offer safe drug-free and alcohol-free alternatives to high-risk activities that often follow year-end celebrations for high school students.

Early said this year’s programs will be funded by his office’s Drug Forfeiture Reinvestment Program. Funding to support these grants was previously provided by the Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance Drunk

Driving Trust Fund.

Schools and parent groups can apply for grants to continue existing programs or establish new events promoting student safety this spring.

Applications for funding requests are due by Feb. 16.

To request a grant application, or to learn

more about various grant opportunities, contact Ellen Miller at [ellen.miller@mass.gov](mailto:ellen.miller@mass.gov).

Meanwhile, students and their families are encouraged by local law enforcement agencies to make responsible decisions this spring season and take part in supervised celebratory events.

Avoid situations where drugs and alcohol may be present, police said.

To learn more about the DA’s programs and funding opportunities available for safe alternative events this spring, visit [www.worcesterda.com](http://www.worcesterda.com).

## Charlton resident named to Ithaca Dean’s List

ITHACA, N.Y. — Aislinn Ennis of Charlton has been named to the Dean’s List for the fall semester (her first) at Cornell University’s College of Engineering. Ennis is a 2022 graduate of Shepherd Hill Regional High School majoring in Electrical Engineering.

[www.StonebridgePress.com](http://www.StonebridgePress.com)

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## Friday’s Child

**Hi! My name is John and I love the trampoline!**

John is a relaxed and very easy-going boy of Caucasian descent. He enjoys matching games, jumping on his mini trampoline, and playing with a beaded necklace and other small objects. John is diagnosed with non-verbal autism and he utilizes communication through an iPad app.

John does well in school and enjoys being in class with other students. He does not have any physical needs.

Legally freed for adoption, John’s social worker is seeking a family of any constellation. An ideal family for John would be one that is familiar with his diagnosis and a family that is open to having services in the home to aid John throughout his life. A family must also be open to supporting John’s relationship with his sibling and biological mother.

<https://www.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/child/8291>

**Can I Adopt?**

If you’re at least 18 years old, have a stable source of income, and room in your heart, you may be a perfect match to adopt a waiting child. Adoptive parents can be single, married, or partnered; experienced or not; renters or homeowners; LGBTQ+ singles and couples.

As an adoptive parent, you won’t have to pay any fees, adoption from foster care is completely free in Massachusetts.

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

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

## ALL WE KNOW IS LOCAL ~ StonebridgePress.com



# DA continues partnership with IFB to stop insurance fraud, lower premium costs



Courtesy

From left: Assistant District Attorney Maureen McNally, Insurance Fraud Bureau Executive Director Anthony DiPaolo, and District Attorney Joseph D. Early, Jr.

WORCESTER — For the 15th year, Worcester County District Attorney Joseph D. Early Jr. is continuing a partnership with the Insurance Fraud Bureau to work to eliminate insurance fraud, an effort that helps reduce automobile insurance premiums for all drivers.

On Wednesday, Executive Director of the IFB of Massachusetts Anthony M. DiPaolo presented Mr. Early with a check for the partnership to continue in 2023.

The IFB calculates that the insurance fraud deterrence efforts have saved \$28.3 million in losses in Worcester County, resulting in an average savings per vehicle of \$48.

“We are proud to continue

partnering with the Insurance Fraud Bureau on this effort,” Mr. Early said. “These incidents of fraud impact us all, taking money out of the pockets of honest, hard-working citizens. Over the last 15 years, we’ve helped save millions of dollars in lower insurance premiums for Worcester County residents.”

In 2022, the Worcester County

District Attorney’s Office prosecuted 22 of these fraud cases. The IFB provides an annual grant to help fund the investigation and prosecution of staged accidents and fraudulent claim cases.

IFB investigators, local police, District Attorneys and insurance company investigators work together to detect, investigate, prosecute and prevent automobile insurance fraud.

## Spectrum Health Systems announces changes to 2023 Board of Directors

WORCESTER — Spectrum Health Systems, Inc., a longtime not-for-profit organization providing a comprehensive continuum of addiction treatment throughout Massachusetts, announced today the appointment of Thomas Turco, former secretary to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, to its board of directors, and Cheryl Gallant, vice president of Human Resources at Coghlin Companies, Inc., as board chair.

“We are honored to have Thomas join our board of directors for 2023, and to see Cheryl take this step in leadership,” said Kurt Isaacson, President and CEO of Spectrum Health Systems. “Both have strong backgrounds in their respective fields and have earned their roles on our board for their expertise and values in advocacy as our board continues to support our organization, employees, clients, and their families in gaining access to treatment through our many service offerings.”

Gallant’s experience working in employee relations, workforce planning and driving process improvements to further enhance work culture will help drive a positive employee experience for Spectrum and its staff in addition to the service its staff provides to clients. Gallant has been a Spectrum board member since 2018 and will be replacing Andrew Salmon, Chief Future Officer at Salmon Health and Retirement, as board chair. Salmon remains a board member. She will be an active presence and a voice for the organization around sustained initiatives intended to enhance services for the employees and clients it serves. A resident of Worcester, Gallant brings more than 30 years of experience in human resources since receiving her undergraduate degree in communications from the University of Missouri and her master’s degree in human resources management from Lindenwood University in Missouri.

Retiring in 2021 after serving as a consultant and secretary to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security for the past three years, Turco made tremendous strides to help reform and enhance statewide corrections over the course of his career. His experience and background in developing standardized law enforcement practices and policy standards will serve as valuable expertise on the board in helping to strengthen the company’s correctional division and administration of care to justice-involved individuals among its respected partnerships in Massachusetts, Georgia and Virginia. Turco currently resides in Auburn, and received his undergraduate degree in criminal justice from St. Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire before earning his Master’s degree in criminal justice administration from Western New England College in Springfield.

Gallant and Turco’s shared passion for making a difference among those they serve will help further improve the work Spectrum is doing to provide effective treatment, education, and more to ensure life-saving care and knowledge are accessible to those who need it in Massachusetts and beyond.

For more information about Spectrum Health Systems, visit our Web site or call 1-877-MyRehab.

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## Local students named to UVM Dean’s List

BURLINGTON, Vt. — Serena Veilleux and Carter Belog have been named to the dean’s list for the fall 2022 semester at the University of Vermont.

Veilleux, from Charlton, is majoring in Geology. Belog, from Sturbridge, is majoring in Electrical Engineering. To be named to the dean’s list, students must have a grade-point average of 3.0 or better and rank in the top 20 percent of their class in their respective college or school.

**About UVM**  
Since 1791, the University of Vermont has worked to move humankind forward. Committed to both research and teaching, UVM professors – world-class researchers, scholars, and artists – bring their discoveries into the classroom and their students into the field. Located in Burlington, Vermont, one of the nation’s most vibrant small cities and top college towns, UVM top 100 national research university educating over 14,000 undergraduate students, graduate students, certificate and non-degree students, and M.D. students in the Larner College of Medicine.

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When: Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup> & Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 pm-9:00 pm,  
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**Adult Fly-Tying and Rod Building Classes, starting in February...Sign up Today!**

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[www.newenglandflytyers.org](http://www.newenglandflytyers.org)

## Activities Assistant for Council on Aging (15 hours per week) – Town of Charlton



The Council on Aging Department is seeking an Activities Assistant to help with bringing new innovative programs and organizing activities for our very active senior community. Some administrative work will be required. Please see job description for complete list of qualifications and responsibilities. Hourly rate: \$16.06 – \$17.72 dependent on experience and education. Please apply online at <https://www.townofcharlton.net/158/Human-Resources> no later than February 13, 2023 .

Position will remain open until filled. The Town of Charlton is an equal opportunity employer and encourages diversity.



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End Date: 12/31/22  
Town(s): Southbridge

Office	Listed & Sold Units \$ Vol*	Listed/Not Sold Units \$ Vol	Sold/Not Listed Units \$ Vol	Total Units \$ Vol*	Sides %/\$ Vol
1 Aucoin Ryan Realty Southbridge, MA 01550	10 1,792,000	22 5,979,225	4 1,138,500	36 8,909,725	46 6.42
2 1 Worcester Homes Auburn, MA 01501	1 3,500	11 3,494,800	16 4,237,000	28 7,735,300	29 5.57
3 Lamacchia Realty, Inc. Worcester, MA 01606	1 660,000	12 4,311,900	8 2,319,900	21 7,291,800	22 5.25
4 Keller Williams Realty Greater Worcester Worcester, MA 01604	-	8 2,687,325	12 3,811,900	20 6,499,225	20 4.68
5 RE/MAX Prof Associates Sturbridge, MA 01566	2 87,000	12 4,064,000	5 1,247,625	19 5,398,625	21 3.89
6 eXp Realty Auburn, MA 01501	3 2,420,000	5 1,711,000	1 490,000	9 4,621,000	12 3.33
7 Property Investors & Advisors, LLC Worcester, MA 01608	-	2 730,000	10 3,211,900	12 3,941,900	12 2.84
8 ERA Key Realty Services- Spenc Spencer, MA 01562	-	1 375,000	9 3,191,400	10 3,566,400	10 2.57
9 eXp Realty Southborough, MA 01772	1 560,000	4 921,500	5 1,877,000	10 3,358,500	11 2.42
10 Coldwell Banker Realty - Worcester Worcester, MA 01605	2 842,400	3 1,030,000	2 640,000	7 2,512,400	9 1.81

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This program is supported by a grant from the Sturbridge Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Afternoon Book Discussion: "The Kitchen Front" by Jennifer Ryan

Join us for our discussion of the book The Kitchen Front by Jennifer Ryan. This program will be from 1-3 p.m. on Feb. 7 in the library's meeting room. Copies of the book can be reserved online and picked up at the library during business hours. Sponsored by the Friends of the JHPL. If you have any questions please visit our website at sturbridgelibrary.org or call us at (508)-347-2512.

About the book: Two years into World War II, Britain is feeling her losses: The Nazis have won battles, the Blitz has destroyed cities, and U-boats have cut off the food supply. In an effort to help housewives with food rationing, a BBC radio program called The Kitchen Front is holding a cooking contest—and the grand prize is a job as the program's first-ever female co-host. For four very different women, winning the competition would present a crucial chance to change their lives.

Armchair Travelers: "In a Sunburned Country"

Join us on Feb. 22 from 7-8 p.m. for a discussion of In a Sunburned Country by Bill Bryson. Patrons can drop in for

a conversation in the Library's meeting room about the ideas presented in the book. For any questions, please visit our website at sturbridgelibrary.org or call our front desk at (508)-347-2512. Copies are available and can be picked up at the library. Sponsored by the Friends of the JHPL.

About the book: Every time Bill Bryson walks out the door memorable travel literature threatens to break out. His previous excursion up, down, and over the Appalachian Trail (well, most of it) resulted in the sublime national bestseller "A Walk in the Woods." Now he has traveled across the world and all the way Down Under to Australia, a shockingly under-discovered country with the friendliest inhabitants, the hottest, driest weather, and the most peculiar and lethal wildlife to be found on the planet. In a Sunburned Country is his report on what he found there—a deliciously funny, fact-filled, and adventurous performance by a writer who combines humor, wonder, and unflinching curiosity. (Amazon)

## Southbridge Public Schools partners with ENGAGE Massachusetts to support students' success

SOUTHBRIDGE — Receiver/Superintendent Dr. Jeffrey A. Villar is pleased to announce that Southbridge Public Schools has partnered with ENGAGE Massachusetts (ENGAGE MA) to support and increase student success.

The ENGAGE MA program is free and designed to provide extra support for students in Grades 6-12 who may be struggling academically or are in need of social-emotional support, as well as their families. The program aims to boost school engagement and academic success during the school year.

The District currently has 46 students enrolled in the program and Engage MA is working to enroll additional students.

Students who choose to participate in the program are assigned an academic support coach, who answers questions, connects them with resources and implements a plan to help

the student stay on track and engaged with their schooling.

"This partnership gives students and parents an extra layer of support, one that not only helps identify areas of concern, but also provides skilled solutions and approaches," Villar said. "Through this program, we aim to increase student engagement and achievement, and create a path of success that leads them to graduation and beyond."

Coaches encourage and motivate students, offer organization and study tips and provide students with educational resources and exercises to help strengthen math and reading skills. They also give students referrals to local nonprofit organizations that can provide social-emotional support.

The program is tailored to each student's specific needs. Students and parents can choose how often they wish to do check-ins with their coach.

## Jess Ertsgard named to President's List at Miami University

OXFORD, Ohio — Jess Ertsgard was named to the Miami University fall 2022-23 President's list.

Miami University students who are ranked in the top three percent of undergraduate students within each division for the fall semester 2022-23 have been named to the President's list recognizing academic excellence.

Ertsgard, from Sturbridge is earning a B.S. in Kin, Nutr & Health degree in Kinesiology.

Nationally recognized as one of the most outstanding undergraduate institutions, Miami University is a public university located in Oxford, Ohio. With a student body of nearly 19,000, Miami effectively combines a wide range of strong academic programs with faculty who love to teach and the personal attention ordinarily found only at much smaller institutions.

## REAL ESTATE

### BRIMFIELD

None

### CHARLTON

None

### HOLLAND

\$375,000, 30 Butterworth Rd, Boody, Hunter, and Boody, Lauren M, to Grajales Jr, Benjamin, and Grajales, Mikayla.

### SOUTHBRIDGE

\$347,000, 125 Chapin St, Hamre, Blake J, and Sharma, Dru, to Polunci, Jason C, and Aiello, Michael.

\$340,000, 27 Curtis St, Reed, Rose A, to Bremer, Courtney B.

\$337,000, 20 Fairview Ave, Plumbers Inc, to Akyeampong, Kelvin, and

Obeng, Linda. \$139,114, 212 Dennison Ln, Lach, Cody C, to Lach, Bethany M.

\$112,000, 528 Main St, Kiago, Hellen, and Wells Fargo Bank Na, to Twenty Twelve LLC.

\$50,000, 76 Morris St, Skarani Doris Est, and Hanlon, Shirley, to Special Tech Inc.

### STURBRIDGE

\$615,000, 4 Evergreen Ln, Noinala, Khampraseuth, and Noinala, Toumkham, to Patel, Parth B.

\$380,000, 47 Woodland St, Resilient Investments LLC, to Finn, Shaun.

\$275,000, 254-A Holland Rd, Federal Hm Loan Mtg Corp, to Zelenak Jr, William J, and Nelson, David K.

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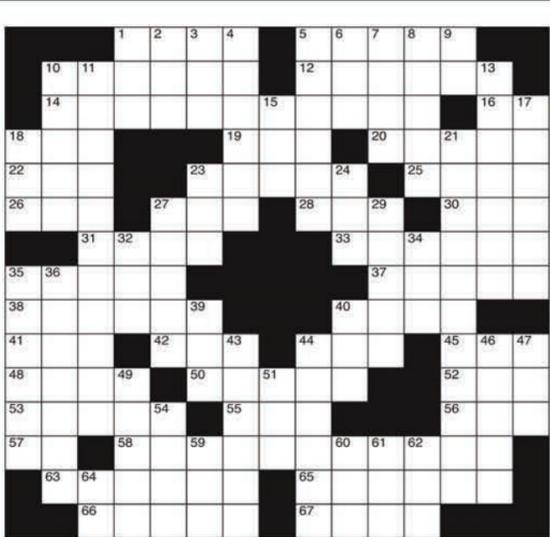
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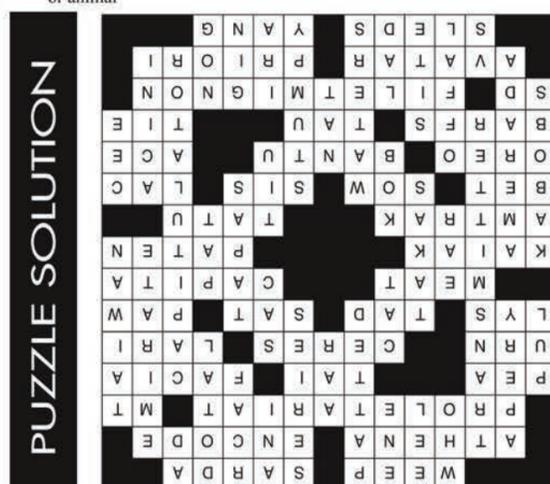


### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Shed tears
- 5. Luxury jewelry designer
- 10. Goddess of wisdom
- 12. Convert into a particular form
- 14. Working-class people
- 16. It borders Canada (abbr.)
- 18. A princess can detect its presence
- 19. Red-brown sea bream
- 20. Defunct retail empire
- 22. Vase
- 23. Demeter's equivalent
- 25. Monetary unit of the Maldives
- 26. French and Belgian river
- 27. Small amount
- 28. High schoolers' test
- 30. Animal's foot
- 31. Some is red
- 33. Per \_\_\_ each
- 35. Swedish jazz pop duo
- 37. Plate for Eucharist
- 38. Train line
- 40. Russian pop duo
- 41. Stake
- 42. Plant by scattering
- 44. Female sibling
- 45. City of Angels hoopsters (abbr.)
- 48. Popular cookie brand
- 50. Group of Niger-Congo languages
- 52. A team's best pitcher
- 53. Vomits
- 55. 19th letter of Greek alphabet
- 56. Men's fashion accessory
- 57. Its capital is Pierre (abbr.)
- 58. Expensive cut of steak
- 63. Popular James Cameron film
- 65. A \_\_\_; relating to knowledge gleaned from deduction
- 66. Kids' snow toys
- 67. Flip side to yin

### CLUES DOWN

- 1. Global public health agency
- 2. Snake-like fish
- 3. Midway between northeast and east
- 4. Dabbed
- 5. TV show
- 6. Folk singer DiFranco
- 7. Canadian flyers
- 8. Of the dowry
- 9. Commercial
- 10. The act of imitating
- 11. Equipment used to broadcast radio or TV signals
- 13. Lands of an emir
- 15. Swiss river
- 17. Island
- 18. Monetary unit of Afghanistan
- 21. One who surrenders under agreed conditions
- 23. Garfield is one
- 24. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
- 27. Small boats used in the Black Sea
- 29. Small savory Spanish dishes
- 32. Body part
- 34. Touch lightly
- 35. Popular grilled foods on a stick
- 36. \_\_\_ Hess: oil company
- 39. Antelope with a reddish coat
- 40. Pharaoh of Lower Egypt
- 43. Pink Floyd's Roger
- 44. Short and thick
- 46. Small, sac-like cavities
- 47. Performer \_\_\_-Lo
- 49. Entrails of animal used as food
- 51. \_\_\_ King Cole, musician
- 54. Where construction is done
- 59. Chap
- 60. Investment vehicle
- 61. Often mixed with tonic
- 62. Holiday beverage egg \_\_\_
- 64. Against



PUZZLE SOLUTION

## Worcester Polytechnic Institute announces Dean's List

WORCESTER — A total of 2,069 undergraduate students achieved the criteria required for Worcester Polytechnic Institute's (WPI) fall 2022 Dean's List. The criteria for the WPI Dean's List differs from that of most other universities as WPI does not compute a grade point average (GPA). Instead, WPI defines the Dean's List by the amount of work completed at the A level in courses and projects.

"WPI's academic programs are rigorous and require a level of independence beyond what is required in traditional courses. WPI students work on open-ended problems for communities around the world. The problems are important and the impact is real" said dean of undergraduate studies Arthur C. Heinricher. "Some of this nation's best and brightest students come to WPI to study engineering and science and business and the humanities. Those named to the Dean's List have excelled in all of their work, and we are exceptionally proud of these outstanding students."

The following students were named to the Dean's List for fall 2022:

Ian Grzembki of Sturbridge, majoring in Computer Science (BS), class of 2026

Jack Lafond of Sturbridge, majoring in Data Science (BS), class of 2025

Ryan Malone of Brimfield, majoring in Robotics Engineering (BS), class of 2025

Isabella Pabon of Worcester, majoring in Computer Science (BS), class of 2025

Jack Robertson of Holland, majoring in Aerospace Engineering (BS), class of 2024

Samantha Arroyas of Uxbridge, majoring in Industrial Engineering (BS), class of 2025

Cutter Beck of Charlton, majoring in Computer Science, class of 2025

Kayla Carpenter of Charlton, majoring in Chemical Engineering (BS), class of 2024

Connor Chartier of Uxbridge, majoring in Computer Science (BS), class of 2025

Michaela Cluett of Charlton, majoring in Business (BS), class of 2025

Maline Demers of Uxbridge, majoring in Psychological Science (BS), class of 2025

Emily Frick of Uxbridge, majoring in Biomedical Engineering (BS), class of 2023

Jocelyn Hinchcliffe of Uxbridge, majoring in Biology and Biotechnology (BS), class of 2025

Ethan Lilley of Charlton, majoring in Electrical and Computer Engineering (BS), class of 2025

Bridget McGonagle of Charlton, majoring in Biochemistry (BS), class of 2026

Robert Mellen of Uxbridge, majoring in Robotics Engineering (BS), class of 2026

Cristian Oliveira of Uxbridge, majoring in Robotics Engineering (BS), class of 2026

Hannah Smith of Uxbridge, majoring in Biology and Biotechnology (BS), class of 2023

Clarice Stumpf of Uxbridge, majoring in Biochemistry (BS), class of 2025

Stefanie Beaudry of Southbridge, majoring in Architectural Engineering, class of 2023

Thomas Benoit of Southbridge, majoring in Electrical and Computer Engineering (BS), class of 2026

Karl Ghosn of Southbridge, majoring in Mechanical Engineering (BS), class of 2025

Jeremy Peters of Southbridge, majoring in Mechanical Engineering (BS), class of 2025

Ethan Shanbaum of Southbridge, majoring in Computer Science (BS), class of 2026

Joelis Velez Diaz of Southbridge, majoring in Chemical Engineering (BS), class of 2024

About Worcester Polytechnic Institute WPI, a global leader in project-based learning, is a distinctive, top-tier technological university founded in 1865 on the principle that students learn most effectively by applying the theory learned in the classroom to the practice of solving real-world problems. Recognized by the National Academy of Engineering with the 2016 Bernard M. Gordon Prize for Innovation in Engineering and Technology Education, WPI's pioneering project-based curriculum engages undergraduates in solving important scientific, technological, and societal problems throughout their education and at more than 50 project centers around the world. WPI offers more than 70 bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs across 18 academic departments in science, engineering, technology, business, the social sciences, and the humanities and arts. Its faculty and students pursue groundbreaking research to meet ongoing challenges in health and biotechnology; robotics and the internet of things; advanced materials and manufacturing; cyber, data, and security systems; learning science; and more. [www.wpi.edu](http://www.wpi.edu)

## School Committee rejects transportation bids, hoping for cheaper pricing

BY JASON BLEAU  
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY/CHARLTON — As with most expenses these days, the cost of transportation has also gone up for school districts including the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District who discussed the most recent transportation bid during their Jan. 11 meeting.

Richard Mathieu, Director of Finance and Operations for the district, brought forth the bids collected for school transportation admitting that what would have normally been a relatively standard item on the agenda was complicated by rising costs while the district is already approaching a tight budget situation in the new year.

The lowest bidder was the district's current transportation partner, First Student, which offered a three-year fixed rate with two one-year district options making it a three-to-five-year contract. However, the bid came in with a significant increase which left Mathieu seeking the School Committee's insight into how to proceed.

"Normally, this is a very straightforward recommendation, especially when the incumbent is the low bidder.

However, this round of bids came in substantially higher than predicted and given the state of perpetual financial pressure in the district all options must be carefully considered. More than 50 percent of the increase is dedicated to drivers' wages as First Student attempts to solidify its local employee base and enter into a future collective bargaining agreement," said Mathieu.

The district attempted to negotiate the price with First Student within state regulations and, after a few offers and counter offers, settled on a \$50,000 credit spread over the five years. However, Mathieu didn't feel he could provide a recommendation choosing instead to discuss the pros and cons of rejecting the offer or accepting it with either decision bringing potential risks.

"The con to accepting the bid is simply the price increase. A \$550,000 price increase is challenging to accept, while it may be understandable in today's market with all the known price drivers besides wages, the cost of benefits and the cost of fuel — in terms of option two, rejecting the bid, we do have the opportunity to affect pricing by making changes in the bid specs. Specifically, we would reduce the current age of the bus fleet. The current bid says the buses

need to be 2020 or newer and that has been the historic way that Dudley and Charlton have approached transportation," said Mathieu.

Mathieu was clear that both options presented concerns. Rejecting the bid and adjusting the bid specs could reduce the cost but run the unrealistic but still possible risk of receiving no bids or even higher bids. Accepting the option would present higher transportation prices to the towns in an already difficult financial climate during budget season but would lock in the current price with a partner the town has worked with successfully in the past. Mathieu further stressed that because the bids had been opened a decision had to be made at the Jan. 11 meeting even though several members of the School Committee were not present.

The School Committee debated the matter heavily, but a motion was made to reject the bid with the hopes that First Student or another vendor would be open to providing a lower price after adjusting the bid specs. The committee members present voted unanimously to take a chance and reject the offer from First Student with the intent of sending an adjusted transportation contract back out for new bid.

## Free Science of Snow event for Southbridge girls Feb. 13

SOUTHBRIDGE — Girls in grades K-1 and their guardian are invited to a free Science of Snow event on Monday, Feb. 13 from 5:30-6:30 p.m. at the Jacob Edwards Library, 236 Main St., Southbridge.

Participants will learn about the different types of snowflakes, learn why it snows, make their own snow, and earn their first official Girl Scout patch.

This event is for girls in Southbridge in kindergarten and first grade, who are not currently Girl Scouts. RSVP by February 9 at <https://bit.ly/snowsouthbridge>.

For information on Girl Scouts contact Han at [HLaprade@gscwm.org](mailto:HLaprade@gscwm.org) Telephone: 508-749-3604

About Girl Scouts of Central and Western

Massachusetts

Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts serves nearly 5,000 girls in grades K through 12 with the strong support of over 3,000 adult volunteers in 186 towns and cities in central and western Massachusetts. The Girl Scout program allows girls to discover the fun, friendship, and power of girls together while build-

ing their personal leadership qualities. GSCWM supports girls by giving them extraordinary opportunities to explore, experience, and learn about their world and helps girls recognize that they are vital members of their communities. To join, volunteer, reconnect, or donate, visit [www.gscwm.org](http://www.gscwm.org)

## Library's LEGO Club meets Feb. 9

STURBRIDGE — Join us on Feb. 9 for our LEGO Club Meeting! We meet once a month on Thursday evenings from 6 - 7 p.m. in the Library Meeting Room.

This event is suitable for children ages five to 12 with adult caregivers. Registration is required, so please visit our Web site at [sturbridgelibrary.com](http://sturbridgelibrary.com) or our social media pages @sturbridgelibrary to find the registration link. Please message us on Facebook or call our front desk at (508)-347-2512 with additional questions. The Friends of the JHPL sponsors this event.

## Nomination papers available for town election

SOUTHBRIDGE — The annual town election will be held in Southbridge on Tuesday, June 13, and nomination papers will be available to persons who wish to run for local office beginning Tuesday, Jan. 17.

The offices needing to be filled are:

- Three Councilor at Large positions (three years)
- One seat on the Board of Assessors (three years)
- Three School Committee seats (three years)
- One seat on the Southbridge Redevelopment Authority (five years)
- One seat on the Southbridge Housing Authority (one year)

Nomination papers require 43 signatures for all town-wide offices. Nomination papers must be returned to the Town Clerk's office for certification of signatures by Tuesday, April 25 at 5 p.m. For more information regarding the town election and how to obtain nomination papers, call the office of the Town Clerk at (508) 764-5408.

## UMass Memorial Health-Harrington welcomes new practitioner to Brimfield Family Medicine

SOUTHBRIDGE — UMass Memorial Health - Harrington (UMHH) has welcomed Diana Immenhausen, D.O. to its Family Medicine practice located at 255 East Old Sturbridge Rd. in Brimfield. To schedule an appointment, call 508-765-3145.

Dr. Immenhausen brings a decade of experience providing primary care for all ages. She is certified by the American Osteopathic Board of Family Physicians and is a member of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians as well as the American Osteopathic Association.

Prior to joining UMMH physician services, Dr. Immenhausen served as attending physician at Stony Brook Family Medicine in Sag Harbor, N.Y. In addition to caring for patients there, she lectured to family medicine, internal medicine and transitional year residents, and mentored medical students and nurse practitioner students from the Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University and the Stony Brook School of Nursing.

Dr. Immenhausen earned her medical degree from Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine in Erie, Pennsylvania and completed a residency in Family Medicine at Stony Brook Southampton Hospital in Southampton, New York, where she went on to be elected Chief Resident.

UMHH Family Medicine providers care for all ages, from birth through adulthood. They provide comprehensive primary care with a scope of services that ranges from well visits to acute care, in both the inpatient and outpatient environment. For more information, visit [harringtonhospital.org](http://harringtonhospital.org).

# Family Dining & Gift Guide

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### Math Blocks

Fill in the missing blocks with numbers between 0-10. The numbers in each row add up to the totals to the right. The numbers in each column add up to the totals on the bottom.

	2	5	10
7	10		23
	4		13
10	16	20	

6	4	0
9	01	7
5	2	3

Solution

### THIS DAY IN...



### HISTORY

- **1845:** FLORIDA IS ADMITTED AS THE 27TH U.S. STATE.
- **1910:** JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER JR. RETIRES FROM BUSINESS TO DEVOTE ALL OF HIS TIME TO PHILANTHROPY.
- **1986:** THE AUSTRALIA ACT 1986 COMMENCES, RESULTING IN THE COUNTRY'S FULL INDEPENDENCE FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM.

### HEALTH FACT!

TRUE OR FALSE?  
FROZEN VEGETABLES ARE LESS NUTRITIOUS THAN FRESH OR CANNED ONES.

ANSWER: FALSE

### Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.

Z F E R E R E R B N U

Answer: Freezer Burn



### REFRIGERATE

to subject food to cold in order to chill or preserve it

### How they SAY that in...

**ENGLISH:** Ice  
**SPANISH:** Hielo  
**ITALIAN:** Ghiaccio  
**FRENCH:** Glace  
**GERMAN:** Eis

### Did you know?

DESSERTS LIKE ICE CREAM AND ICE POPS ARE POPULAR FROZEN FOODS.

### GET THE PICTURE?

Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

ANSWER: FROZEN (TV) DINNER

### CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to employees. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 25 = C)

**A. 16 19 13 7 14 13**  
Clue: Employee

**B. 19 4 4 26 25 14**  
Clue: Place to do business

**C. 25 3 6 26 25 20 14**  
Clue: Office desk configuration

**D. 6 19 15 15**  
Clue: Supervisor

Answers: A. worker B. office C. cubicle D. boss

### SUDOKU

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

### Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

### 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!

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

ANSWER:

# Grow tasty and nutritious leafy greens indoors

Boost the flavor and nutritional value of winter meals by growing a container of greens indoors. Plant, tend and harvest greens for garden-fresh flavor now and throughout the year.



**GARDEN MOMENTS**  
.....  
**MELINDA MYERS**

Recommended on the seed packet. You can grow each type of green in its own container or mix them up for an attractive display in larger planters like the Tartu Elevated Rectangular Planter (gardeners.com).

ads. Green or red leaf lettuce is easy to grow indoors, and its mild flavor is most appealing to children and picky eaters.

Spinach is another popular and easy-to-grow leafy green vegetable used fresh in salads and smoothies or added to soups and sauces. It contains many vitamins and nutrients, including iron, folic acid, and calcium.

Kale is considered a superfood. This nutrient-dense vegetable is packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. If the flavor is a bit too intense for you, try the baby leaf types that are milder in flavor, or try braising kale for a milder flavor and more tender texture.

Add a bit of peppery flavor to salads, soups, pastas, and other dishes with arugula. Add a spicier flavor with mustard greens. Sauté mustard greens or add them to your favorite Southern, Asian, Indian or savory dish.

Include color and flavor in your winter meals with beet greens. The leafy part of this vegetable is often overlooked but is the most nutritious part of the plant. Use these the same way you would spinach or kale. You can purchase beet varieties selected for growing the best greens to harvest from baby to full size.



Courtesy - Gardener's Supply Company

Tabletop light stands work well on kitchen counters and provide plenty of light for greens to grow.

Green leafy vegetables are healthy sources of carbohydrates, typically rich in fiber and nutrients, while also being low in fat and calories. Many of these vegetables can help reduce the risk of stroke, anemia, high blood pressure, certain cancers, and diabetes. They also help improve the health of your gut, heart, bone, and skin while boosting your body's immunity.

To create your own indoor garden of greens, all you need are seeds, a container, potting mix, and a sunny window or artificial lights. Select a container or planter with drainage holes or reduce maintenance with the help of self-watering containers like the Viva Round or Square self-watering planters. Their water reservoirs reduce watering frequency.

Fill the container with a quality potting mix that is well-drained and retains moisture. Plant seeds as rec-

Water thoroughly and often enough to keep the soil moist while waiting for the seeds to sprout. Reduce the need for frequent watering by covering newly planted containers with a plastic sheet or dome. Once sprouts appear, remove the plastic and begin watering thoroughly when the top inch of soil begins to dry.

Boost productivity and increase planting space with the help of artificial lights. You will find a variety of setups for any space in your home. Counter and tabletop light stands like the Micro Grow Light Garden can be conveniently located in the kitchen or dining room. Stand-alone light shelves provide more growing space within a small footprint. Furniture-grade light stands make them easy to use in any room in the house.

Grow greens you and your family like to use in your favorite recipes and sal-

Make it more fun by getting others involved. Hand family members and guests a plate and kitchen shears so they can harvest and help prepare the meal.

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



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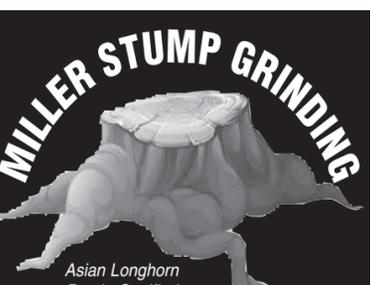
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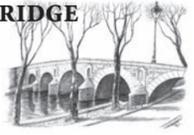
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## Take time away from your phone

Most weeks, our Editorial column spins off of a subject we curious about. While the subject of cell phone and screen addiction comes up often, this week, our perspective on the issue noticeably shifted after receiving a wise tip. A national news story broke, relating that many younger people are switching to flip phones as a way to curb mental illness and burnout. There are several tips as far as screen time and how to manage it. The first one is to ignore your phone, don't even look at it, until 30 minutes after you wake up. In that time, sit down, have your morning coffee, and read a book. When you start to scroll on your phone just after waking up, you put yourself into what's called a passive scrolling phase, which can derail your entire day and ward off productivity. A few days of following this new advice, and there is a noticeable sense of comfort and relaxation that can carry you throughout your day. It's like taking 30 minutes every morning to get back to the basics and recall simpler times. Most people feel like they are in control of their phone use, but are you? How can you determine if you have a phone addiction, or are just part of the modern era grind? We've said it before, and we'll say it again — nothing beats the days of watching "Jeopardy!" uninterrupted, without the pressure of responding to a ding from your phone. In 2011, only 35 percent of the population owned Smartphones; today, 81 percent do. It is our main form of communication, so much so that now there is a term called nomophobia, or the fear of going without your phone. Excessive cell phone use is a huge problem for many. As far as addiction goes, some experts say the dopamine connection the phone offers can be linked to something akin to a drug addiction. The triggering of that chemical in your brain, reinforces compulsive behavior. When we can't predict when we will receive a text or a "like" on social media, we check our phones more often. Adolescents are more vulnerable to this problem than any other age group. Excessive use in that age group is such an issue that most teenagers never turn off their phones. Experts say that the younger a child has access to a phone, the sooner the problems begin. Problematic cell phone use is linked to low self-esteem, low impulse control, depression and anxiety. Signs you may have a phone addiction could be that you reach for your phone if you're bored, you feel anxious or upset if you can't get to your phone, you wake throughout the night to check it, or your phone has caused you to get into an accident. Other signs could be that you spend most of your waking hours on your phone, and that it interferes with personal relationships or work. When trying to focus on work, or any task, you are significantly disrupted, and your concentration is thrown off. Ways to break the addiction in order to fix your relationships, your health and other responsibilities include figuring out if there is a larger issue as to why you're using your phone so much. Are you avoiding something else bigger? Resolving the larger issue at hand, could cause a decrease in phone use. Change your settings to remove notifications and other alerts, set your screen to dark mode at night, keep your phone out of sight and never charge it in your bedroom. After a certain time, set your phone up so that only emergency contacts can get through to you, everyone else can wait. Try replacing games on your phone with real in person games or develop a hobby you've been wanting to try. Too much cell phone use can develop into a loss of control. There have been some experiments where people have gone two days without their phones. Some people choose to give up their phones all together, while others make significant changes to reduce use. The potential risk of depression, insomnia and lack of productivity just isn't worth it. Think back to pre-cell phone times. While there are safety benefits to having a phone, we don't need to be connected 24/7, and we don't need to respond or answer our phones just because they ding. Your responsibility is to yourself, and it is revelatory how much you can get done if you just unplug. Take a breather, shut your phone completely off for 15 minutes and see how you feel. If you do try this trick, send us an email, and let us know what you find. If you are willing to take it one step further, and switch to a flip phone temporarily, let us know how that goes. Flip phones are very affordable and often come without a plan, and can be purchased at most stores.

# OPINION

## EARTHBORED

### 90 seconds to midnight

BY GUS STEEVES

I started this column accidentally titling it "90 minutes to midnight."

Oh, how I wish that were true. Given everything, that would mean actual peace, and we'd be taking major steps toward solving most of our big problems.

Of course, as many already know, it's quite far from the truth. Our world is very rapidly descending into what could best be called utter lunacy, and it's scary to anyone sane.

I saw last week's Bulletin of Atomic Scientists' "Doomsday Clock" presentation where they shifted the time to 90 seconds. Personally, I think it was really around 30 by then, and that was before several NATO governments announced they will supply main battle tanks to Ukraine. They're also considering sending fighter jets.

The trend of the past year strongly suggests they'll do it, too. Several sources I read online note it takes months to train tank and fighter crews, so there's a pretty good chance those tanks and fighters will end up with NATO soldiers at the helm.

Then what? Logically, when they cross the Ukrainian border, Russian radar will track them back to their bases and follow them home with hypersonic missiles.

We have to get away from the propaganda idea that NATO is not involved in this war. It is, and increasingly more so

everyday. The Russians know it. There's growing evidence that US and other Western mercenaries are the major combat forces there, while the Ukraine's own military basically no longer exists. Credible numbers show Ukrainian casualties are super-high — 100-150,000 dead and many more wounded, numbers far, far higher than the Russians have seen. Ukraine lost this war as far back as April. The zombie keeps shuffling along, losing limbs but fueled by NATO-brand amphetamines.

Unfortunately, for our leaders, it's never been about Ukraine. Their people (and ours) are cannon fodder for a bigger obsession the West's leaders never got to act on in the 1980s: Russia. As German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said recently, quoted in many media sources: "... the most important and the crucial part is that we do it together and that we do not do the blame game in Europe, because we are fighting a war against Russia and not against each other."

Nobody asked the world's people if we wanted war with Russia, but the loons running our countries don't care what we want. At best, they care only about profits — a lot of this warmongering is an excuse to send billions to war-making corporations. But that has a massive downside — the stuff they make has only one purpose: to kill people, and it is doing so. Killing for profit is psychopathic evil.

I'm tired of hearing people criticize Russia as if it were doing things in a vacuum, ignoring the years of blatant provocation the West has committed to push this war into being. We, as American citizens, don't have a say over the Russian government, but we are supposed to control our own. It's time we exercised that control before Washington's escalatory acts lead us past a point of no return.

As Larry Johnson notes in his blog entry of Jan. 28, "Sane, responsible policymakers should be looking for an off-ramp. But those people do not reside in the Biden Administration. They are doubling down like a deranged gambler that has lost all of his money and is borrowing new capital from the Mob."

The Doomsday Clock announcement, unfortunately, shows that one-sidedness, too. While the underlying issues were correct, the speakers overwhelmingly attacked Russia while saying next to nothing about our own involvement, now or in recent years. The one exception was a passing reference to the fact both sides are spending trillions to upgrade and expand nuclear arsenals.

Escalation takes two, people!

If this path continues, that upgrade process will never happen, because the existing nukes will be used and stop it. While it's end would be good, nobody would benefit from it happening that way.

## Dementia friendly Charlton

BEYOND  
THE PEWS  
.....  
REV. JOHN H.D. LUCY  
CHARLTON CITY UMC

Much kudos to the town of Charlton seeking to be a dementia-friendly town. Major sponsors of Dementia-Friendly Charlton are Overlook, St. Joseph's Catholic Church, the town, the library, Cornerstone Bank, and the Senior Center.

I've had the pleasure of attending a presentation by Kathleen Walker, managing director at Overlook, on the signs and symptoms and causes of dementia, as well as how to care for loved ones and how to care for self while caring for others. My church, Charlton City UMC, is hosting another such presentation with refreshments and discussion, Feb. 21 at 1 p.m. We hope you can make it but even if you can't, let me say...

The elderly in general often go forgotten and ignored in our society. If a person has dementia, the likelihood of that being the case is greater; as we may think, "They won't remember if I go visit anyway," or, "I don't know how to help this person!" Our love and compassion should remain, however, because a person's ability to feel loved and wanted never goes away.

Caring for a person with dementia can certainly be exhausting and frustrating. Isolating, too, since it takes up so much time. Just as raising a kid takes a village, so should caring for our elderly and vulnerable loved ones. It is our duty and call as Christians to support one another so that no one, either the person with dementia or the person caring for a loved one, goes forgotten or unloved.

Further, one of the things that Kathleen says is that it's important to enter into the world of the person with dementia, rather than trying to convince them of reality as it now is. Rather than, "No, Dad, I'm not your brother, I'm your son!" we can say, "Tell me more about your brother." This can be hard but again, it's part of our call as Christians. St. Paul famously was "all things for all people" in order to spread and share God's love with anyone and everyone. We can do the same.

For now, may we continue to open our eyes to those in our town and society that may not receive the level of care and compassion they need; and may anyone in need of support know that there are plenty around town ready to be your village.

## Could you cope with long-term care costs?

We all want to stay healthy and live independently throughout our retirement years. Unfortunately, that won't be possible for some of us, so it's a good idea to be prepared for health-related challenges — such as the need for long-term care.

As you may know, long-term care covers a variety of services, ranging from occasional visits from a home health aide to full-time residency in a nursing home. But while these types of care may vary in duration and intensity, they all have one thing in common — they're expensive. Genworth, an insurance company, reports these median annual costs:

Over \$100,000 for a private room in a nursing home

Over \$60,000 for the services of a home health aide

Furthermore, Medicare typically pays very few of these expenses, which means the burden of payment will likely fall on you — or, even worse, on your adult children if you can't afford the care you need.

Of course, you could hope that you will avoid these costs simply by not requiring any type of assistance — but the odds aren't necessarily in your favor: In fact, someone turning 65 today has an almost 70 percent chance of needing some type of long-term care services in their remaining years, according to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

So, how can you protect



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yourself from the potentially enormous costs of long-term care? You could decide that you'll pay out of pocket — if so, you'll need to incorporate into your retirement budget a reasonable estimate of potential long-term care costs, and you may need to make some significant changes to your saving and investment plans. And the earlier you begin, the better.

Your other option is to purchase some form of long-term care insurance. Essentially, three types of coverage are available:

Traditional long-term care insurance — A traditional long-term care policy covers long-term care expenses in your home or at a nursing facility. But policies will differ in terms of what services are covered and how benefits are paid. And you may also be able to choose whether you want inflation protection. Also, with some policies, you can deduct the premiums from your state and federal taxes. (Your tax advisor can evaluate a policy you're considering for potential tax benefits.)

Hybrid long-term care insurance — In addition to providing coverage for home health care or a nursing home stay, a hybrid long-term care policy also offers a death benefit, so if you never need long-term care, your fam-

ily could benefit from the policy's proceeds.

Life insurance with a long-term care rider — You can find a life insurance policy that lets you add long-term care coverage through a "rider," or optional add-on. With this type of policy, you can use some of the death benefit to pay for your long-term care needs.

Which policy is best for you? There's no one right answer for everyone. A financial professional can help you evaluate all your options within the context of your overall investment and protection strategies. But keep in mind that all long-term care policies tend to get more expensive as you get older, so if you're considering this type of coverage, you may want to get started sooner rather than later.

*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 trevorniel@edwardjones.com.*

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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.

# Why is Wallum Lake being neglected?



Courtesy

This week's picture shows Chris Henchey and a couple other trap shooters, lined up for some target practice at the \*Uxbridge Rod & Gun Club range recently. The range is open to any shooter that enjoys the sport ,every Sunday starting at 10 a.m. Come join in for some fun.

This week, Captain Mel True will sponsor his annual fishing show Feb. 4 & 5 at the Whites of Westport. The Tried & True fishing show will have more than 85 vendors selling new and used fishing tackle. Doors open at 9 a.m. both days. Tickets will be available at the door at \$10 each; children under 12 are free. The show has a lot to offer for both seasoned anglers, and those that are just getting started. Videos of fishing by numerous boat captains will be available, showing the best tactics to catch the big ones, and where to go. It will be a fun packed day for young and old!

The warm weather continues, but this week, there could be enough cold temperatures at night to freeze up some of the small ponds, which could make for some ice fishing activities, but only



THE GREAT  
OUTDOORS  
.....  
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TRUE

for the seasoned anglers. A couple of inches of good black ice is all that is needed to hold one angler to fish on, but walking on these ice conditions needs the constant checking of ice with a chisel ,as you navigate the new frozen ponds. Small Rod & Gun club ponds could also become safe to fish on, and provide some good fishing for hold-over trout. No more than one angler fishing in one spot, needs to be emphasized. Bunching up in one spot could cause unsafe ice, and a bad outcome. Stay safe and always fish with a friend!

Word has been received of a winter stocking of trout in numerous Rhode Island ponds, but Wallum Lake received nothing! Rhode Island also stocked some lake trout in a few of their ponds, along with some rainbow trout and salmon. It is unheard of in the past,

that a state like Rhode Island was stocking lake trout. The salmon were not Broodstock salmon, but were similar to other strains. More information will be gathered for next week's column.

If Wallum Lake continues to be neglected by both Massachusetts and Rhode Island, Sportsmen need to take matters into their own hands, and privately stock some lake trout into Wallum. The lake is ideal to introduce lake trout into, as it has the depth of water to sustain a lake trout, and the forage fish in the lake would provide plenty of food for the fish to feed on. It is a shame that both Mass. & Rhode Island cannot work together to make Wallum Lake a trophy trout pond, but do not expect any good news in the near future.

A bit more news on local Rod & Gun Clubs in the area. Most have a waiting list of sportsmen waiting to join. Be sure to pay your dues early to avoid being left out because you are late with your renewal. There also seems to be a lot more shooters that are joining clubs that are mainly interested in joining the club to use the ranges. There seems to be a lot more gun owners than in past years, and it shows at the gun ranges ,and at gun shows like the one last week in Marlborough! The lines outside to get into the show were long, with many leaving the show without getting in. There are more Gun owners that are licensed to carry because of the dangerous world that we live in today. Mass shootings by individuals that are illegally carrying a firearm are increasing every day, and it is not going to stop anytime soon. I hate to turn on the news, like everyone else! What has made this country so violent?

The Mass. Fish & Wildlife Headquarters in Westborough has only a few employees at their desk because of Covid. If you need to talk to someone about an issue, you need to e-mail the person you are trying to contact. Sitting down and discussing your problem or looking for information face to face, is a thing of the past! Hopefully, this Covid thing is over soon!

Take A Kid Fishing & Keep Them Rods Bending!

## Even in the darkest of times, one person can make a difference

POSITIVELY  
SPEAKING

TOBY  
MOORE

On a sprawling plantation in Maryland, Harriet Tubman took her first breath into a life of servitude, surrounded by fields of cotton, tobacco, and sorrow.

At age five, Harriet was bought by a cruel trapper who forced her to work in the icy rivers, setting muskrat traps. Soon she was too sick to work and was brought back and made to be a caretaker for the plantation owner's baby; any cries from the baby would result in a brutal whipping for Harriet.

One day, while the plantation owner and his wife were in a heated argument, Harriet spotted a bowl of sugar, something she had never tasted before. Sneaking a pinch of the sweet treat, she was seen by the Master's wife. Harriet bolted out of the house and hid in a pig pen for five hungry days rather than face another whipping. With no food or refuge, she returned and was beaten brutally.

Harriet's faith was a defining force in her life that guided her every step of the way. Rumors of escaped enslaved people reaching freedom in the North captivated Harriet. She prayed for a life beyond the constraints of slavery.

Despite her hardships, she found love for a free man named John Tubman. She often confided in John about her dream of escaping, but he threatened to report her if she ever tried.

Harriet said, "I had reasoned it out in my mind; there were two things I had a right to, Liberty or Death, and if I couldn't have one, I would have the other."

One day, a Quaker woman approached her as she worked in the fields. The Quakers were a religious society known for their commitment to anti-slavery beliefs. The lady told Harriet that she could come to her house if she ever wanted to escape.

It was the first time Harriet had met someone part of the whispered-about Underground Railroad, a network of safe houses and secret routes used by escaped slaves to reach freedom.

Escaping at night when her husband was asleep, Harriet arrived at the Quaker woman's house, where she was given food and taught to navigate using the north star, as she would always travel by night.

As she made her way towards her freedom, Harriet was taken from one safe house to another, each one offering her food and shelter along the way.

Delighted to be a free woman in Philadelphia, her mind eventually turned to family. One day news reached Harriet that her sister Mary, her children, and other relatives were to be sold at the auction house, and she was determined to rescue them.

Harriet again traveled by night, returning to the county where she once lived in slavery. With determination in her heart, she devised a plan with Mary's husband, a free man, to help her free Mary and her children. He showed up at the auction house with a forged letter, claiming the plantation had a buyer for Harriet's family, and they were to return home immediately.

The guard hesitated, his hands hovering over his rifle as he read the letter. Mary's husband held his breath for an eternity, wondering if the ploy would work. It did, and Harriet wasted no time, whisking them away to freedom. She was now a conductor on The Underground Railroad.

Harriet faced new dangers with the passage of laws allowing captured escaped slaves to be returned to their owners, even when found in the North.

Determined, she saved for a house in Canada, where she planned to bring escaped slaves. Harriet embarked on multiple rescue missions from Canada.

It wasn't long before Harriet was a legend amongst enslaved people; they sang gospel songs in the fields about her. They called her Moses, sent to set her people free.

A reward was placed on her head, and she was sometimes forced to disguise herself as a man as she traveled from plantation to plantation to rescue any who desired freedom. She made 19 trips and rescued over seventy enslaved people.

Her legacy serves as a reminder that even in the darkest times, one person can make a difference, and that we all have the power to overcome fear and stand up to tyranny in all of its forms.

# Tea for Two (or more) is Good for the Body & Soul

The daily English ritual of Tea Time may be more than a social break - in fact evidence suggests it may be just what the doctor ordered! The simple habit of sipping a cup of hot, steaming tea is being reexamined and is hailed as a cure all for many common ailments in addition to its role as a warm, comforting refreshment. In recognition of National Tea month in January - OK so by the time you read this, it might be February!), the following information highlights the many ways tasty tea truly is terrific!



TAKE  
THE  
HINT  
KAREN  
TRAINOR

toid arthritis. The tea's benefits are attributed to a class of compounds called polyphenols, which are abundant in tea made with fresh or green leaves.

\* Here's good news for allergy sufferers. A recent study reveals a compound in green tea may help inhibit aspects of the immune system response that produces symptoms of common allergens such as grass, pet dander, grass or mold!

\*Did you know a sore throat can be relieved by using a strong, hot tea as a gargle? Simply brew the tea of choice, allow it to cool, and gargle once or twice a day during the cold and flu season. As a bonus, the natural, herbal gargle tastes great.

\* Medical studies reveal green and black teas take center stage when it comes to boosting the immune system. Test-tube studies also suggest that the flavonoids in tea may have more antioxidant activity than certain better-known antioxidants like vitamins C and E.

\*According to researchers at the University of Geneva in Switzerland, green tea is packed with caffeine and catechin polyphenols, substances proven to speed up the body's calorie-burning ability. A study they performed showed drinking three cups of the Ancient Japanese cure per day can rev up your metabolism as much as an average man walking 17 minutes!

\*Studies reveal green and black tea contain fluoride and polyphenols that pre-

vent plaque from sticking to your teeth? Studies show tea decreases the activity of the oral enzyme amylase, which is responsible for breaking down starch into sugar in the mouth. In addition, the tea plant naturally contains fluoride in its leaves which makes tooth enamel stronger and more resistant to acids. Tea also inhibits bacteria growth in the mouth.

\*Sipping both black and green teas has been associated with a lower risk of heart disease. It's been speculated that the antioxidant activity of chemicals in tea called flavonoids are at least partly responsible. Black and green teas each contain different flavonoids that appear to be beneficial to health.

Topical Tea Treatments  
Drinking tea isn't the only way to reap the benefits of the healing herbs. Here are some ways natural teas can take the place of commercial health and beauty aids.

Stress Reliever: Make up this green tea and oatmeal bath recipe from a New York City Day Spa, and you'll be soaking in the lap of luxury for mere pennies! The popular treatment is a great stress buster for both men and women as the green tea tones your skin and helps you unwind after a stressful day, while the oatmeal serves as a soother for sensitive skin.

To make: Combine one half cup of loose green tea leaves (available at health stores) and one half cup rolled or instant oatmeal. Place the mixture in a muslin or cheesecloth bag to make a sachet. Then hang the bag from your bathtub spout with string or ribbon and let the warm water rush over it while filling the tub. Once steeped, remove the bag and enjoy a relaxing soak for 15 minutes or so.

Treat Tired Eyes: If late nights and little sleep are

making your eyes puffy, this quick and easy treatment will erase the telltale signs as well as a costly cream. Brew loose tea (try a calming herb, such as chamomile) and chill in the freezer until very cold but not frozen. Dip a cotton pad in the tea to saturate, wring out, and place on puffy areas. Lay back and keep pads on for at least ten minutes.

Acne Aid  
Alternative: Studies claim green tea can be as effective as 4% benzoyl peroxide in treating acne. Better yet, the research reveals the tea is gentler on the skin than the chemical. To try at home, simply apply brewed green tea to the skin with a cotton ball.

Win Dinner for Two at the Public House

Your tips can win you a great dinner for two at the historic Public House Historic Inn in Sturbridge! Simply send in a hint to be entered into a random drawing. One winner per month will win a fabulous three course dinner for two at the renown 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 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 Public House Inn.

For Advertising Information Call 774-200-7308

email: mikaela@ stonebridgepress.news



## Ceviche makes Valentine's Day dinner special

Valentine's Day dinners out on the town can be special. However, there is no denying that reservations can be difficult to come by and some establishments must limit their menus for this busy night to make it easier to serve a packed house. Because restaurants can be so busy on February 14, some couples may opt to stay in and enjoy a special home-cooked, romantic meal.

Shellfish may not be served at home on a regular basis, which makes it an option for a memorable Valentine's Day dinner. Ceviche is popular along Mexico's western seaboard and consists of very fresh raw seafood that is "cooked" by the action of lime juice.

This Valentine's Day, romance-minded home cooks can whip up this recipe for "Ceviche" from "The Complete Mexican, South American & Caribbean Cookbook" (Metro Books) by Jane Milton, Jenni Fleetwood and Marina Filippelli.

### Ceviche Serves 6

7 ounces raw peeled shrimp  
7 ounces shelled scallops  
7 ounces squid, cleaned and cut into serving pieces  
7 limes  
3 tomatoes  
1 small onion  
1 ripe avocado  
1/4 cup chopped fresh oregano, or 2 teaspoons dried  
1 teaspoon salt  
Ground black pepper  
Fresh oregano sprigs, to garnish  
Crusty bread and lime wedges to serve (optional)

1. Spread out the shrimp, scallops and squid in a non-metallic bowl. Squeeze six of the limes and pour the juice on the mixed seafood to cover it completely. Cover the dish with plastic wrap and set aside in the refrigerator for 8 hours or overnight.

2. Drain the seafood in a colander to remove the excess lime juice, then pat it dry with paper towels. Place the shrimp, scallops and squid in a bowl.

3. Cut the tomatoes in half, squeeze out the seeds, then dice the flesh. Cut the onion in half, then slice it thinly. Cut the avocado in half lengthwise, remove the pit and peel, then cut the flesh into 1/2-inch dice.

4. Add the tomatoes, onion, and avocado to the seafood with the oregano and seasoning. Squeeze the remaining lime and pour on the juice. Garnish with oregano and serve with crusty bread and lime wedges, if desired.



## Valentine's Day indulgence done devilishly right

If asked to describe the favored foods of Valentine's Day in a single word, "decadent" might prove the most apt descriptor: Foodies and non-foodies alike recognize that Valentine's Day and chocolate are intertwined, making the day an ideal time to indulge in something decadent. This Valentine's Day, couples can share their love for decadent delights by working alongside one another to whip up this recipe for "Devil's Food Layer Cake" from Elisabeth M. Prueitt and Chad Robertson's "Tartine" (Chronicle Books).

### DEVIL'S FOOD LAYER CAKE

Yields 1 10-inch cake; 12 to 16 servings

#### Cake layers

13/4 cups all-purpose flour  
4 1/2 tablespoons cornstarch  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda  
1 1/4 cups cocoa powder  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 cup unsalted butter, at room temperature  
2 3/4 cups sugar  
5 large eggs  
1 1/4 cups full-fat buttermilk

#### Chocolate Ganache

24 ounces or 32 ounces bittersweet chocolate  
3 cups or 4 cups heavy cream  
1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon caramel

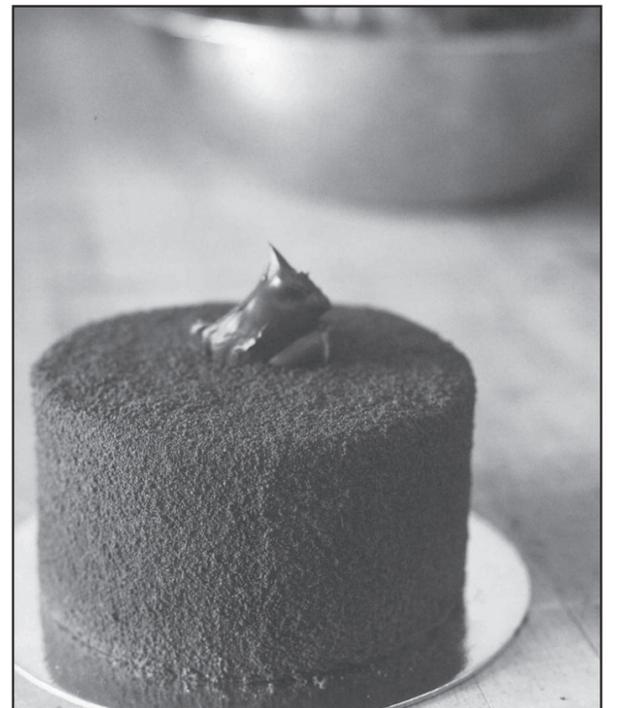
Preheat the oven to 350 F. Butter and lightly flour the sides of two 9-inch cake pans, knocking out the excess flour. Line the bottom of each pan with parchment paper cut to fit exactly.

To make the cake layers, sift together the flour, cornstarch, baking powder, baking soda, cocoa powder, and salt into a bowl and set aside. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the butter on medium-high speed until light and creamy. Slowly add the sugar and continue to beat on the same speed light in color and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time, mixing well after each addition until incorporated before adding the next egg. Stop the mixer and scrape down the sides of the bowl with the rubber spatula. With the mixer on low speed, add the flour mixture in 3 equal batches alternately with the buttermilk in 2 batches, beginning and ending with the flour mixture. Stop the mixer, scrape down the sides of the bowl and then mix again for another few seconds.

Divide the cake batter evenly between the prepared cake pans. Bake until the top springs back when lightly touched or a cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean, about 45 minutes. Let the cakes cool completely in the pans on a wire rack.

When the cakes are cool, turn them out by inverting the pans, and then turn the cakes upright. Using a serrated knife, slice off the domed portion from the top of each cake to make the tops flat. If you want to decorate the cake with crumbs as described in the headnote, reserve the slices for making the crumbs.

To make the crumbs, preheat the oven to 250 F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a nonstick liner. Break up the cake slices and spread on the lined baking sheet. Place in the oven and toast until completely dry, about 1 hour. Let cool completely, then transfer to a food processor or blender and process until finely ground. Sift the crumbs through a



medium-mesh sieve. (Don't use a sieve with fine mesh or the crumbs won't pass through.) Set aside.

To make the ganache, place the chocolate in a heatproof bowl, using the smaller amount of each ingredient if you will be decorating the cake with crumbs and the larger amount if you will not. Bring the cream to just under a boil in a small saucepan. Pour the cream over the chocolate. Let the mixture sit for a few minutes without stirring until the chocolate is partially melted, and then stir with a rubber spatula until smooth and shiny.

To assemble the cake, split each cake into 2 layers to make 4 layers in all. Transfer 1 layer to a serving plate. Using an offset spatula, spread 3 tablespoons of the caramel evenly over the cake layer. Spread a thin layer of ganache (about 1/4-inch thick) over the caramel. Top with a second cake layer, and again spread with 3 tablespoons caramel and then a thin layer of ganache. Top with the fourth cake layer. Refrigerate the cake until the center seems firm, 1 to 2 hours. Cover the remaining ganache with plastic wrap and leave at room temperature for finishing the cake.

Remove the cake from the refrigerator. Using the rest of the ganache, frost the top and sides of the cake with the offset spatula. If you are going to coat the cake with the toasted cake crumbs, the cake must be evenly frosted and the ganache must be soft enough for the crumbs to adhere. If the ganache has hardened, use a kitchen torch to soften it slightly, or put the whole cake into a 400 F oven for 10 seconds or so, just until the chocolate looks shiny. Sprinkle the crumbs evenly over the top of the cake, then tilt and turn the cake so that they spill over the sides, adhering to them as they fall. If you are using only the ganache and not the crumbs, the ganache will be thicker on both the top and sides.

Serve the cake at room temperature. To store, cover tightly and keep in a cool place for up to 4 days. It is not necessary to keep this cake in the refrigerator.



Valentine's Day presents an opportunity to shower loved ones with special gifts, including treats. Dessert is a significant component of Valentine's Day, as chocolates and cakes are given and consumed in abundance.

French macarons are a great sweet for amateur bakers to add to their Valentine's Day repertoire. Making macarons often is a labor of love, so offering a sweetheart a plate of these chewy, meringue-based cookies really shows you care. Vary the filling of choice depending on your beloved's favorite flavors.

Enjoy this recipe for "French Macarons," which utilizes the Swiss meringue method, courtesy of Karli Bitner and her "Cooking with Karli" blog. Weighing the ingredients produces more reliable results.

### FRENCH MACARONS

Make 20 macarons

100 grams powdered sugar  
100 grams superfine almond flour  
100 grams egg whites  
100 grams granulated sugar  
Food coloring, if desired

#### Vanilla buttercream filling

4 tablespoons butter, at room temperature  
1 1/2 cups powdered sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

## Sweet cookies for your sweetheart

Up to 2 tablespoons heavy cream  
Food coloring, if desired

1. Measure out all ingredients.
2. Sift together the powdered sugar and almond flour. Set aside.
3. Add 1 cup of water to your sauce pan or to the liner of your Instant Pot.
4. Heat the water over medium heat until steaming.
5. While the water is heating, add the egg and 3 tablespoons of the measured out sugar to the bowl you'll be using for the double boiler.
6. Once the water is steaming, place the bowl over the steaming water and whisk until the egg whites are foamy and white. When they are foamy and white, remove the bowl from the pan or Instant Pot and set on a hot pad on the counter. Turn off the burner or Instant Pot.
7. Add the remaining sugar to the egg whites and mix using an electric hand mixer until the egg whites are white, glossy and can form stiff peaks.
8. Add the food coloring now if you'd like to color your macarons. Mix until combined.
9. Add the powdered sugar and almond flour to the bowl and mix with your mixer for 8 seconds. After the 8 seconds is up, use a silicone spatula to stir and smear the batter from the outside of the bowl towards the center. Turn the bowl as you do this to make sure all of the batter gets stirred equally.
10. Do this until your batter thins and is able to drizzle a ribbon of batter for a few seconds without it breaking.
11. Transfer the batter to a piping bag equipped with a round piping tip.
12. Pipe equal circles onto a silicone or parchment-lined cookie sheet. Make sure that your piping bag is straight up and down. Apply equal pressure and release pulling straight back up. Repeat with the remaining batter.
13. Bang the pan gently but firmly onto the counter a few times to remove any air bubbles.
14. Preheat oven to 300 F.
15. Allow the macarons to dry out as the oven preheats, for about 20 to 30 minutes. Your macarons should be dry to the touch before going into the oven.
16. Bake for 11 to 13 minutes at 300 F. The macarons should not turn brown.
17. Allow the macarons to cool completely on the pan.
18. When the macarons are completely cool, make your filling.
19. Make your filling by combining all ingredients using either a stand mixer or your electric hand mixer. Slowly add in the heavy cream (you can substitute milk if you'd like) because you want a thick buttercream so it doesn't squirt out while eating the macaron.
20. Once the buttercream is mixed together and your desired consistency, gently pipe some frosting onto the bottom side of one cookie and then sandwich the frosting with the bottom side of a second cookie to create your macaron.
21. Repeat with remaining cookies.

# Plan a special Valentine's Day



Couples have been commemorating their love for one another in February for quite some time. Couples may go about such celebrating in their own unique ways, but it's not uncommon to focus on a night out on the town.

Valentine's Day is a busy holiday for

many businesses, but especially so at restaurants and other romantic venues. So it's best to plan ahead to ensure a perfect evening. These tips can help you organize a Valentine's experience to remember.

Tip #1: Reserve early

The closer to Valentine's Day, the more likely popular restaurants will be all booked up. If the goal is to dine at a particularly trendy spot — or anywhere but the most obscure establishment — be sure to make a reservation well in advance. Start planning the Valentine's Day dinner in December so you won't have to look far and wide to book a reservation. If a restaurant does not take reservations that far out, ask when they will start collecting names for Valentine's Day and book the moment you can.

Tip #2: Secure transportation

One way to make the night more romantic is to snuggle in the back seat of a vehicle and have someone else do the driving. This also is a safer option if you plan to pop a bottle of bubbly or sip some wine while celebrating. Hiring a limousine, luxury car, horse-drawn carriage, or something similar also will require advanced reservations. However, going the extra mile can make the night memorable.

Tip #3: Emulate a scene from a favorite film

The person you love may adore a romantic movie, whether it's a classic or more recent tear-jerker. When planning a romantic evening out, consider

reenacting a movie scene with you and your special someone in the starring roles. For example, recall when Tom Hanks met Meg Ryan at the top of the Empire State Building in "Sleepless in Seattle." Include a visit to the observation deck or roof as part of a whirlwind Valentine's Day experience.

Tip #4: Attend a live music performance

Music can touch the heart and soul. That makes an evening watching a band play or enjoying a musical on the stage even more memorable if it occurs on Valentine's Day. Select an intimate venue to add to the romantic ambiance of the night.

Tip #5: Think outside tradition

While dinner and a movie are Valentine's Day favorites, any activity done together can be memorable and romantic. Why not book a couple's cooking class? Or enjoy a winter sport like skiing or ice skating? Or warm up after window shopping on Main Street by sipping hot cocoa and snuggling on the sofa under a blanket at a nearby B&B?

Romantic nights out on Valentine's Day can be made even more special with some forethought and planning.



## Planning your Valentine's Day proposal

February 14 is a day dedicated to love. And for couples who are pondering their futures together, Valentine's Day may seem tailor-made for wedding proposals. According to a survey of 1,000 married adults by James Allen, an online diamond and bridal jewelry retailer, people really love getting engaged on Valentine's Day. Forty-three percent of Millennials report favoring Valentine's Day for proposals — whether they're doing the asking or being asked.

There are a few things to keep in mind when considering whether or not to pop the question on Valentine's Day. Here are some ideas for planning the proposal.

Make it your own

Even if the proposal is taking place on one of the most popular days of the year to get engaged, interject some personality into the occasion. Include important elements that are dear to the person to whom you are proposing, such as favorite flowers or a preferred restaurant. Restaurant reservations may be hard to come by on Valentine's Day, so you may want to select a more private meal at home or something catered unless you want to share your proposal with a crowd.

Visit possible locations in advance

Think about where you would like to propose and visit those areas at different times of the day. Timing a proposal during sunset with the rays creating a warm glow on a park bench or on the incoming tide can make it more magical. Adjust proposal area plans for busier crowds expected on Valentine's Day.

Have the ring at the ready

Jewelry shops are in demand around Valentine's Day, so be sure to choose and have the ring sized well in advance of the proposal. This ensures the ring will be ready in time. If the ring will be a surprise, get hints beforehand to understand your loved one's design tastes. Consider bringing a friend along when shopping to offer support and advice.

Use chocolate to your advantage

Boxes of chocolate are ubiquitous on Valentine's Day. Nestle the ring inside of a box of truffles or another favorite confection and have the question "Will you marry me?" attached to the inside of the box.

Hire a photographer

Work with a photographer to capture the moment, whether it's a professional photographer or a friend enlisted for the task. This way you can be fully immersed in the moment as it unfolds, and then look back on the experience from a different perspective when the photos are printed.

Valentine's Day is a popular time for wedding proposals. With a little planning, the occasion can be even more special. TF232684

**SOCIAL MEDIA TEXT:** There are a few things to keep in mind when considering whether or not to pop the question on Valentine's Day. Here are some ideas for planning the proposal.

## Accounts vary on Valentine's Day origins

Valentine's Day is a bright light in the middle of the winter. Come February 14, sweethearts celebrate their love and affection for one another on this day devoted to happy couples.

The origin of Valentine's Day has generated much speculation over the years. Most early accounts do not point to heart-shaped boxes filled with chocolates. Rather, a few distinctive tales may paint the picture of early Valentine's Day, and they have nothing to do with stuffed animals or romantic dinners.

Roman festival

One of the earliest records of the term Valentine's Day is traced to the Roman festival of Lupercalia, which was a fertility festival. This annual event held on February 15 included animal sacrifices and priests called the Luperci who would take pieces of animal hide and touch it to the foreheads of women in the hopes it would make them more fertile. Fortunately for the squeamish (and the sacrificial animals), Pope Gelasius I ended Lupercalia and replaced it with St. Valentine's Day by the end of the fifth century.

Two or three St. Valentines?

Most people attribute the origins of Valentine's Day to the holiday's namesake, St. Valentine. But it seems that Valentine was the surname of a few different individuals. According to History.com, the Catholic Church recognizes at least three different saints named Valentine or Valentinus. One Valentine was a priest during the reign of Emperor Claudius II, who decided that single men made better soldiers than those with families or wives. Claudius outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine disagreed with the decree and would perform marriages in secret. Others believe it was St. Valentine of Terni, a bishop beheaded by Claudius II outside of Rome, who was the true namesake.

Yet another Valentine may have been jailed and fell in love with a jailer's daughter while in prison. He purportedly wrote to her, beginning the first Valentine card or letter tradition. Other stories say the imprisoned Valentine actually was writing to a blind woman he purportedly healed, and signed the note "from your



Valentine."

It is hard to know who is who in regard to the name Valentine, as the stories and the people behind them are used interchangeably. Some historians believe they actually are the same person rather than several Valentines, while others insist there were multiple martyred individuals.

However you slice it, the defiant actions of one or more people named "Valentine" set the course for centuries of romance to follow.



## 4 facts about St. Valentine

Saint Valentine is the patron saint of lovers and engaged and married couples. He also is the name behind the holiday that inspires images of red hearts and rose petals in the middle of February.

Not much is actually known about St. Valentine because records are sparse. However, these facts have emerged.

- St. Valentine could be one of at least three individuals who were martyred. In fact, some believe there were about a dozen St. Valentines.
- Of course St. Valentine is known for presiding over lovers. However, he's also the patron saint of epilepsy, watching over those who experience seizures associated with the disease.
- Visitors to the Basilica of Santa Maria in Rome can find the flower-adorned skull of St. Valentine on display. Other parts of St. Valentine's skeleton are on display in the Czech Republic, England, France, and Ireland.
- Some people think Geoffrey Chaucer may have invented Valentine's Day. In his "Parlement of Foules," he speaks of a tradition of courtly love with the celebration of St. Valentine's Day. This association became more established after Chaucer's poem received widespread attention.



# LEGALS

## MORTGAGEE'S NOTICE OF SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain Mortgage given by Melissa A. Carling to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Reliant Mortgage Company, LLC, its successors and assigns, dated November 22, 2013 and recorded with the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 51779, Page 245 as affected by a Loan Modification recorded on January 14, 2019 in Said Registry of Deeds at Book 59932, Page 312, subsequently assigned to Pacific Union Financial, LLC by Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Reliant Mortgage Company, LLC by assignment recorded in said Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 56054, Page 296, subsequently assigned to MidFirst Bank, a federally chartered Savings Association by Nationstar Mortgage LLC d/b/a Mr. Cooper, successor by merger to Pacific Union Financial, LLC by assignment recorded in said Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 61397, Page 194 for breach of the conditions of said Mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing same will be sold at Public Auction at 1:00 PM on February 16, 2023 at 3 Gedeon Avenue, Sturbridge, MA, all and singular the premises described in said Mortgage, to wit:

The land with the buildings thereon situated in Sturbridge, Worcester County, Massachusetts, being Lots 17, 18, 19, 27, 28 and 29 as described on a certain plan recorded with Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Plan Book 33, Plan 15, and being entitled "Plan of Lots of Bellevue Plan owned by Eagle Realty Company, Sturbridge, Massachusetts, Scale 1" =50', dated May 1919, Plan and survey by Mitchell and Genereux, Engineers, Southbridge, Massachusetts", bounded and described as follows:

BEGINNING at a point at the intersection of Gideon Avenue and Aline Street as shown on said Plan;

THENCE northerly by the westerly side of Aline Street, 60 feet, more or less, to a point at Lot 26;

THENCE westerly 200 feet by Lot 16 and Lot 26 as shown on said plan to a point on the easterly side of road leading from Southbridge to Sturbridge;

THENCE southerly by said road 60 feet, more or less, to a point in the intersection of said Highway and Gideon Avenue, as shown on said plan;

THENCE easterly by the northerly side of Gideon Avenue and the southerly side of Lots 19 and 29 as shown on said Plan, 200 feet to the beginning.

For my title see deed recorded herewith, at Book 51779, Page 243.

The property address is: 3 Gedeon Avenue, Sturbridge, MA 01566.

The premises are to be sold subject to and with the benefit of all easements, restrictions, encroachments, building and zoning laws, liens, unpaid taxes, tax titles, water bills, municipal liens and assessments, rights of tenants and parties in possession, and attorney's fees and costs.

### TERMS OF SALE:

A deposit of FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND 00 CENTS (\$5,000.00) in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or money order will be required to be delivered at or before the time the bid is offered. The successful bidder will be required to execute a Foreclosure Sale Agreement immediately after the close of the bidding. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid within thirty (30) days from the sale date in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or other check satisfactory to Mortgagee's attorney. The Mortgagee reserves the right to bid at the sale, to reject any and all bids, to continue the sale and to amend the terms of the sale by written or oral announcement made before or during the foreclosure sale. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication. TIME WILL BE OF THE ESSENCE.

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

MidFirst Bank  
Present Holder of said Mortgage,  
By Its Attorneys,  
ORLANDS PC  
20-003271/376/NOTOP\_DR  
PO Box 540540  
Waltham, MA 02454  
Phone: (781) 790-7800  
20-003271s  
January 26, 2023  
February 2, 2023  
February 9, 2023

## Town of Sturbridge Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing Notice Special Permit

Sean & Johnna Doyle

In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 40A, §11, the Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing at the **Center Office Building located at 301 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566 on Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at 6:45 PM** on the application of Sean & Johnna Doyle. The applicant is requesting a Special Permit pursuant to Article XVIII §300-18.2 (2) and a Finding pursuant to Article XV §300-15.2 A of the Zoning Bylaw to expand, change or alter a pre-existing, non-conforming use or structure for the property located at **63 Beach Avenue**. The applicant is proposing to construct an addition, raising of the structure 4'-3" within in the existing foundation, and to relocate an existing carport and existing shed, as well as construct pervious paver walkways and patio as shown on the plans and documents provided. As proposed the front setback will be reduced to 14.2' where 30' is required. No other non-conformities will be intensified as a result of the proposed alterations.

The proposed request can be viewed at <https://www.sturbridge.gov/zoning-board-appeals/pages/recent-filings> or arrangements can be made to view the application packet by contacting the Sturbridge Planning Department at (508)347-2508 or by email at [jlacy@sturbridge.gov](mailto:jlacy@sturbridge.gov).

Any person interested or wishing to be heard on this proposal should appear at the time and place designated. Members of the public may watch the meeting online via the Town's on demand video broadcast or via cable television on Channel 191. In the event of a remote hybrid meeting, notice shall be posted on the ZBA website and those that wish to participate will find specific information on how to access the meeting on the website. Please note that the meeting/hearing will not be suspended or terminated if technological problems interrupt the virtual broadcast, unless otherwise required by law.

Elizabeth Banks, Chair  
Sturbridge Zoning Board of Appeals  
January 26, 2023  
February 2, 2023

## Town of Sturbridge Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing Notice Special Permit

Robert M. & Lisa A. Muscaro

In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 40A, §11, the Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing at the **Center Office Building located at 301 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566 on Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at 6:55 PM** on the application of Robert M. & Lisa A. Muscaro. The applicant is requesting a Special Permit pursuant to Article XVIII §300-18.2 (2) and a Finding pursuant to Article XV §300-15.2 A of the Zoning Bylaw to expand, change or alter a pre-existing, non-conforming use or structure for the property located at **72/72A Paradise Lane**. The applicant is proposing to raze and rebuild an existing single family home with related site improvements as shown on the plans and documents provided. As proposed the front setback will be reduced to 24.8' where 30' is required. No other non-conformities will be intensified as a result of the proposed alterations.

The proposed request can be viewed at <https://www.sturbridge.gov/zoning-board-appeals/pages/recent-filings> or arrangements can be made to view the application packet by contacting the Sturbridge Planning Department at (508)347-2508 or by email at [jlacy@sturbridge.gov](mailto:jlacy@sturbridge.gov).

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Elizabeth Banks, Chair  
Sturbridge Zoning Board of Appeals  
January 26, 2023  
February 2, 2023

## Town of Sturbridge Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing Notice Special Permit

Stephen B. & Marcy L. Reed

In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 40A, §11, the Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing at the **Center Office Building located at 301 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA**

**01566 on Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at 7:05 PM** on the application of Stephen B. & Marcy L. Reed. The applicant is requesting a Special Permit pursuant to Article XVIII §300-18.2 (2) and a Finding pursuant to Article XV §300-15.2 A of the Zoning Bylaw to expand, change or alter a pre-existing, non-conforming use or structure for the property located at **88 South Shore Drive**. The applicant is proposing to renovate the existing cottage and add an addition to allow for a one story home and an attached garage as shown on the plans and documents provided. As proposed the lot coverage will increase to 16.80% where 15% is allowed. No other non-conformities will be intensified as a result of the proposed alterations.

The proposed request can be viewed at <https://www.sturbridge.gov/zoning-board-appeals/pages/recent-filings> or arrangements can be made to view the application packet by contacting the Sturbridge Planning Department at (508)347-2508 or by email at [jlacy@sturbridge.gov](mailto:jlacy@sturbridge.gov).

Any person interested or wishing to be heard on this proposal should appear at the time and place designated. Members of the public may watch the meeting online via the Town's on demand video broadcast or via cable television on Channel 191. In the event of a remote hybrid meeting, notice shall be posted on the ZBA website and those that wish to participate will find specific information on how to access the meeting on the website. Please note that the meeting/hearing will not be suspended or terminated if technological problems interrupt the virtual broadcast, unless otherwise required by law.

Elizabeth Banks, Chair  
Sturbridge Zoning Board of Appeals  
January 26, 2023  
February 2, 2023

## Town of Sturbridge Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing Notice Special Permit

The Blanchard Family Trust

In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 40A, §11, the Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing at the **Center Office Building located at 301 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566 on Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at 6:35 PM** on the application of The Blanchard Family Trust. The applicant is requesting a Special Permit pursuant to Article XVIII §300-18.2 (2) and a Finding pursuant to Article XV §300-15.2 A of the Zoning Bylaw to expand, change or alter a pre-existing, non-conforming use or structure for the property located at **26 Farquhar Road**. The applicant is proposing to re-build a garage on a portion of an existing concrete pad as shown on the plans and documents provided. The concrete pad straddles the property line, the construction as proposed will maintain a 2' side setback where 15' is required. Since construction will be on the existing pad, no new non-conformities will be intensified or created as a result of the proposed construction.

The proposed request can be viewed at <https://www.sturbridge.gov/zoning-board-appeals/pages/recent-filings> or arrangements can be made to view the application packet by contacting the Sturbridge Planning Department at (508)347-2508 or by email at [jlacy@sturbridge.gov](mailto:jlacy@sturbridge.gov).

Any person interested or wishing to be heard on this proposal should appear at the time and place designated. Members of the public may watch the meeting online via the Town's on demand video broadcast or via cable television on Channel 191. In the event of a remote hybrid meeting, notice shall be posted on the ZBA website and those that wish to participate will find specific information on how to access the meeting on the website. Please note that the meeting/hearing will not be suspended or terminated if technological problems interrupt the virtual broadcast, unless otherwise required by law.

Elizabeth Banks, Chair  
Sturbridge Zoning Board of Appeals  
January 26, 2023  
February 2, 2023

(SEAL)

## TRIAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS THE SUPERIOR COURT Worcester Superior Court 225 Main Street Worcester, Massachusetts 01608 Docket No: 2285CV1394A ORDER OF NOTICE BY PUBLICATION COUNTRY BANK FOR SAVINGS

vs  
BARBARA A. ILG  
a/k/a BARBARA ILG

TO: Barbara A Ilg a/k/a Barbara Ilg, all in said Commonwealth; and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. App. §501 *et seq.*:  
Country Bank for Savings, claiming to

have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in MA, known and numbered as 12 East Baylies Road f/k/a 14 East Baylies Road, Charlton, MA, given by Barbara A. Ilg a/k/a Barbara Ilg & William Kirkham to Country Bank dated 06/15/2011, and recorded in Worcester County District Registry of Deeds, in Book 47504, Page 271, has/

have filed with this court a Complaint for determination of Defendant's/ Defendants' Servicemember status. If you now are, or recently have been, in active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at Worcester Superior Court on or before 03/03/2023 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of non-compliance with the Act.

**Witness**, Judith Fabricant, Esquire, Chief Justice of the Superior Court, at Worcester, Massachusetts, this 20th day of January, 2023.

Dennis P. McManus  
Clerk of Courts  
Corinne L. Gorman  
First Assistant Clerk  
February 03, 2023

## TOWN OF STURBRIDGE

Pursuant to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Ch 149, the Town of Sturbridge (the Awarding Authority) is soliciting Statements of Qualification ("SOQ") from responsible and eligible **General Contractors**, in association with the Addition and Renovation to the Sturbridge Senior Center, located on 480 Main Street in Sturbridge, MA. This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is the first step of a two-phase bidding process as required by M.G.L. Chapter 149, for this building addition / renovation project with an estimated cost of \$9.5 million.

The Sturbridge Senior Center Prequalification Committee will consist of representatives from the Building Committee, Owner's Project Manager (Construction Monitoring Services, Inc.) and the project's design firm (ICON Architecture). The committee will evaluate the Statement of Qualifications using the criteria contained in the RFQ and prequalify those General Contractors meeting a minimum RFQ criterion score. The project will be executed using a traditional design-bid-build delivery method. Following prequalification, the Town of Sturbridge will invite the prequalified respondents to submit General Bids for Sturbridge Senior Center Addition and Renovation Project. Qualified contractors must be DCAMM certified in General Building Construction.

Prequalification **will be required** on the work described in the following categories of work:

### General Building Construction (General Contractors ONLY)

Electronic copies (.pdf) of the Request for Prequalification RFQ Documents and any subsequent addenda will be available through the Owner's Project Manager (Construction Monitoring Services, Inc.). Hard copies of addenda will be electronically mailed or faxed. It shall be the sole responsibility of the proposer to ascertain the existence of any and all addenda, whether or not the addenda are presented, or received by the Bidder. Questions related to submitting a response to the RFQ should be directed as further indicated in the Prequalification package. No late, faxed, or conditional packages will be accepted.

Responses are due not later than **Thursday, February 9, 2023 at 2:00 PM**, and shall be delivered to the following:

Construction Monitoring Services, Inc.  
270 Main Street, Marlborough, MA 01752

**Issued: January 25, 2023**

February 03, 2023

## Town of Sturbridge Public Hearing Notice

Notification is hereby given that an application has been filed by Into The Grain, LLC for a New Liquor License at the premises currently located at 559 Main Street, Unit 208, Fiskdale, MA 01518 with the Sturbridge Board of Selectmen. In accordance with MGL Ch. 138, a public hearing will be held on Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 6:35 p.m. This hearing will be held at Veterans Memorial Hall, Sturbridge Town Hall 308 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566

Your advertisement must appear 10 days prior to the public hearing to comply with Massachusetts General Laws and /or Town of Sturbridge Bylaws. Failure to comply may result in your application being denied or delayed.  
February 02, 2023

**MCCALL**

continued from page A1

observes, pushing faster than they can go – want to give priority to local hiring, and generally “care about the character and integrity of the town. People here want to see it thriving like it once used to.”

“You can go a long way here,” he said. “You have a quaint city feel on Main Street, and, going up Lebanon Hill, have bucolic hills going into Connecticut.”

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

**AGGREGATION**

continued from page A1

some people, not a comfortable scenario.”

“We’re making a choice for every resident,” she added. “...I’m always a little concerned about putting private residents into anything.”

She noted such plans often take a year or more for state review. O’Rourke agreed; one of their recent plans took more than two years. When aggregation began, they averaged 75 days, but some states take just two weeks. A state budget amendment calls for mandating a maximum of 180 days or plans get automatic approval, but that has not yet been voted upon.

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

## Alexis Plumley earns Dean’s List honors at The College of Saint Rose

ALBANY, N.Y. — Congratulations to Alexis Plumley, of Brimfield, for earning a spot on the Dean’s List for the Fall 2022 semester at The College of Saint Rose in Albany, N.Y. Plumley is majoring in Forensic Psychology at Saint Rose.

Full-time undergraduate students, who complete a minimum of 12 graded credit hours and who achieve a semester average of 3.5 without a D, F, or Incomplete are eligible for the Dean’s List.

The College of Saint Rose (www.strose.edu) is a dynamic, progressive college in the heart of New York’s capital city where teaching is the first priority. The Saint Rose experience empowers students to improve themselves and the world around them.

**CHARLTON**

continued from page A1

numerous local businesses to determine how the town can help them grow. In addition to the Charlton Business Networking Group, Golas has also met with Treehouse Brewing to assess how the town can assist their growth and stressed the need to help other businesses any way possible, including help-

**SCAMS**

continued from page A1

steal from victims’ accounts,” the agency’s website reports. “It is estimated that skimming costs financial institutions and consumers more than \$1 billion each year.”

Various ways exist to reduce risk of such a theft, including using credit cards rather than debit, making sure to cover the keypad when inputting your

ing make Charlton more attractive and marketable.

“Over the next few months, we’ll be working with the Economic Development Commission to present for the Central Massachusetts Realtors Association and Chamber of South Center Mass on opportunities here in Charlton for business growth. I wanted to put it out there to welcome any opportunities to meet with and continue discussions with local businesses

PIN number so a mini-camera can’t see it (although some scams use keypad overlays), and going inside to pay. One rarely mentioned is using cash, which is “legal tender for all debts public and private” and has the advantage of anonymity. There are also devices on the market that claim to identify if a card reader has a skimmer installed.

Back on 2021, the Boston FBI office investigated and prosecuted an organized gang known as the Hornea Crew, which installed such skimmers

on how the town can help foster growth here. We know that Amazon is coming to town, so we have that big business, but we want to keep our sights focused on growing small businesses that start here,” said Golas.

The future looks bright, but only time will tell how the town will continue to contribute to bringing more business to the region and help maintain businesses that have made Charlton such a treasured and successful community.

at several locations in Massachusetts, Connecticut and other states. The courts sentenced three men to 27-65 months in prison, restitution, and supervised release on charges of conspiracy and aggravated identity theft.

Dessert told selectmen that his department is working with the FBI and Secret Service in their investigation.

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

## University of New Hampshire announces Dean’s List

DURHAM, New Hampshire — The following students have been named to the Dean’s List at the University of New Hampshire for the fall 2022 semester.

Emma Albright of Charlton, earning Honors  
Gabrielle Eberhart of Charlton, earning Highest Honors  
Owen Hughes of Charlton, earning High Honors  
Thomas Constantino of Charlton, earning Honors  
Julia Blauvelt of Charlton, earning Highest Honors  
Lauren Chase of Charlton, earning Honors  
Kristina Kirk of Uxbridge, earning Honors  
Sallie Hogan of Uxbridge, earning Highest Honors  
Tobias Genova of Uxbridge, earning Highest Honors  
Evan Hemingway of Fiskdale, earning Highest Honors  
Carly Cave of Sturbridge, earning Highest Honors  
Morgan Hammond of Sturbridge, earning Highest Honors

## Margaret Mabel Arndt of Sturbridge graduates from Saint Michael’s College

COLCHESTER, Vt. — Margaret Mabel Arndt of Sturbridge graduated in December 2022 from Saint Michael’s College with a Bachelor of Arts in English.

About Saint Michael’s College

Saint Michael’s College, founded in the great Catholic intellectual tradition, which also recognizes the principles of social justice and compassion, is a selective, fully residential Catholic college in Vermont’s beautiful Green Mountains. Our closely connected community delivers internationally respected liberal arts and graduate education near Burlington, one of the country’s best college towns. To prepare for fulfilling careers and meaningful lives, young adults here grow intellectually, socially, and morally, learning to be responsible for themselves, each other and their world.

## Grace Timmins of Brimfield named to James Madison University President’s List

HARRISONBURG, Va. — Brimfield resident, Grace Timmins, has been named to the President’s List at James Madison University for the fall 2022 semester. Students who earn president’s list honors must carry at least 12 graded credit hours and earn a GPA of 3.900 or above. Timmins is majoring in Health Sciences - BS.

Founded in 1908, James Madison University is a public university located in Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley. JMU is one of the nation’s leading lights in higher education, where students enjoy engaging relationships with world-class faculty who drive education innovation and support advanced research. With state-of-the-art amenities and facilities, students have access to NCAA Division 1 athletics. JMU also has the highest post-graduation job levels of all Virginia colleges.

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## LEGALS

**Public Notice**

Notice is hereby given under Chapter 138, Section 12 of Massachusetts General Laws of a public hearing to be held in the George Parent Meeting Room, second floor of the Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, Southbridge, MA, on Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. during the regular scheduled Liquor Licensing Board Meeting in regard to a Change of Manager and Change of Officers Amendment.

This hearing pertains to Improved Order of Redmen Nipmuck Tribe #131 Inc., 328 Main St., Southbridge, MA, 01550. Anyone wishing to speak will be given the opportunity to be heard.

This notice is also published electronically on [www.stonebridgepress.com](http://www.stonebridgepress.com) and on [www.masspublicnotice.org](http://www.masspublicnotice.org)  
Town of Southbridge  
Liquor Licensing Board  
February 02, 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. WO23C0015CA  
CITATION ON PETITION TO  
CHANGE NAME  
In the matter of:**
**Benjamin Serabals Perez**  
A Petition to Change Name of Minor has been filed by Benjamin Serabals Perez of Sturbridge MA requesting that the court enter a

Decree changing his name to:

**Benjamin James Perez**
**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

**Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Worcester Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/14/2023. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.**

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

Date: Date: January 11, 2023  
Stephanie K. Fattman

Register of Probate

February 2, 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. WO23C0005CA  
CITATION ON PETITION TO  
CHANGE NAME  
In the matter of:**
**Brianna Marie Brown**  
A Petition to Change Name of Minor has been filed by Brianna Marie Brown of Sturbridge MA

requesting that the court enter a Decree changing his name to:

**Brianna Marie Hurley Brown**
**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

**Any person may appear for purposes**

**of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Worcester Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/14/2023. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.**

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

Date: Date: January 13, 2023  
Stephanie K. Fattman

Register of Probate

February 2, 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. WO23P0203EA  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR  
FORMAL ADJUDICATION**
**Estate of:**
**Gerard Shirar**
**Date of Death: 11/14/2022**

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Suzanne Shirar of Leicester 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:

**Suzanne Shirar of Leicester 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 02/28/2023.** 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: January 24, 2023

Stephanie K. Fattman,  
February 2, 2023

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# SPORTS

## Young Pioneers' program shows progress as season rolls along



Nick Ethier photos

Southbridge's Jaimarys Oquendo lines up a deep jump shot from the top of the key.



Madison Demers of Southbridge handles the ball and looks for a teammate to pass to.



Southbridge's Tatiana Albaladejo looks for space to shoot in the paint versus Northbridge's defense.



Yasiri Rojas of Southbridge catches a pass along the wing.

BY NICK ETHIER  
SPORTS EDITOR

**SOUTHBRIDGE** — The Southbridge High girls' basketball program has many things going against it. Due to low numbers, there is no junior varsity team. Last year's season was cut short after one game, which was also due to low numbers. And the Pioneers are one of the youngest and shortest teams to take the court night in and night out. And yet, despite all the setbacks, Southbridge continues to show fight and progress in each and every game, which was on full display when

hosting Northbridge High on Friday, Jan. 27. A bystander in attendance wouldn't have known the final score to be 45-8 in the Rams' favor had it not been displayed on the scoreboard. "I have four eighth graders on my team, and then one sophomore, one junior, two freshmen — really young, no seniors — and only three girls that have played more than one year of basketball," said head coach Jill Lombardi, now in her first year after previously coaching the junior varsity and middle school teams in the past. "There was no program after

one game last year, so it's been a building process. We've got to work on a lot of skills as far as the basics versus other teams that can work mostly on strategy. It's been a struggle, but I will say the girls, they would do anything I ask. They give 100 percent effort, they're really good kids, studious, everything." Southbridge is now 0-8, and when asked how the team battles trying to win while also realizing that rebuilding the program can be a multi-year process, Lombardi broke it all down. "At the beginning of the year we get real

with one another. We talk about the process of what we need to do. They're pretty self-aware and reflective girls," said Lombardi. They're hard on themselves because they want to do the best that they possibly can." Against now 9-3

Northbridge, the Pioneers' Jaimarys Oquendo had her team's highlight of the night when she drained a near half-court 3-pointer as the first quarter buzzer sounded. Oquendo finished with five points. Other scorers for

Southbridge included Monica Alvarez and Yesenia Ortiz. All seven Pioneers pulled down at least one rebound versus Northbridge, with Tatiana Albaladejo leading the way with six boards.



Southbridge's Monica Alvarez lets go of a shot from near the free throw line.



Ava Molina of Southbridge releases a chest pass up toward the top of the key.



Sensing a defensive double team, Southbridge's Yesenia Ortiz passes the ball out of harm's way.



StonebridgePress.com

### News, really close to home

# SPORTS

## Trio of Maddi's score, Proulx phenomenal in net as Auburn defeats Saint Joseph Prep



Nick Ethier photos

Auburn's Olivia Viens holds off a Saint Joseph Prep defender while carrying the puck down the ice.



Maddi Leonard of Auburn scans the ice while stick-handling the puck toward Saint Joseph Prep's zone.



Auburn's Maddi Wall attempts to maneuver around a Saint Joseph Prep defender.



Leah Medeiros of Auburn prepares for a faceoff versus Saint Joseph Prep.

BY NICK ETHIER  
SPORTS EDITOR

AUBURN — Scoring at the end of a period is quite the morale booster for any hockey team, and the Auburn High girls' varsity squad did so twice — nearing the ends of the first and second periods — when hosting Saint Joseph Prep of Boston at the Horgan Arena on Tuesday, Jan. 24. Maddi Wall and Maddi Meyer had those goals, Maddi Langevin scored in the third period and goalie Rachel Proulx was a rock in net, stopping 28 shots as the Rockets won a 3-1 decision.

“As we go through a game, we take it one period, one shift, at a time. I talk to the girls about getting better, and when we're not doing well and we're a little bit flat, and then all of a sudden you have one real good shift at the end of the period, it sets the pace for the start of the next period,” said Auburn head coach Pete LaPrad regarding the goals by Wall and Meyer.

Wall's goal came with 42 seconds to go in the first period. She collected the puck along the goal

line and banked it in off goalie Kate Dolson's pads. Meyer's tally came with even less time on the clock. In fact, following her goal — a wrist shot from the slot following a shot by Langevin and a save by Dolson — there was less than a second remaining, so both teams went straight to the locker room for intermission.

In that second period, with the game still 1-0 in the Rockets' advantage, Proulx was the best player on the ice. She turned aside all 14 Saint Joseph Prep shots thrown her way.

“Both goalies this year are doing really, really well,” LaPrad said of Proulx and Tori Horne. “I have always said through the years, we coach from the goalie out. The goalie is the most important place on the rink. When your goalie is standing on her head and she's making saves like Rachel did in that period, it just sets the pace for everybody.”

Saint Joseph Prep did break the ice just 24 seconds into the third period, as Maeve McGrath took a wrist shot that beat Proulx,

with Mary McElroy grabbing the assist.

But the Rockets retook a two-goal lead midway through the period when Langevin took a pass from Maia Tatum and, much to her delight, noticed an empty net. That was because Dolson was pulled, as Saint Joseph Prep thought that a penalty was being called on Auburn. It was just a potential icing call, though, which got waived off.

“We talk to the girls constantly about this game is as much mental as it is skill. She got the puck, someone from the bench yelled “open net,” she looked up, had the open net and hit it,” LaPrad said of Langevin's heads-up goal. “It's not an easy thing to do under pressure, throw the puck and hit the net from half ice.”

The Rockets' defense then killed off a Saint Joseph Prep (2-9) power play, their only man-advantage of the game, late in the contest to solidify the 3-1 victory.

“Our special teams, power play and penalty kill, are doing really,



Auburn goalie Rachel Proulx holds her ground as a Saint Joseph Prep player attempts to score.

really good this year,” said LaPrad. “We have good systems and they're doing a good job.”

Auburn, whose team is a co-op that also includes skaters from Tantasqua Regional as well as Grafton High, Notre Dame Academy, Sutton High and the Worcester

Public Schools, is now 7-5-1 on the season.

“We have elevated our level of competition, schedule-wise, to where we're playing pretty much everyone in Division 1. We're playing big schools, strong teams, and we are competing,” said LaPrad. “If we can

stay around .500, we're very happy. That's what we're shooting for.”

If the Rockets finish .500 or better following the conclusion of their 20-game regular season schedule, they will automatically qualify for the Division 1 State Tournament.

### HIGH SCHOOL NOTEBOOK — WARRIORS PREPARE FOR SWIM LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Saturday, Jan. 28  
Tantasqua boys 93, Grafton 56 — Swimming at the Whitinsville Community Center, the Warriors emerged victorious and improved to 6-3 in the process. Ethan Zhu, Ethan Korenda and Sam Merchant all placed first in their respective events, and Eben Mazeika qualified for swim sectionals.

Grafton 91, Tantasqua girls 74 — First place finishers for the Warriors were Zoey Zhu, Kira Dambly and Sasha Hildago, as the girls' loss dropped the team's record to 4-5. Both swim teams are set to host the league championships this week.

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DOUGLAS - 7 Mount Daniels Way 1st TIME OFFERED! Custom 4 Bedroom Cape with inground Pool. Abutting Douglas State Forest. Stone fireplace. 1st floor bedroom. 2 Car Attached Garage! 2 ACRES! Located on a cul de sac road

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Webster Lake 27 South Point Road



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Webster Lake 13 Bates Point Road



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CATHERINE M. COUGHLIN, ESQUIRE  
STATE BAIL ADMINISTRATOR  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE TRIAL COURT  
[catherine.coughlin@jud.state.ma.us](mailto:catherine.coughlin@jud.state.ma.us)

The appointing authorities do not discriminate against any applicant because of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, status as a veteran, basis of disability or any other federal, state or local protected class.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**BAIL COMMISSIONERS NEEDED**  
**DUDLEY DISTRICT COURT JURISDICTION**

The Massachusetts Trial Court hereby gives notice of the availability of one or more Bail Commissioner appointments for the Dudley District Court located in Worcester County.

A Bail Commissioner is appointed by the Massachusetts Trial Court to make bail determinations and to release persons arrested when courts are closed (overnights, weekends and holidays.)

This is an appointment only. No salary or benefits are included but fees are collected from the person in custody at the time of release. The base fee is \$40.00.

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE TRIAL COURT  
[catherine.coughlin@jud.state.ma.us](mailto:catherine.coughlin@jud.state.ma.us)

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# Bay Path LPN receives letter of commendation

SHIRLEY — Superintendent John L. Dean recently presented Julia Martinez, LPN of Worcester, formerly of Spencer, with a Letter of Commendation recognizing Martinez's courage and willingness to help others as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN).

In a letter to Martinez, Dean stated, "I want to take this time to acknowledge you and express my gratitude . . . your

response . . . and immediate action in providing lifesaving aid . . . was admirable."

Further, Dean thanked Martinez for her hard work, commitment, and invaluable contributions to MCI-Shirley reiterating, "your courage and willingness to help others is an inspiration to all."

In a communication to Gretheline

Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN Academy Director, Martinez stated, "I have a purpose. I keep this in mind when life kicks me down. Thank you for making (me) a part of the Mock Code Team! I am forever grateful . . . for all the great things I experience!"

Martinez is a graduate of Bay Path RVTHS Practical Nursing Academy, PN Class of 2021. She was a member of the Mock Code Team and Admissions Panel Interview. Martinez is Certified in Mental Health First Aid, Dementia Care (with Distinction for 100% perfect Score), and Infusion Therapy / Central Line Care Program from Intravenous EDU. Martinez is an attendee for the COVID-19 Contact Tracing at Johns Hopkins University and the Vital Signs: Understanding What the Body is Saying at the University of Pennsylvania.

About Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy

Bay Path Practical Nursing is a 40-week, (10-month), full-time, Monday through Friday, evening program. The program begins mid-August and is completed in late June. Graduates receive a Practical Nursing Certificate and are eligible to take the NCLEX-PN licensure exam. For more information, visit [www.baypath.net](http://www.baypath.net).



Julia Martinez

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# Charlton adds new officer; vacancies remain

BY JASON BLEAU  
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — The Charlton Police Department is welcoming a new member to its ranks as officials seek to fill several police officer vacancies on the force.

The Board of Selectmen approved the hiring of one new officer on Jan. 24, filling one of three open officer positions within the Police Department. Town Administrator Andrew Golas officially recommended Steven Bellerose as Charlton's newest officer as one of 13 finalists from a pool of 32 candidates who applied for the position.

"Mr. Belrose has 20-plus years of experience in Massachusetts policing. He has served as a police officer, sergeant, and lieutenant with the Southbridge Police Department. He has a Masters in Criminal Justice with a concentration in public administration and looks forward to coming to Charlton and positively engaging with our community," Golas told selectmen.

Officer Bellerose was unable to attend the meeting due to his duties with the Sturbridge Police Department, but selectmen approved his hire regardless and requested he visit the board in the future to receive an official welcome. Officer Bellerose officially starts with Charlton on Feb. 12.

The selectmen also expressed excitement over the larger pool of candidates who applied for the position considering it as a sign that Charlton has become a place where people want to live and work. The two remaining available officer positions will be appointed at a later date.

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