

Empowering Women in Business Conference celebrates 10 years



Courtesy Photo

Valerie Weisler, the founding CEO of the Validation Project, will serve as the keynote speaker in the 10th annual Empowering Women in Business Conference which will be held virtually on Dec. 10.

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY – Nichols College will continue a yearly tradition honoring a decade of empowering women despite the limits imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Dudley-based college announced in a press release that the school will host its 10th annual Empowering Women in Business (EWIB)

Conference which was postponed from its original April date and will instead take place on Dec. 10. Each year, the conference helps give a voice and inspiration to female entrepreneurs, business owners, executives, and students providing resources and activities to empower them to succeed. The conference includes keynote speakers each year comprised of women who have found success in a variety of

business backgrounds.

The conference will be virtual for 2020, and will include the originally planned keynote speaker Valerie Weisler, the founding CEO of the Validation Project, a global youth empowerment organization that works with over 6,000 teenagers in 105 countries to turn passion into positive action through mentoring and social justice assignments. Her self-designed kindness curriculum is taught in nearly 1,000 schools. Across the world.

“Valerie has channeled her experience of being bullied into an international organization that helps thousands turn their struggles into their superpowers,” said Rachel Ferreira, director of the Institute for Women’s Leadership which was established by Nichols College President Susan West Engelkemeyer in 2013. “What she has accomplished is beyond impressive, and her message will be a source of inspiration for this year’s EWIB participants.”

The 2020 Empowering Women in Business Conference will take place over Zoom from 12:30 until 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 10. Participants must register for the event at the cost of \$20 per person, \$10 for Nichols faculty, staff and alumni, or \$5 for Nichols students. Those interested in attending the virtual conference can visit www.empowering-women.biz/.

Public safety concept to be downgraded

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON – Following another failed attempt to earn voter support for a debt exclusion to fund a new public safety building, it has been decided to downgrade the project to a smaller scale, focusing only on the fire department aspect and eliminating the inclusion of a police department.

The Charlton Board of Selectmen met in a virtual meeting on Nov. 24 where they received a request from the Public Safety Building Committee to change the committee to one that would focus only on a fire department project. The change would reflect the committee’s original charge from when the group was formed back in 2017 before a larger public safety complex concept was brought to the table.

“We had a big discussion as far as the direction that we would like to see moving forward since the vote did fail at the ballot vote by about 340 votes. After a very lengthy discussion with all the members of the committee there was a vote taken to recommend to the Board of Selectmen for us to be considered a fire station only committee and to move forward with the design of a fire station only to go on that same site that he town has already purchased,” committee member Captain Rob Barton said.

A debt exclusion to find the

public safety building proposal has failed twice when put before voters, once in 2019 and again during the election in 2020 where the committee and selectmen hoped to get a larger sample size of the town’s voters to have their say on the project. The initiative was designed to house both a fire and police department and serve as a replacement of both their aging structures, especially the fire departments severely aged facilities. Despite voters approving funding for the project during a meeting in May of 2019, the debt exclusion required to utilize town monies for the facility failed both times it was sent to the polls leaving the committee no choice but to reassess. The needs of the fire department have long been a selling point and one of the more supported elements of the project although Captain Barton said even that has its share of detractors due to the potential cost.

“The public’s input as far as what they would support for a dollar amount is paramount. It’s completely necessary. Unfortunately, there are some people who are just completely unrealistic in what they think a fire station only in the year 2021 should cost,” Captain Barton said. “It didn’t matter how many times we explained to them that fifteen years ago there was a cost estimate of \$12 million and that failed. Think

Please Read **PUBLIC SAFETY**, page **A11**

Old Sturbridge Village, Country Bank serve Thanksgiving to families in need

STURBRIDGE — Old Sturbridge Village (OSV) and Country Bank came together again, to offer 750 free meals to families in need this Thanksgiving. The culinary team at the Village prepared, cooked and assembled the meals. Country Bank not only financially supported the project but delivered and distributed the meals as well. The meals were delivered to St. John’s Food for the Poor, YWCA, Abby’s House, Veterans Inc. and Elm Street Congregational Church. In addition, the students of Old Sturbridge Academy created hand-made greeting cards to go with the meals which are sure to bring a warm smile to anyone’s face.

“We wanted to do every-

thing we could to help support families in the community this Thanksgiving,” said James Donahue, President of Old Sturbridge Village. “Country Bank and Old Sturbridge Village share a collective belief that we can make a difference when we work together, and we are doing just that.”

Paul Scully, President and CEO of Country Bank, said, “As a community partner, we care deeply about our communities, and we want to offer our support where it is needed most this holiday season. As we reflect on the past year with gratitude for the Bank’s strength and ability to support so many

Please Read **THANKSGIVING**, page **A3**



Photo Courtesy

Old Sturbridge Village (OSV) and Country Bank came together again, to offer 750 free meals to families in need this Thanksgiving.

MIAA, MWIL greenlight winter sports

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY/CHARLTON – The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association and Midland-Wachusett Interscholastic League, which include schools in the Dudley Charlton Regional School District, have released updates on their upcoming winter sports seasons for the 2020-2021 academic year.

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), Board of Directors released a statement in November with an update from the association’s COVID-

19 Task Force including modifications to winter sports which includes a Dec. 14 start date for the winter season.

MIAA President Jeff Granatino said in a statement, “It is great to see that so many of our student-athletes will be able to take part in the sports they love this winter. Many coaches, athletic directors, principals and superintendents worked hard over the past few weeks to ensure that we would be able to offer interscholastic athletes for our students, and I want to thank them for their efforts.”

Granatino added, “The pandemic has reshaped the way

education is delivered across the country and the same can be said about its impact on athletics. Nonetheless, I am confident our student-athletes and coaches will adjust to the new expectations this winter and have an experience as fulfilling and as exciting as what we saw during the fall season.”

Among the sports slated to return to action in 2021 are indoor track and field, wrestling, ice hockey and high school basketball. Winter cheerleading was also listed as being moved to the spring season.

MIAA Executive Director Bill Gaine released a statement

saying, “The MIAA’s mission can be defined by a dual prescription: promoting maximum participation opportunities for the maximum number of student-athletes so that life lessons can be learned. At the same time, promoting the health and safety of all participants is the Association’s imperative.”

The Midland-Wachusett Interscholastic League, which includes Shepherd Hill Regional High School, released a statement of their own confirming their approach will be in line with the MIAA. In their update the Midland-Wachusett Interscholastic

League Athletic Directors confirmed they will proceed with winter sports but that no spectators will be allowed at games until further notice. “Through a modified league/geographic pod-based competitive structure, the Midland-Wachusett League, in conjunction with all Central Massachusetts playing schools, will seek to creatively reimagine what is possible within the constraints of the new health and safety protocols that have been established in response to the ongoing pandemic,” the league said in a statement. “Each sport must

Please Read **SPORTS**, page **A3**

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Sturbridge Rotary gives masks to first responders



Left to right: Sturbridge Rotary President Dr. David Zonia, Fire Chief John Grasso, Jr. and Police Chief Earl Dessert.

BY SYDNEY LEANNA
CORRESPONDENT

STURBRIDGE — ‘Tis the season of giving...PPE and generosity! On Tuesday, Nov. 24, Sturbridge Rotary Club members and representatives of the Town of Sturbridge’s First Responders gathered outside the Sturbridge Police Station for a special presentation.

1,000 PPE face masks were generously donated to the Sturbridge Rotary

Club by a Rotarian in the Connecticut District. Sturbridge Rotary Club President, Dr. David Zonia, presented these face masks to the Town to assist First Responders as they protect and support our Sturbridge community. The First Responders were represented by Interim Police Chief Earl Dessert and Fire Chief John Grasso, Jr. who were most appreciative to receive the donation. Included in those on hand to witness the presentation were fellow

Sturbridge Rotary Club members Klaus and Glenys Hachfeld.

Rotary’s Past District Governor Hachfeld commented, “The whole point of this Club is to help the community.”

Donations such as these truly exemplify the Rotary motto, “Service above Self.”

The Sturbridge Police Department is also doing their part, of course, to give back to the community. They recently partnered with the organization “Cops For Kids With Cancer,” working together to help families who are especially struggling this holiday season by providing much needed financial help. Please consider donating to this cause online at: <https://copsforkidswithcancer.org/donation-sturbridge-police-2020/>.

Let’s help them surpass their \$2,500 goal!

With all that’s transpired this year, we’re reminded now more than ever that taking care of our community is truly what matters the most!

Sturbridge Rotary Club is one of 35,000 clubs world-

wide providing humanitarian service as members of Rotary International. Beyond the regional and international help that we provide, we are most proud of providing support for local issues impacting the members of the Sturbridge community.



ACCURACY WATCH

The Charlton Villager is committed to accuracy in all its news reports. Although numerous safeguards are in place to ensure accurate reporting, mistakes can occur.

Confirmed fact errors will be corrected at the top right hand corner of page 3 in a timely manner.

If you find a mistake, email news@stonebridgepress.news or call (508) 909-4106 during normal business hours. During non-business hours, leave a message in the editor’s voice mailbox. The editor will return your phone call.



St. Joseph’s hosting drive-through Advent celebration

CHARLTON — St. Joseph’s Church will host a drive-through Advent experience, “The 12 Trees of Christmas,” on Saturday, Dec. 19 beginning at 5:30 p.m.

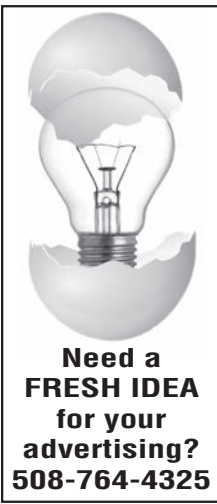
Join us for a unique celebration of song and creativity. Enjoy sacred music in your car on 89.5 FM, and drive under the portico to view depictions of “The 12 Days of Christmas” on evergreens in front of the church. The trees will be decorated by members of our parish family and will be on display until the Feast of the Epiphany.

Don’t let the pandemic steal your Christmas spirit this year. Let’s prepare for our Lord’s birthday in safety, comfort and joy!

THANKSGIVING

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in need, we are also humbled to witness so many great acts of kindness and support throughout our communities from the people and businesses who make this region the remarkable place it is to live and work.” Scully added, “The pandemic has taken its toll on the people and places in our communities. We know that many have suffered losses over the last several months. Some have lost their jobs, their business, and others have lost loved ones. There is not a more significant time in our history for community partners to step up and provide support to those in need.”



SPORTS

continued from page A1

undergo sport-specific modifications, some significantly changing the look of the game, to adhere to the (guidelines).”

The MWIL also confirmed the Dec. 14 date for tryouts to begin with actual practices, workouts and team meetings to start in January of 2021. The MWIL as voted to sponsor competitive seasons for basketball, gymnastics, and swimming. They will also be sponsoring cheerleading, indoor track, and wrestling.

REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS

CHARLTON

\$545,000, 2 Willis Dr, K& D FT, and Cahill, Ruth M, to Cloutier, Joseph, and Cloutier, Patricia J.

\$545,000, 203 Leland Dr, K& D FT, and Cahill, Ruth M, to Cloutier, Joseph, and Cloutier, Patricia J.

\$530,000, 7 Sydney Cir, Martinez, Felipe, and Martinez, Lori A, to Lechiara, Paul M, and Cormier, Brittany L.

\$62,500, Buteau Rd, Thibeault, Corinne, and Thibeault, Corrine, to Martinez, Jose T, and Martinez, Audrey.

\$60,000, N Sturbridge Rd #1, Thomas, Christine, to Thomas, John P, and Thomas, Nancy.

Town of Sturbridge DPW Heavy Equipment Operator



The Town of Sturbridge has an immediate full-time opening for a Heavy Equipment Operator in the Department of Public Works, Highway Division. This position is a union position and the successful candidate will be responsible for operating heavy equipment and driving trucks equipped with dump bodies to transport and dump loose materials, among other responsibilities.

A CDL (Class B) and hoisting license (Class 2B) are required. The starting pay for the position is \$23.88 per hour.

For a copy of the complete job description and an application please go to <https://www.sturbridge.gov/your-government/pages/job-opportunities>.

Position open until filled.

The Town of Sturbridge is an EOE.

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Early intervention will do developmental screenings for children birth to 3 years old

Please call 508-765-0292 for An appointment

Public Notification- Child Find Tantasqua Regional High School

The Tantasqua Union 61 Public Schools are working to locate, identify, and evaluate any child residing in a home, facility, or residence within its geographical boundaries, age three (3) through twenty two (22) years. Who may have a disability and be in need of Special Education or 504 services. This includes children who are not in school, those who are in public, private, or home school; those who are highly mobile such as children who are migrant or homeless; and those who are advancing from grade to grade, who may need, but are not receiving Special Education or 504 Services. In keeping with the mission of Tantasqua Regional/ Union 61 School Districts, and in alignment with the Massachusetts General Laws, this notice is provided as part of the outreach and ongoing liaison with resources within the Tantasqua District (Brimfield, Brookfield, Holland, Sturbridge, Wales). This is to advise you of the availability of the referral process, for Special Education and 504 evaluations, for those children, ages three through twenty two who may be suspected to have a disability and may be determined to be eligible for specialized instruction and/ or related services. Special Education regulations require that principals or other educational administrators make specific efforts to meet student’s needs in the general education setting. Those efforts include promotion of instructional practices and provisions of adequate instructional support for students and teachers (MGL, c. 71 B, section 2). If any student has been unsuccessful in making progress

within the general curriculum despite documented instructional support and effort, and is suspected of having a disability, any parent, caregiver, or professional may refer the student for a special education evaluation. To request a referral for a special education evaluation, please submit a letter in writing to Jamie Desjardin School Psychologist/ Team Chair Burgess Elementary School 45 Burgess School Rd Sturbridge, MA 01566 Please provide the student’s name, date of birth, current grade and school, parent’s names, address and telephone numbers. You should include information about the child’s needs, current performance/ functional level and his/ her responses to instructional and clinical interventions. The Public School’ Special Services Department will review the referral information and contact the parent (s) directly. Written notice of the referral along with the evaluation consent form, if warranted, will be forwarded to the parent. Upon receipt of consent, we will contact you and your staff to assist us gathering information for student evaluation. Please contact Student Support Services at (508) 347-9301 if you need further information regarding the referral process. The Tantasqua Regional/ Union 61 Public Schools will make sure any child enrolled in its district who qualifies for Special Education or 504 services, regardless of how severe the disability, is provided appropriate Special Education or 504 services at no cost to the parent or child.

New staff member to join Highway Department

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

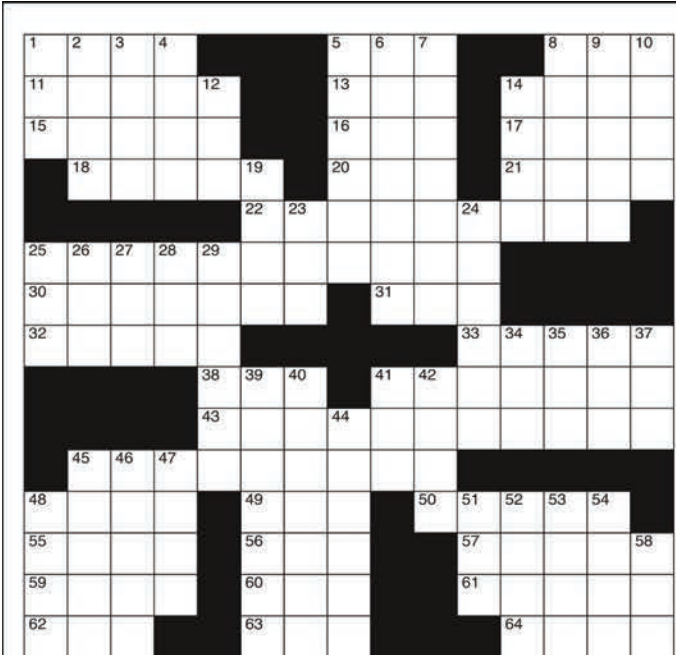
CHARLTON – The Charlton Board of Selectmen has approved adding a new staff member to the highway department in order to ensure the appropriate staffing levels to manage a potentially busy win-

ter season. Selectmen received a request from Highway Superintendent Gerry Foscett to add a new full-time employee to his department to help offset certain losses going into the winter season. Foscett said he understood the request to be poorly times, but felt it was his job to make sure

the town was fully prepared to handle the needs of the community for the foreseeable future. “I feel this is my responsibility to make the board aware that in my opinion with the current staffing numbers we have at the Highway Department we cannot meet the reasonable expectations of the residents or insure that public safety will not be compromised especially during our snow and ice operations. This isn’t strictly to address my needs for snow and ice, it’s actually the year-round staffing is not adequate to provide the service that I can tell you that I at least perceive are the expectations of the town,” Foscett said. “I understand the financial strain this may add, but that’s the situation I find myself in. I wish at budget time in the spring I had addressed this, but I was just happy to get a replacement for one of my employees who weren’t available. I’m in dire need for this employee to be hired.” Foscett further explained that the lack of personnel adds a strain to the employ-

ees to manage the different routes during winter weather. Without the new full-time hire, he didn’t feel confident that his department could get the job done in a timely and effective manner. “I have nine different routes in my snow and ice operation and they average around 13 miles of roads, might be 26 or more miles, one more employee we could cut that and take a little pressure off what I’m putting on my drivers to person even a satisfactory job on the road,” Foscett said. “I think my guys do a great job on the snow and ice, but what I’m putting on their backs, it’s driving them to a point where things are happening that shouldn’t happen.” Selectmen admitted that the request was a rare one from Foscett who they said rarely asks for much beyond the most essential needs during budget talks. Selectman Bill Borowski even pointed out that Foscett rarely asks for something he “doesn’t need” which he felt lent credence to his request.

Selectman David Singer added that the highway department is as essential to the town as first responders and that supporting their needs is paramount. Even Selectman Patsy Rydlak, who has been vocally opposed to adding staff during the current economic climate, implied that she felt the request was a necessity. Selectman Stephen Koronis called it a “critical need” while Selectmen Karen Spiewak was more apprehensive than her fellow board members due to the budget situation and the lack of certain pieces of information she felt she needed to support the request. In the end selectmen voted 4 to 1, with Spiewak being the only dissenting vote, to fund the full time hire for the remainder of the fiscal year using money previously allocated for a floating assistant position to fund the estimated \$20,000 salary. Selectmen will reassess how to maintain the added personnel during budget preparations next year.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Opposite of west

5. __ Caesar, comedian

8. Helps little firms

11. A way to censor

13. Expresses atomic and molecular weights

14. Chalcedony

15. Type of sword

16. A corporation’s first offer to sell stock to the public

17. Attired

18. A sequence of winding turns

20. Pal

21. Expresses pleasure

22. Amendable

25. Clear

30. A way to cut off

31. Indigenous Thai person
32. Pale brownish yellow color

33. Aquatic plants genus

38. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!

41. Merchants

43. Fix a chair

45. Throws into disorganization

48. Famed German composer

49. Keyboard key

50. Oral polio vaccine developer

55. Partner to pain

56. Where golfers start

57. Jenny __: weight loss program

59. Sailing dinghy

60. Suffix that forms adjectives

61. Speeds at which music is played

62. Body part

63. Fall back

64. Ancient Greek sophist

CLUES DOWN

1. One point south of due east

2. Wings

3. One point south of southeast

4. The shirts on our backs

5. One who works on the seas

6. Select jury

7. Small intestines parts

8. Plant of the heath family

9. Extrasolar planet

10. Creates more of

12. Before

14. Forms over a cut

19. Runs down

23. Exercise regimen __-bo

24. Unkeyed

25. Principle underlying the universe

26. Corpuscle count (abbr.)

27. Residue

28. Company that rings receipts
29. Rugged mountain range

34. Commercials

35. NY footballer

36. They __

37. Soviet Socialist Republic

39. Poked holes in the ground

40. Pitchers

41. Your

42. Diana __, singer

44. Important document for inventors

45. Bangladesh capital

46. Fluid that flows in the veins of Greek gods

47. Famed daguerreotype photographer

48. Where military personnel work

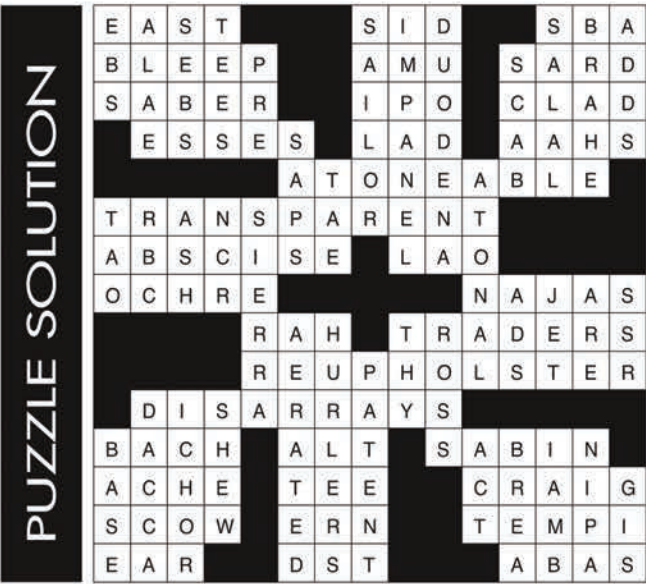
51. Play a role

52. La __ Tar Pits, Hollywood

53. Unstressed-stressed

54. Type of palm tree

58. Judo garments



Commonwealth Consulting Group introduces CCGConnect

WORCESTER — Commonwealth Consulting Group (CCG) is branching out. The Worcester-based merchant services company has rolled out a new turnkey solution for software developers called CCGConnect that allows business applications, such as point-of-sale (POS) systems or electronic cash registers (ECRs) to integrate in-store (card present) payments. According to CCG principal, Keith Reardon, “most software companies have to spend a lot of time and resources to implement EMV chip-card transactions into their system. This type of semi-integration and PCI certification can sometimes take months, but with CCGConnect, a software company can copy and paste our coding into their system, pair a terminal, and run a test transaction in under three minutes.” CCGConnect is delivered in the form of a software development kit (SDK) that bundles everything developers need for the software application to integrate with both current and next-generation payment termi-

nals while remaining outside of PCI-DSS scope. The system also offers cross-border coverage; a single integration can serve merchants in both the United States and Canada. “By integrating CCGConnect into an application,” says Reardon, “developers can eliminate the lengthy certification processes and get to market faster.” The system offers out-of-the-box connectivity with pre-certified payment terminals and no coding is required when new terminals are added. Once copied into an application, CCGConnect automates the discovery of semi-integrated payment terminals on a merchant’s local network and establishes any required pairing. Once a pairing is established, the SDK is responsible for orchestrating the flow of payment operations between the application and payment terminals. All merchant and cardhold-

er-facing screens are provided. Additional information about CCGConnect may be found online at ccgpays.com/developers, or by emailing Commonwealth Consulting Group at inquiry@ccgpays.com, or by calling (800) 866-3944. Commonwealth Consulting Group is a Worcester-based merchant services company that provides its clients with cost-effective payment processing systems and paper supplies, robust e-commerce payment solutions, ATMs, mobile payment systems, gift and loyalty cards.

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Shepherd Hill Regional High School
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Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical
High School (508) 248-5971 or (508) 987-0326

CHURCH LISTINGS

• **Charlton Federated Church**, 64 Main St., 248-5550, Sunday worship 10:30 a.m. www.fedchurchcharlton.org

• **Charlton Baptist Church**, 50 Hammond Hill Road, 248-4488, www.charltonbaptist.org, Sunday worship 10 a.m.

• **Charlton City United Methodist**, 74 Stafford St. 248-7379, web site: CharltonCityUMC.org Sunday worship and Children’s church 10am

• **St. Joseph’s Church**, 10 H. Putnam Ext. 248-7862, www.stjosephscharlton.com, Saturday Vigil Mass 4:30 p.m., Sunday Mass 8 a.m., Sunday Family Mass 10 a.m., Sunday LifeTEEN Mass 5 p.m., Weekday Mass Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 a.m.

• **Hope Christian Fellowship**, 6 Haggerty Road, 248-5144

• **Assemblies of God Southern New England District Headquarters**, Route 20, 248-3771, snedag.org, Office hours Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

• **Lamblight Christian Church**, 37 Main Street - Grange building 1st Floor, Charlton, MA 01507, Rev. Stephen Wade, (774) 452-2393 - Pastor’s Cell. Sunday Service 10:00am. www.visitlamblight.com

• **New Life Fellowship A/G, SNED Chapel**, 307 Sturbridge Road, Rt. 20, Charlton, MA, Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.

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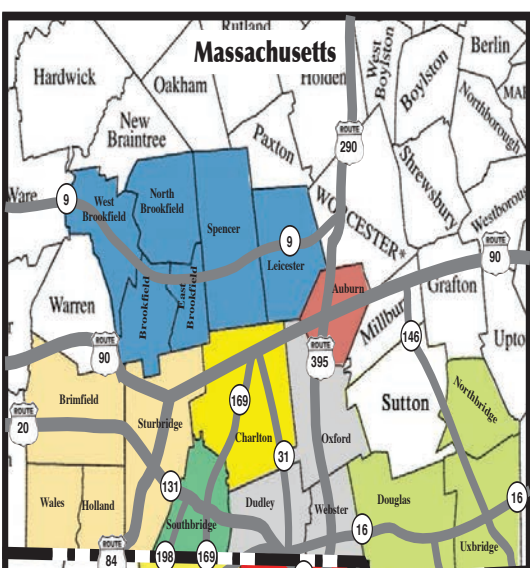
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This section reaches 47,000 households in 7 Massachusetts newspapers.

Quinebaug Lodge participates in mentor program for young adults with autism

SOUTHBRIDGE — On Friday, Nov. 20, the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge held its first “Mentor Program for Young Adults with Autism” movie night. Covid-19 rules were followed, and masks were required, and social distancing guidelines enforced.

Back in February, an informational presentation was held at the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge and the quest speaker was Kayla McRoy, Assistant Director at Nonotuck Resource Associates. McRoy is the organizer of the Community Integration and Inclusion Initiative for young adults with autism. Kayla provided a power point presentation of what this program will entail along with goals and objectives of this initiative and what it means to be a mentor and how the mason organization can help sustain this initiative.

McRoy completed a L.E.N.D. fellowship at UMass Shriver Center in partnership with Suffolk University. L.E.N.D stands for Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and other Disabilities. She is also com-

pleting her master’s degree in Public Administration at Suffolk University this December. Her inspiration for this initiative is her younger brother Gage, who has autism. Her fiancé, Brethren Benjamin Marinelli, is a Master Mason and member of Quinebaug Masonic Lodge. What a better place to ask and get volunteers for this community mentor project. After this presentation meeting, several Master Masons volunteered to be mentors for this program. Kayla’s goal and hope is to get other Masonic Lodges in the State involved in this mentorship program.

Kayla applied for and received a grant through Suffolk University. With the grant money she was able to donate a projector and screen to be able to start her Mentor’s Partnership Program with a special movie night at the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge. This Mentor program will help to increase community access for young adults with autism and to grow meaningful relationships in the community. Her idea was to start with a

Photo Courtesy

Gage McRoy and his older sister Kayla McRoy who is spear heading this awesome Mentorship Program for Adults with Autism to promote community inclusion. Kayla wants her brother to have the fulfilling opportunity and experiences and this success requires support from his community.

movie night and to get the Masons involved with community integration, inclusion, and socialization for adults with special needs. The events are a lot of fun and a great opportunity to communicate with Freemasons.

Kayla’s goal and hopes are to expand and engage in community activities for young adults with autism and to promote their social independence within their community. The mentor program will allow the Masons to pair with a young adult and to participate in a community event. This relationship with their mentor will be the start to help establish other new relationships. If you would like more information about this program please contact Kayla directly, she can be



reached at mcroy@nonotuck.com. If you would like to learn more about Autism please visit <http://www.autismspeaks.org/>

or/ or Shared Living and Adult Family Care please visit www.nonotuck.com (Nonotuck Resources Associates).

State Police Toys for Tots drive underway

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — For the 36th straight year, the Massachusetts State Police will team up with the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve to assist children in need.

State troopers across the Commonwealth are in the midst of their annual Toys for Tots holiday drive. They have relied heavily on community donations over the years, and the many challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic make donations especially important in 2020.

Donors may drop off new, unwrapped, non-violent toys for boys or girls, ages infant to 14, at any State Police barracks across Massachusetts. The deadline for donations to be received is Friday, Dec. 11.

If you are unable to purchase a toy this year, there are plenty of other ways you can help the cause.

“As always, donors also have the option of making a monetary donation by credit card or through the mail directly to the Toys for Tots program,” read a statement released by the Mass. State Police.

New this year, donors will also have the option through the Toys for Tots website of shopping for a toy online and donating it through the organization’s new virtual toy box.

For more information about how to make a monetary donation or donate a toy through the virtual toy box, please visit the Toys for Tots Web site: www.ToysForTots.org.

For residents wishing to donate toys locally, you can find the locations of all State Police barracks at www.mass.gov. These include the Brookfield barracks on Route 9, whose officers have taken part in multiple holiday community programs in recent years.

Officials thank all donors for helping to brighten the season of giving for children and families. Without the Toys for Tots program, many youngsters wouldn’t be able to open a Christmas gift this year.

“We thank you for your support of this wonderful program,” the State Police statement read. “For many families, economic realities make the holidays difficult. Families in need must ensure their children have enough to eat, warm clothes to wear, and a roof overhead. Holiday gifts for young ones might not fit into the budget, perhaps even more so this year, when many people’s earnings have been impacted by the coronavirus. That is why we are proud to support the USMC reserves once again in the mission to ensure that all children, regardless of their family’s situation, have gifts this Christmas and holiday season.”

QCC’s Rad Tech program receives activation fund grant

WORCESTER — Thanks to The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, Quinsigamond Community College’s Radiologic Technology (RT) program will soon have upgraded instructional imaging equipment. The College was recently awarded a 2020 Activation Fund Grant in the amount of \$70,790. The Grant was the second largest awarded to 14 organizations. The funds will be used to purchase cutting-edge digital radiography equipment that will help prepare students for their clinical rotations. The vast majority of hospitals now use digital radiography equipment in place of the more traditional imaging.

“I am so thankful for the support we received from The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts. The Foundation’s generosity in helping our students learn on state-of-the-art digital imaging equipment will give them a huge advantage to seamlessly enter the workforce,” said QCC’s Dean of School of Healthcare, Pat Schmohl.

QCC’s RT program admits up to 20 students per year, depending on the number of available clinical place-

ments. The program has clinical affiliations with Health Alliance Leominster Campus, Heywood Hospital, Marlborough Hospital, St. Vincent’s Hospital, UMass Memorial Medical Center Memorial Campus, and UMass Memorial Medical Center University Campus. Graduates of the RT program must take and pass the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists credentialing exam in order to be employed as a radiologic technologist.

“The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts is pleased to be able to support QCC in this important initiative to provide Rad Tech students with training using digital radiology equipment, which helps maintain a highly-skilled and up-to-date workforce for the hospitals in the Central Massachusetts region,” stated Jan Yost, President and CEO of The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts.

For more information about QCC, contact Josh Martin, Director of Institutional Communications at 508-854-7513 or jmartin@qcc.mass.edu.

Come support local food drive!

STURBRIDGE — Calling all shoppers! As the holiday season is fast approaching, hunger levels have continued to rise in Massachusetts. According to Feeding America, one in four children are currently facing food insecurity. A way you can help is by donating to a food drive!

Tantasqua High School’s

Project 351 club will be holding a food drive on Saturday, Dec. 12 from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 13 from 8 a.m. – 1 p.m. This food drive will be held at Shaw’s Sturbridge, in the parking lot! What do you need to donate? The club will provide wish lists to help guide you while you shop. If you’re unable to shop, there’s another way you can help out!

Monetary donations will also be gladly accepted. All donations will be going to the Wales Community and Brookfield Ecumenical food pantries, which collectively serve the towns of Brimfield, Holland, Wales, and the Brookfields.

Make an impact this holiday season, and come donate food with the Project 351 club!

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They keys to a happy holiday season

It's official — the holiday season has arrived, with the first big one under our belts. Thanksgiving is the perfect segue into Christmas and Hanukkah. It's when all of the fall decorations, and the dilapidated pumpkins get tossed and the candy canes and red and whites come out. Black Friday and Cyber Monday has passed, and now it's time to put things into cruise control until the big day arrives.

When we were younger, the holidays were magical and fun for most of us, with a minimal amount of stress and an abundant amount of gifts to those fortunate enough to receive any. As we get older and have families of our own, holidays remain fun, as we pour that magic into making our own family's holidays memorable.

Despite our current situation, holiday spirits remain high. Taking a drive around town, decorations are popping up every day. The night sky serves as the perfect backdrop for flashing holiday lights. Many people have started to decorate historically early, as a way to bring some sense of normalcy and positivity to others.

It may be difficult this season; however, try to do something creative to make someone's holiday one they can remember, something they don't expect. When you take the time to essentially play Santa Claus, the joy you get back is tenfold.

As for relieving stress, don't put too many expectations onto yourself and respect your own limits. You don't have to do everything, you can delegate. As for shopping, you can find just about anything online, even from local shops making gift buying easier. If shopping isn't your thing, hand out gift cards with a handwritten letter.

Throughout the season, take in the lights and remember to take in the holiday spirit of those around you. Go for a walk in the snow and listen to how quiet everything is. Begin and end each day with something you find enjoyable. We find that watching holiday movies, eating sugar cookies, drinking hot chocolate and listening to holiday music really can be uplifting. "A Christmas Carol," while a bit creepy at times, does put things into perspective. If you haven't read the book in a while or watched the movie, now is the time.

No, things won't look as they normally do this season. With that said, people throughout history have turned lemons into lemonade. This season it's especially important to support local small businesses, many who now offer items online. Throughout this season, let's all focus on lifting each other up as this pandemic eventually will take its place in history.

In the words of Hamilton Wright Mable, "Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love."

LETTERS

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We don't have a set limit, but if you keep it around 600 words or so, you're going to have a better chance at seeing all your words in print.

If you want to write a bit longer about a particular issue, maybe a guest Your Turn column is your cup of tea. If you do that, try to keep it between 700-800 words.

Remember, libelous remarks and/or personal attacks are a no-no and could lead to your letter not being published.

So, what are you waiting for? Start writing!

OPINION

VIEWS AND COMMENTARY FROM CHARLTON, CHARLTON CITY, CHARLTON DEPOT AND BEYOND

Blue Christmas

Blue Christmas is a long-held tradition in some parts of what we call, "Western Christianity," historically held on the winter solstice. Those Christian traditions that hold a Blue Christmas service, on or around Dec. 21, usually leave plenty of room for grief and despair and doubt to be expressed and prayed for. Not only does the winter solstice symbolize darkness but the Roman Catholic feast day of St. Thomas the Apostle is observed the same day—you know, the apostle most known for doubting Jesus had actually been raised post-crucifixion.

Essentially, the whole concept is that followers of Christ acknowledge that the holy days are not festive and joyful for everyone. Even for those who are cheerfully anticipating and celebrating Christmas or other holy days, there are often pangs of sadness, guilt, grief, despair, or loneliness that diminish how merry we might be: a loved one is missing from around the table for the first time, we're recently divorced or separated from a meaningful relationship, we lost a job or couldn't afford gifts, etc. Whatever we are going through, it is good, right, and healthy to give expression to those emotions, especially those that lead us to ques-



BEYOND THE PEWS
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REV. JOHN H.D. LUCY

tion or doubt the existence or goodness of God. Our scriptures include the Book of Lamentations, psalms that ask, "How long, O Lord?" Job who questions and doubts, and St. Thomas as well who needs to see for himself to believe. If we try to hide how and what we are feeling from ourselves, others, or God because we think we should or so that we don't ruin someone else's fun, we allow wounds to grow.

This year, in particular, probably each and every one of us has reason to call Christmas and the season of holy days blue. Family and friend gatherings have been limited or erased. We are lonely. We wonder how long we must endure this pandemic. We fear we won't have another chance to spend these special days with old or sick loved ones. And so many of us are grieving.

So I encourage you not to hide. Whether you believe in God or not, God wouldn't and doesn't demand or expect you to think and believe all is well and jolly all the time. Find someone to talk to, find a church or synagogue or mosque that will listen and pray with you, that hosts some type of a Blue Christmas service. The season may be blue, but you aren't and needn't be alone.

Holiday antique and auction news

Many holiday related stories have been featured in recent antique and auction news reports. Several Christmas related antiques recently brought strong prices at auction, according to the Antiques and Arts Weekly. A "red-robed Santa sitting in the gondola under a wicker dirigible with propellers on the side and holding his bag of toys" sold for \$7,800 at auction in November. "Santa in red robe riding a white fur nodding reindeer with orange decorative harness" went for \$13,200. "Santa riding a clockwork nodding donkey" with "a feather tree in one hand and the donkey outfitted in a vibrant harness" reached \$15,600. "Santa on nodding polar bear, 29 inches high with composition feet, hands and head with a mohair beard, the bear covered in rabbit fur" brought \$36,600. Antiques and the Arts reported that the Santa and polar bear seller is a member of the Golden Glow of Christmas Past Collectors group (goldenglow.org).



ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES & ESTATES
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WAYNE TUISKULA

ed that the Santa Claus and Rudolph figures from the 1964 "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" TV special recently sold at auction. Prior to the auction, the New York Times reported that the figures were "constructed of wood, felted wool, leather and lead armature" and cost around \$5,000 each to make in 1964. The two figures were expected to sell for between \$150,000 and \$250,000, according to the New York Times article. KSTP reported that "the seller was Peter Lutrario, 65, of New York, who told The Associated Press before the auction that he thought he would never part with the dolls but wanted to be able to take care of his children and grandchildren with the money." The undisclosed buyer paid \$368,000, well above the estimates. The Lutrario family stockings will certainly be stuffed this Christmas.

We are cataloging die-cast toys for an online auction that will end in early 2021. This will be the first of multiple toy auctions. Later auctions will feature rare antique toys from the 19th and 20th centuries. We will also be auctioning hundreds of paintings from the estate of Fay Moore. Moore is well known for her horse racing and other equestrian paintings. Additional auctions are also being planned. Please sign up for email updates on our website or follow us on Facebook for more information.

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Managing your retirement plan under a new employer

Your employer-sponsored retirement plan is a valuable asset. But sometimes things happen that can affect the status of your plan. So, for example, if you work for a hospital that changes ownership, and you have been participating in a 403(b), 457(b) or 401(k) retirement plan, what should you do with it now?

Basically, you have four options:

Cash out your plan. You can simply cash out your plan and take the money, but you'll have to pay taxes on it, and possibly penalties as well. So, unless you really need the funds and you have no other alternative, you may want to avoid liquidating your account.

Roll your account into your new employer's plan. If it's allowed, you can roll over your old 403(b), 457(b) or 401(k) plan into your new employer's plan. Before making this move, you'll want to look at the new plan's investment options (which should be numerous) and fees (which should be low). If you move the money directly to the new plan, you won't be taxed at the



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time of the transfer, and your funds can continue to grow tax-deferred.

Leave your plan with your old employer. If your account balance is above a certain level, you may be able to leave your plan with your old employer's plan administrator. You won't be able to contribute any more money to the plan, but if you like the investment options you've chosen, keeping the money in your old plan might be a viable choice.

Move your account into a traditional IRA. One possible advantage to moving your 403(b), 457(b) or 401(k) into a traditional IRA is you'll open up a world of new investment options, because you can fund your IRA with virtually any type of vehicle, including stocks, bonds, mutual funds, certificates of deposit (CDs) and exchange-traded funds. And if you already have a traditional IRA, you can combine the new funds with the old ones, making it easier to track your holdings. As is the case with leaving your money in your old employer's plan or transferring it to a new plan, you'll continue to benefit from tax-deferred growth. Keep in mind, though, that IRAs have costs, too, possibly including transaction costs to buy or sell new investments. (One more thing to keep in mind: When you want to move a retirement plan to an IRA, you may want to make a direct rollover, so the old plan's administrator moves the money directly into the IRA, allowing you to avoid immediate taxes. If you were to make an indirect rollover, you'd get the money yourself, but your old employer would have to deduct 20 percent for federal taxes, and you'd have to deposit the entire balance, including the withholding, into your IRA within 60 days.)

Which of these choices is best for you? There's no one "right" answer for everyone. You'll want to consider all the options and possibly consult with your tax advisor and financial professional. But do all you can to protect your retirement plan – you've worked hard to build it, and you'll need to rely on it to help you pay for your years as a retiree.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Jeff Burdick, your local Edward Jones Advisor in Sturbridge at 508-347-1420 or jeff.burdick@edwardjones.com.



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Man’s best friend



THE GREAT
OUTDOORS
.....
RALPH
TRUE

Dogs are man’s best friend. My life without my two dogs, Twig & Molly, would not be as enjoyable if I did not have them around. A daily walk with them at a local Rod & Gun club helps keep them in shape. The walks are good for this writer also, although I still am slightly overweight because of my eating habits. The dogs wake me up as soon as the light breaks. Molly is first! She quickly jumps in my bed and walk’s up my stomach until her face is right over mine. One long lick on my face and I am out of bed. Twig is next although she does not jump in my bed like Molly.

Taking the dogs out to the back yard, often requires a good grip on their leashes because of the high population of rabbits in the back yard. Molly occasionally digs out a spot under the fence to go hunting alone in the woods. A quick blast on the whistle brings her back to the gate in short time. It is nice to see the rabbit population making a comeback in the valley area, but Molly needs to be made aware of the dangers lurking in the woods. The two dogs are inseparable, and remain protective of each

other. Coyotes, Fishercat & Bobcat pose a real threat to domestic dogs and cats, and their populations are increasing every year.

Every year, families plan on purchasing a dog for Christmas, and it is often the wrong time of year to do so. It is a hectic time to bring in a puppy, and often brings more work keeping the dog safe in its new environment. Maybe this year could be different because of the pandemic. Many parents are working from home, away from the stresses of everyday life, especially for the next three months or so.

A new dog in the family could be just the right move this year, as long as you can afford one, as it can become very costly if they need to be brought to a veterinarian. It is a 10-to-15-year commitment to insure a happy & healthy life to the new puppy. Be sure to select the proper breed for you and your family, and never ever purchase a puppy from a pet store. You need to insist on seeing both parents of the pup and also get references. Every pup is cute when they are young and looking at a litter of pups is sometimes overwhelming. Take your time and do your homework. Temperament of the adult dogs is extremely important. What you see is what you will get!

Choosing a dog from an animal shelter is a big risk. Not knowing where the dog came from, how it was treated, etc. needs to be carefully thought over before making a deci-

sion. There have been many great dogs purchased at dog shelters, but it is a big gamble. They all need a second chance and adoption of a family pet or hunting dog is the way to go for some families. Good Luck!

Deer hunting opened for shotgun this past Monday under less-than-ideal conditions, with a rainstorm brewing late afternoon and Tuesday. Archers had a great season deer hunting this year and the harvest could well surpass last year’s record-breaking season. Many big bucks sporting large antlers have been reported by a local processing shop, and other reports from sporting goods stores with deer in the 200-pound-plus range is not uncommon. It will be interesting to hear the final results of the archery deer harvest in the coming weeks from MFW.

Fortunately, deer hunters in the valley do not need to travel to Petersham to do some deer hunting. In my younger years, we needed to travel a bit to get a shot at a deer. There was a line of cars a couple of miles long on opening day, carrying hunters to the areas around Petersham and surrounding towns. It was a lot of fun back then even though we never brought home the venison like we do today. We are so fortunate to have such a healthy deer herd in our back yard.

A local angler, Fernando Puglesa, landed a 36-inch Northern Pike in a local river in Whitinsville this past weekend. The fish was released back



Photo Courtesy

A local angler, Fernando Puglesa, landed a 36-inch Northern Pike in a local river in Whitinsville this past weekend.

into the river to fight another, day but not before the angler took a couple of pictures. The fish did not have much girth, as this week’s picture shows.

Duck hunters locally have reported on the lack of mallards this year. There are plenty of wood ducks, but the absence of mallards was a bit disappointing to many local waterfowl hunters. Goose and duck hunting closed Nov. 28, and will reopen Dec. 14. The next season will hopefully get better, as lakes and ponds freeze up. It is a dangerous time for duck

hunting for both man & dog, especially on the coast. Wind & freezing temperatures make for great waterfowl hunting, but extreme caution needs to be practiced at all times. More on this next week!

What was the organization on the Meadow Pond called The Sea Scouts back in the ‘50s? Stay tuned in next week.

Stay safe, wear a mask and practice social distancing!

Take a Kid Fishing & Keep Them Rods Bending.



TAKE
THE
HINT
.....
KAREN
TRAINOR

Now that Thanksgiving is over, holiday decorating can begin in earnest! But if you think decking the halls means digging deep into your pockets, think again. Through the years this column has shared many economical ways to add a holiday touch to your surroundings during the yuletide season. With many budgets still tight, this year is an ideal time to review (and hopefully adopt) some of these quick and easy holiday ideas. Read on as this week’s column spotlights some festive favorites!

Christmas Tree Preservative: If your family loves decorating a real tree, but you hate the mess of fallen needles, and the fear of sparking branches - don’t despair! And don’t spend big bucks on commercial preservatives either. This recipe will save the tree, some money, and maybe even a few frayed nerves: Ingredients: one gallon water; one cup ammonium sulphate (available from garden supply store); two tablespoons borax (available from grocery or hardware store); a few aspirins or three tablespoons glycerin, or three tablespoons sugar. Instructions: Mix first three ingredients together well. Pour into a spray bottle. Spritz on tree and pour the remainder into the tree stand instead of in water. Saw off the bottom of the trunk, one to two inches and use a drill to bore a narrow hole up through the middle of the trunk. Then fill the hole with cotton, and pack tightly. Put the base in warm water as soon as possible. Warm water will melt the sap, allowing the tree to drink more easily. Note: To prevent fallen needles, add one of these to the base: three tablespoons glycerin; three tablespoons sugar, or a few crushed aspirin.

Wreath and Bough Treatment: Here is a solution that can help retard a fire on your decorative wreath and boughs. It does not fireproof the fresh greens, so continue to use standard fire precautions. To make: Mix together five tablespoons Borax and four tablespoons Epsom salts in two quarts of water. Fill a spray bottle and spritz the tree or wreath completely, then allow to dry.

Jack Frost Window Paint: Remember when Jack Frost use to leave his artistic designs on the windows overnight? Few childhood delights compared to waking up to a snowy morning to a magical window frost! Thanks to double paned windows, Jack’s appearances are few and far between today. But with a little imagination, you can whip up some faux frost that’ll create a crystal ice painting on even the most insulated windows!

Ingredients: A few tablespoons of Epsom salts; one can flat beer; cotton balls. Instructions: Use a cotton ball to dab the mixture onto clean windows. Treat only the corners for a realistic look. As the mixture dries, it crystallizes.

Christmas Tree Flocking: Years ago, families used to gather on Christmas Eve to paint snow flocking on the branches of the holiday tree. Why not bring back the charming tradition of flocking the tree this year? With this recipe it’s easy and more fun than ever.

Ingredients: two thirds cup liquid starch; two cups soap flakes; two to four tbsp. water; blue food coloring. Instructions: Mix together the liquid starch and soap flakes in a bowl. Add the water and beat with a rotary egg beater until the mixture becomes thick and stiff. Add the food coloring a drop at a time while beating, until the snow becomes an icy-white color. Mix together the liquid starch and soap flakes in a bowl. Add the water and

beat with a rotary egg beater until the mixture becomes thick and stiff. Add the food coloring a drop at a time while beating, until the snow becomes an icy-white color.

Recycle Tree Trims
No matter how carefully you choose your fresh tree, branches often have to be trimmed. The fragrant needles from pruned branches can be recycled into festive favors:

Scented Sachets: Balsam pine needles are the stuff pricy pine pillows are made of. String-tied muslin bags of pine needles are top sellers at gift shops. To whip up a festive balsam “pouch,” cut two rectangles of fabric from wool or flannel (old flannel shirt material is ideal). Depending upon how many needles you have, you can stuff small sachet pillows nice and tight with ground up needles, adding a drop of balsam essential oil for good measure. For finely ground needles, you will need a net or double flannel lining to prevent the grindings from escaping. To finish it off, use an elastic band to tie off the top. Wrap a festive ribbon around it and glue on a tiny pinecone or two.

Pine Pillows: If you don’t have an abundance of fallen needles, you can still capture the scent of balsam. Fill a cheesecloth or net pouch with the tips of Christmas tree branches. Add some polyfill stuffing, and sprinkle in a few drops of pine or balsam essential oil. Secure open end shut. Stuff the cheesecloth filled pouch into a travel size zippered pillowcase. Add polyfill as well as a few more drops of essential oil. Be sure to use enough stuffing so pillow is stuffed solid, yet still soft. Note: Balsam pillows and sachets have long been given as a gesture of friendship so they make the ideal hostess gift.

Pine Potpourri: Wish you could retain that delightful pine scent of your Christmas tree? This home-

made Pine Potpourri offers a fresh, evergreen scent any time of year! Mix together: ½ cup bayberry leaves; ½ cup snipped balsam needles ; ½ cup miniature pine cones; ½ cup rose hips; 2 tsp orrisroot; 2 drops pine-scented fixative or oil. Mix the bayberry, balsam, pine cones and rose hips in a large bowl. Add the orrisroot and fixative and stir gently. Store in a jar with a tight fitting lid. Note: To rejuvenate and extend your pine potpourri, try this economical trick: Put some ground corn cob material (sold as cellulose or litter material at the pet store) in a jar. Add several drops of essential oil, place lid on jar and shake. Shake the jar every day for about a week or so. Add it to your potpourri, to give it body and hold the scent.

Win Dinner for Two at the Publick House

Your tips can win you a great dinner for two at the historic Publick House Historic Inn in Sturbridge! Simply send in a hint to be entered into a random drawing. One winner per month will win a fabulous three course dinner for two at the renowned restaurant, located on Route 131 across the town common in historic Sturbridge. Because I’m in the business of dispensing tips, not inventing them (although I can take credit for some), I’m counting on you readers out there to share your best helpful hints!

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



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Feeling groovy

The opening lyrics to Simon and Garfunkel's hit song, Feeling Groovy, are "Slow down, you move too fast." Lately, I've found this to be sound advice.

Arlene and I built three homes and an office building in our life together. We enjoyed each experience and wouldn't trade the time we spent together in creating these homes and spaces.

Today, I'm sitting in my daughter and son-in-law's kitchen. It's beautiful ... a work of art. The cabinets are white. The light fixtures are large clear globes. The floors are white marble.

As I sit here watching my daughter clean the globes, I said, "Are you sure you want these? They'll be a nightmare to keep clean."

"You say that about everything lately. You walk through our new home pointing out how much work or money it's going to be to maintain," she responded.

I was embarrassed and surprised by my comments, but she's right. I didn't realize how much time and experience has changed me. I don't think I'm being negative, but practical.

In the past, maintenance, whether in time or expense never crossed my mind. We liked what we liked and created our visions of home and workspace together. My daughters' new kitchen is gorgeous, but all I've been seeing is how much

work it will be to keep it clean. When did I change ... and why?

Evolving priorities.

I've decided I only want to spend my time left on earth in four areas.

1. I want to spend more time talking with and listening to God.
2. I want to be with my family and close friends.
3. I want to focus on writing this column and my new books, and,
4. I want to chase Arlene around the house.

Anything else isn't important and takes my time and attention away from what is.

I don't want to clean the house, mow the grass, or shovel the snow. I've spent the last forty plus years maintaining homes and spent the last twenty-six years working in and for an even larger home and forty acres ... and for what? All it did was burn my time, energy, and resources, while keeping me from doing things that are more important and fulfilling. I now have clarity. I see what is important in my life and that's where my focus should be.

Time changes our priorities. I can remember my foolishness in believing



my choices of automobile and size of home was representative of how important I was or how happy I could be. I couldn't have been more wrong. If I could go back and live my life again with my priorities of today, I believe I'd been a better employer, husband, and parent. I believe I'd live life with less stress. Maybe I wouldn't have cancer.

And I've slowed down. Not because of age or health, but because I see life differently. Energy is in shorter supply today and it forces me to think of the most useful way to spend it. And when I'm in a hurry, so much of life passes as a blur. I don't want to miss the important things as they pass. And besides, speeding is getting to the end as fast as you can. The end is not someplace I'm in a hurry to be.

When we are young, we believe we are immortal. The things we have ... time, money, loved ones, a good job, good health ... we assume we'll have forever. Yet in a blink of an eye, one or all of what we have can be gone. As time passes, we learn how fragile life is. It changes our perspective and fine tunes our focus. Time and experience teach us that the possessions in life that we eagerly collect on our search for meaning, are

meaningless.

Legacy.

What will we leave behind? For Arlene and me, it's great children and grandchildren with their priorities in order. Are they all there yet? Of course not. They have not lived enough life yet, but I'm confident the building blocks are there to help them.

For me, I'll leave behind my written words. Some will disappear as wasted gibberish, while others may hang around as useful life lessons. I hope something I've shared will help others live an optimistic and happier life.

And this may surprise you, but I find that I am grateful for cancer. There is nothing like facing the end to sharpen your senses and realize what is important and what is not.

For me, Faith, family (and dear friends), and legacy are what's important. Anything else is a distraction.

Are your priorities in line?

What's important to you?

Gary W. Moore is a freelance columnist, speaker, and author of three books including the award-winning, critically acclaimed, "Playing with the Enemy." Follow Gary on Twitter @GaryWMoore721 and at www.garywmoore.com.

PUBLIC SAFETY

continued from page A1

about what happened in the last fifteen years. Houses themselves are significantly more expensive. Unfortunately if we really went out and asked the public I think the majority of people that would respond would say they'll support a \$10 million fire station and unfortunately if that's the direction the Board of Selectmen gives us it's just not possible."

Selectmen engaged in a back and forth discussion on how to direct the committee to move forward with some debating whether producing a new conceptual design and cost for the May town meeting would be too soon and others believing waiting until next October would be too long. Selectman Bill Borowski said he didn't want to force the committee to have a new plan in place

in May if they didn't have all the information needed to earn voter support.

"I don't want to run into a problem of going into the expectation of May and not having thing lined up, not having the numbers that we need and not having everything that we had this last go-around. I'm not committing to May at this point. If we're at that point then that's great, but to put this on a May ballot having real solid information, I'm just not comfortable with it. It's only November, so between now and when we get to that point lots can change. I just want to make sure that we don't rush into anything because I want this to pass, and to have it pass, I think everything has to be completely buttoned up. Worst case scenario we do it in October," Borowski said.

Selectman Karen Spiewak felt that further postponing the

project would only increase the risk town employees as the fire fighters are currently working in out of date and increasingly unsafe environments in their current aging structures.

"Here's the reality — we need to put band aids on things almost immediately for the safety of our employees. We were very up front with the public about this. Everything we did in promoting this and answering questions we let them know. We helped them to understand the consequences. It's unfortunate that it didn't work, but now it's up to us to see what we can do to move it forward without rushing it. If you're kicking this project way down the road we need to step up. Even if it means making cuts, we need to do what we need to do to make the work environment safe for our employees," Spiewak said.

As for the committee itself,

Captain Barton said they are more than willing to work with the public to bring forward a new proposal keeping in mind expectations for both building standards and cost. However, he feels the public needs to be realistic about its expectations and enter the discussion with an open mind.

"We were given a direction that we had to go in and we went in that direction. Unfortunately, there were some people that weren't happy with that, but that's just the way it was. We're very encouraging for people to come forward and to give us some ideas," Captain Barton said. "I monitor the social media platforms and there's a lot of ideas that people have. Some may be beneficial, and we've already started looking into some of those ideas. This isn't going to be as simple as we'll just lop off the police station and put



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Friday's Child



Chance and Keith
Age 11 and 12

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Chance and Keith are vivacious boys of African American descent. Chance is a kind-hearted and soft-spoken child. He is described as gentle yet playful by those who know him best. Chance loves physical play such as basketball, soccer, bike riding, and swimming. He loves Pokémon and Legos, too! Chance reports that he likes school, and his favorite subject is math.

Keith is a quiet, reserved young boy who is known to be a good friend. He is very athletic and enjoys sports and participating in activities outside. He also likes to read. Keith is a great advocate for himself and for his siblings. He has great relationships with his caretakers and he is able to make friends easily.


Legally freed for adoption, Chance and Keith would like to grow up together in a permanent, loving family. The children have requested that their future family consists of a mother, father, and some pets. A family must be open to maintaining birth family contact through an Open Adoption Agreement. Both boys would benefit from continued visits with their older siblings.

Who Can Adopt?

Can you provide the guidance, love and stability that a child needs? 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.

The process to adopt a child from foster care requires training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you, and if so, to help connect you with a child or sibling group that your family will be a good match for.

To learn more about adoption from foster care, call the Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) at 617-6273 or visit www.mareinc.org. The sooner you call, the sooner a waiting child will have a permanent place to call home.





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OBITUARIES

Rita R. Beaudry, 97



his wife Maureen of Charlton; her two granddaughters, Christine Gervais of Belleview, FL and Karen Dupuis of Oxford; and three great grandchildren, Ty Dupuis, Gillian Gervais and Jacob Gervais. She was predeceased by her

SOUTHBRIDGE- Rita R. (Lataille) Beaudry, 97, formerly of Dennison Dr., passed away on Friday, Nov. 27th, in the Webster Manor Nursing Home, Webster, after a long illness.

Her husband, Lionel Beaudry, passed away in 2004. Her daughter, Carole Ann Racicot, passed away in 2012. Her first husband, Theodore J. Ryczek, passed away in 1986. She leaves her son, Robert T. Ryczek and

brother, Cyril Lataille and her sister, Marie Rose St. Cyr. She was born in Southbridge the daughter of Pierre and Helene (Gariepy) Lataille.

Rita was a Registered Nurse and worked at the Harrington Memorial Hospital in Southbridge for over 30 years, retiring many years ago. She was a member of Notre Dame Parish (now St. John Paul II Parish) and its Ladies of St. Anne Society. Rita was an avid bingo player.

A graveside service for Rita in New Notre Dame Cemetery, Southbridge, will be held at a later date. There are no calling hours.

The Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge, is directing local arrangements.
www.morrillfuneralhome.com

Get in the habit of
saving more each month

Saving is a vital component of financial planning. However, more than half of Americans are saving too little and do not have an accurate grasp of their spending habits.

A recent survey from Intuit Mint Life found that, in 2019, 59 percent of Americans were living paycheck to paycheck and 65 percent didn't know how much they were spending on a monthly basis. The situation is similar in Canada, where the annual BDO Canada Affordability Index indicates 53 percent of Canadians are living paycheck to paycheck and 25 percent say their debt load is overwhelming.

While there's no magic formula to save money, and the amount of money one should save each month depends on how he or she wants to live now and in the future, a handful of strategies can help people save more money each year.

- Follow the 50/30/20 rule. The popular 50/30/20 rule advocates for allocating 50 percent of your budget to essentials like rent, food and housing, 30 percent for discretionary spending and 20 percent for savings. Many people cannot save 20 percent of their income. In such instances, people can make a concerted effort to save 10 percent of their take-home pay.
- Build an emergency fund. The credit reporting agency Experian recommends consumers keep between three and six months' worth of expenses in an emergency fund. The fund should cover expenses on the absolute necessities paid each month, like utilities rent/mortgage and groceries.
- Set goals. Savings goals can help a person stay on track and provide moti-



vation to put money away. Establish separate savings accounts for each goal to reduce the temptation to spend. For example, if the goal is to save more for vacations, then a person can open an account where funds are used exclusively for vacations.

- Automate with your employers' help. Certain employers allow workers to direct deposit a paycheck into more than one bank account. It's easy to request the payroll manager put 10 percent or 20 percent of a paycheck into a savings account while the remainder is deposited into a checking account. Automated deposits can help individuals get accustomed to living on less.

Saving money isn't always easy, but with goals and certain strategies in mind, it's possible for individuals to grow their savings and secure their financial futures.



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WEBSTER – 20 Kunkel Ave! **SUNNY SHORES!** First Time Offered! 8 Rooms, 4 Bedrooms, 2.5 Bath Colonial! Featuring an Appliance Eat-in Cabinet Packed Kitchen! Formal Dining Room! 1st Floor Family Room w/Hardwood Floor! 1st Floor Half Bath w/Laundry! Gleaming Hardwood Staircase to the 2nd Floor w/4 Bedrooms! Master w/ Master Bath & Walk-in Closet! Many Recent Updates including Roof, Central Air, Hot Water Heater, Dishwasher & Refrigerator! Back Deck Overlooks Large Fenced Yard! 7 Zone Irrigation System! Farmer's Porch! Shed! 2 Car Garage w/Openers! This Home has Everything You Need and Then Some! Expandable Basement! Desirable Neighborhood w/Webster Lake Beach & Boat Ramp Access Nearby! Convenient to Route 395! **\$369,900.00**

CHARLTON – 64 Bond Rd! Gorgeous 2,800' 8 Rm, 3 Bdrm, 2.5 Bath Contemporary Ranch set on a Professionally Landscaped 1.49 Acres w/Natural Stone Walls! Quality Craftsmanship Throughout! Featuring a Spacious Granite Kitchen w/Cherry Cabinets & Hrdwd Flrs! Formal Dining Rm! Spacious Frplc Family Rm w/Cathedral Ceilings, Built-in Bookcases, an Open Flr Plan for All Your Entertaining Needs! Capacious Master Bdrm Suite w/Master Bath & Huge Office! Mostly Finished Walk-out Lower Level Featuring a Large Exercise Rm, Bar Area, Plenty of Storage & 3rd Garage! Unfinished Bonus Rm Over the 2 Car Attached Garage! Private Back Yard for Entertaining w/Multi Level Decks and New Patio! Listed by Another, SOLD by C21 Lake Realty! **\$535,000.00**

WEBSTER – 9 Lake Parkway! Newly Remodeled 6 Rm Cape Conveniently Located! 3 Bdrms & 1.5 Baths! New Granite Kit w/SS Appliances, Siding, Gutters, Windows, Ext Doors, Oil Tank, 1/2 Bath, Plumbing, Electrical, Lighting! Oak Hrdwds! Recent Steam Boiler & Roof! Enclosed Porch! Deck! Garage w/Openers! Private Back Yard! **\$279,900.00**

DOUGLAS – 102 SE Main St! Start Packing! Spacious 9 Rm Colonial! 2.23 Acres! Center Island Granite Kit w/Soft Close Cabs, SS Appliances! Slider to 24' Deck! Open Floor Plan! Hickory Wood Floors throughout the Kit, Din & Liv Rms, all w/Recessed Lighting! 1st Flr Office or Possible 4th Bdrm w/Oak Hrdwd Flrs! Full Bath in the Hall! 2nd Flr w/Full Dble Vanity Bthrm & 3 Comfortable Bdrms, all w/Beautiful Wood Laminate! 1st! Master w/Cathedral Ceiling, Skylight, Ceiling Fan, Bay Window overlooking the Back Yard and a Master Bath! Lower Level w/2 Finished Rms, Utility Rm w/Laundry and Half Bath! 3.5 Baths Total! Recent C/Air, Heat & Roof! 24x26 2 Car Detached Garage! Huge Shed! Nearby Nature Trails & Walum Lake Beach! **\$379,900.00**

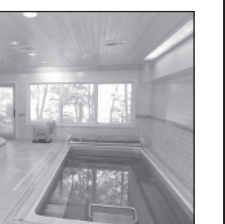
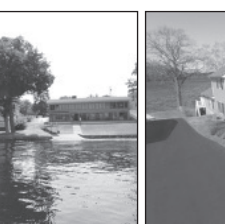
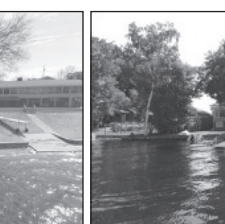
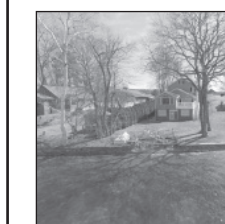
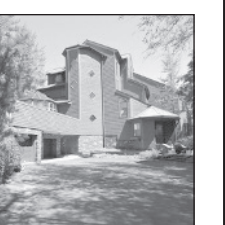
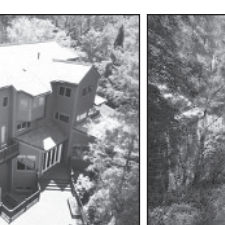
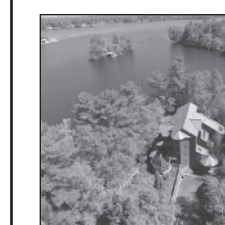
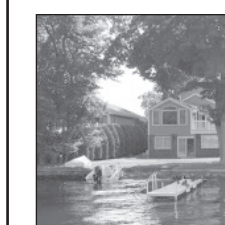


WEBSTER LAKE – 112 Gore Rd! **NORTH POND!** Sucker Brook Cove! 8 Rm, 3 Bdrm, 1.5 Bath Ranch is Ready for You! Southwestern Exposure! Gorgeous Sunsets! Unique Waterfront! An Open Floor Plan! Lake Views from Nearly All Rooms! 2x6 Construction! Energy Efficient Blinds in Every Room! 4 Oil Tanks - Fill Up Once a Year! C/Air! Gas Fireplace! Whole House Fan! Meticulously Cared For! Large workshop! 3 Car Garage! Carport! 2 Sheds w/Electric! Back Yard is Perfect for Family Gatherings! Plenty of Off Street Parking! Summer is Here! **\$539,900.00**

HOLDEN – 315 Holden St! 6 Rm Ranch! Meticulously Maintained! 2 Spacious Bdrms, Full Tiled Bath & 1 Car Garage! Move In Ready! Granite Oak Cabinet Kit w/Tiled Back Splash & JennAir Stove! Frplc Liv Rm! Fam Rm! Gleaming Hrdwds! Perfect Yard w/Major Landscaping this Year! New Roof 2019! **\$344,900.00**

SHREWSBURY – Waterfront – Flint Pond w/Direct Boating Access to Lake Quinsigamond! The Quiet of Flint, All the Action of Quinsig! Privacy Galore on Sargents Island – 4.27 Acres – 2,000' Waterfront! Beautiful Sunrises & Sunsets! Looking for a Getaway, Principal Residence or Second Home, Winters in Florida, Summers on the Island! Tons of Potential, Do a Little or Do a Lot! 4+ Rm, 1 Bdrm, 1.5 Bath "A" Frame with the Ability to Finish the Walk-out Lower Level, add a Family Rm, Bdrm, Bathrm! Nature Abounds, Visited by Deer, Fox, Eagles & More! In Time for Summer! **\$579,900.00**

GRAFTON – 168 Brigham Hill Rd! 8 Rm Garrison Colonial set on 1.3 Acres! 4 Comfortable Bdrms & 2 Full Bthrms! Freshly Painted, Floors Recently Refinished! Spacious Kit w/Lunch Counter! SS Appliances w/Gas Cook-Top! Grand Dining Rm for Family Gatherings! 19x26 Living Rm w/Pellet Stove! Master Bdrm w/Dble Closets & Hot Tub! Bright & Airy Mudroom out to the 2 Car Garage! Furnace & Hot Water Tank 5 Years Young! Radon tested at 2.5! Newer Roof on Garage & Breezeway! New Well Water Tank Installed! Title V in-hand! Property Abuts Grafton Land Trust - Hiking Trails Right Out Your Back Door! Convenient to Routes 90, 9 & 20! Immediate Occupancy! **\$449,900.00**



WEBSTER LAKE – 62 Bates Point Rd! Middle Pond! Absolute Prime 51' Level Waterfront Lot w/Western Expo! Beautiful Sunsets! Fantastic Panoramic Lake Views! 11 Rms, 6 Bdrms, 4 Bathrooms, 3,269' AC'd Colonial! Custom SS Appliance Granite Kit! Formal Din Rm w/ Cherry Hrdwds! Lake Facing Liv Rm w/Cathedrals, Cherry Hrdwds! Slider to Waterfront Deck! Spacious 1st Flr Master Bdrm w/Full Bath, Cherry Hrdwds & Walk-in Closet! Frplcd Lower Level Fam Rm! 1st & 2nd Flr Laundries! 2 Car Garage! **\$949,900.00**

WEBSTER LAKE - 11 Bay View Rd! One of the Lake's Premier Properties! 9,822' of Nice! .68 Acres of Park Like Grounds! 297' Waterfront! \$4 Million Spent, Nothing Spared! 17 Rms! 5 Water View Bdrms, 5.5 Bathrms! Brazilian Cherry Hrdwd Flrs, Grand & Spiral Stairways! Elevator, Ground Flr to Master Suite! In-door Resistance Swimming Pool, Hot Tub & Bthrm w/Steam Shower off Exercise Rm! Billiard Rm! Media Rm! Center Isl Granite Kit w/Viking Gas Range, Sub-Zero Frig, Pantry & Breakfast Bar! Open Flr Plan! Din Area, Fam Rm w/Entertainment Center w/Wet Bar! Formal Din Rm, Frplc Liv Rm & Atrium! Library w/Deck! Waterfront Master Suite w/Office, Bdrm w/Triple Glass Dr to Private Deck w/Lake Views, 3 Walk-in Closets, Bathrm w/Multi-Head Shower, Whirlpool, Dble Vanity, Separate Commode/Bidet/Sink Area! 16 Z's of Updated Geothermal Heat/A/C! Recessed Lights & Fire Sprinklers Through Out! 3 Car Garage! Generator! Slate Roof! Reward Yourself! **\$2,499,900.00**



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Featured New Listings!

WEBSTER - 11 PERRYVILLE ROAD



Beautiful Split entry home, situated on 1 acre, nicely landscaped lot! Vaulted ceiling! 6 rooms, 3 bedrooms, 2 full baths, Fireplace! Central Air - 2 Zones! Covered deck. All town services! 2 car garage under. Shed! **\$289,900.**

DUDLEY - 22 ROBERTS ROAD



Lovely 3 bedroom Ranch! Single door 2 car garage with storage! Eat-in kitchen. Fieldstone Fireplace Living Room! 3 bedrooms, hardwood floors, Remodeled bathroom! Lower Level fieldstone walls/fireplace! In-ground pool! - 3.58 ACRES includes extra lot. **\$312,000.**



WOODSTOCK CT - 110 JOY RD
ON DEPOSIT
Quisential Woodstock Farmhouse w/Spectacular views of Pond. Detached Studio Building! 2.5 Acres. Prof. Landscaped. 5 Bedrooms. Fireplace Dining, library/Music room. Master Bedroom, 2 Full Baths! Renovated Kitchen. Upstairs, 4 Bedrooms w/Full Bath. **New Price \$399,900.**



WEBSTER - 21 3RD STREET UNIT: B
ON DEPOSIT
Condominium - Living leisurely! 3 bedroom, 2.5 bath (including master suite) home. Freshly painted! Recessed lighting, gas fireplace, and sliding doors, to beautiful balcony. Walkout basement! built-in outdoor grilling spot. Easy access to 1395. **\$224,900**



N. ATTLEBORO - 523 KELLY BLVD.
SORRY, SOLD!
Farmhouse style home! Sun-drenched interior! Spacious floor plan! living room, eat-in kitchen, 6 rooms total, 4 bedrooms, 2 baths! Heated by gas / hot water baseboard! Outdoor kitchen, pool! Jacuzzi tub/shower. Located just minutes from Rt 95 & 495! assisted sale **\$408,500.**



WEBSTER - 103 UPPER GORE RD
ON DEPOSIT
Estate Sale! LOCATION, LOCATION! Scenic Upper Gore Rd! Amazing View of Beautiful Webster Lake! Main level has 3 Bedrooms, Kitchen, Dining Rm, Common Bathrm, Master Bedroom & Master Bath - Fireplace Living Room! Finished Lower Level, 1/2 Bath, Laundry, Large room w/Pellet Stove & Direct Garage Access! Tiered deck, w/Screened porch, leads directly to your "Salt water" Inground Pool! **\$319,900.**

LAND
WEBSTER/OXFORD/DUDLEY/DOUGLAS
Oxford - 4 Leisester St - Approx. 8.47 ACRES! River Frontage Possible to be Subdivided! **\$99,900**
Webster - Upper Gore w/View of the Lake! 1+ Acre! Artesian Well, Septic Design & Conservation - DONE. **NEW PRICE \$115,000.**
Webster - Cooper Road 2 Buildable Lots! Water & Sewer Access. Zoned Lake Res! **Each \$24,500.**
Douglas-Mount Daniels 2.5 Acres abuts Douglas State Forest! **ON DEPOSIT! \$132,900**
Dudley - Marshall Terrace 12,000+- Sq Ft Lot! Potential for a 2 Family! **SORRY SOLD! \$70,000.**
Dudley - Packard Dr. 2 Lots! Very Private! off Ridge Dr. Will not last! **SORRY SOLD! \$50,000**



OXFORD - 4 SPICEBUSH LANE
SORRY, SOLD!
One level living with added 35 x 18 finished walk-out lower level. Cathedral ceilings, skylight dining, hard-wood flooring and central air. Stainless appliances w/large double oven. Over-sized 30 x 14 deck, quiet cul-de-sac! **New Price \$314,900.**



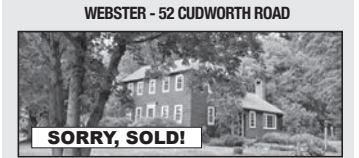
SOUTHBRIDGE - 14 SERVANT WAY
SORRY, SOLD!
Young ranch with heated 2 car garage, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Efficient Propane heat, central air! Open floor plan! gas fireplace! Master Suite w/bathroom, Master California Closet! assisted sale **\$279,900.**



OXFORD - 115 CHARLTON ROAD
SORRY, SOLD!
Beautiful home set back off road providing privacy and oversized yard. Kitchen w/granite counters & abundance of cabinets. Cathedral ceilings kitchen, dining and living room. Open floor plan! large deck with large backyard through sliders in dining room. Hardwood floors! Tile baths. Master bedroom/master bath! Finished walkout lower level w/bar! 2 car garage. Extras above ground pool! **\$369,900.**



WEBSTER - 20 KINGSBURY
SORRY, SOLD!
NEW TO THE MARKET! Custom Sprawling Split 2800+ SF! Central Air! Kitchen, Dining Room, Cathedral Ceiling Living Room, 3 Bedrooms! Granite Counters & New Flooring! New Boiler - Hot Water Tank - Oil Tank! FULL finished Lower Level w/ Full Bath & Laundry! THERE'S MORE! 2 Car Garage, renovated to include Hydro Heat, AC & 1/2 Bath! Great for Fitness Studio, Game Room or Home School! Over 1.4 Acres! **\$360,000.**



WEBSTER - 52 CUDWORTH ROAD
SORRY, SOLD!
1.99 ACRE INDUSTRIAL ZONED LOT! GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE & WORK FROM HOME! Amazing 1790 Antique Colonial! Undergone major updates & renovations, maintaining Antique Charm! Great Room graced by an Open Hearth Stone Fireplace! Soaring Cathedral Ceilings! **\$499,900.**

On the shores of Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg

Webster Lake - 100 Lakeside Ave



SORRY, SOLD!

WEBSTER LAKE! PANORAMIC VIEWS! BEAUTIFUL SUNSETS! Extraordinary Waterfront Contemporary! Architect designed with Lake Living in mind, Custom Built with Attention to High Quality & Detail. Outstanding open concept, water view from almost every room. Nicely enhanced on a .25 acre level peninsula, 180'+/- prime lake frontage! Situated by a all natural shoreline! All you need to live is located on the 1st floor. Grand 2 story foyer, cozy fireplace living room, gourmet kitchen, lake facing dining, formal dining room, media room & spacious 1st floor guest BR Suite w/ private bath. Incredible 2nd floor fireplace lake-facing corner master suite w/luxurious private bath, 3 more 2nd floor BRs & full bath! Something Special! Remember, Timing Is Everything! **\$1,075,000.**

Lake Shirley - 647 Reservoir Rd



SORRY, SOLD!

Lakefront! Lake Shirley! Modern Flare on a Lakefront Colonial! 1st level Formal large entry foyer, living room, gas fireplace, chef kitchen, Impala black granite, center island, 3 season porch, overlooking the lake. 1st FL bedroom suite w/ shower and jacuzzi tub. 2nd floor Master Suite! Lower level Summer kitchen, full bath, game room. Crown moulding & hardwood floors throughout, wired sound system, radiant floors. oversize 2 car garage. Additional Guest House! assisted sale **\$1,040,000.**




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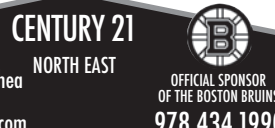
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Octobers' Single Family Homes Real Estate Market

AUBURN			
	October 2019	October 2020	Trend
Median Price	\$283,750	\$349,000	▲
Market Volume	\$7,804,001	\$6,977,000	▼
# of Homes Sold	26	20	▼
Avg Days on Market	33	14	▼

OXFORD			
	October 2019	October 2020	Trend
Median Price	\$286,700	\$322,000	▲
Market Volume	\$4,351,152	\$4,303,820	▼
# of Homes Sold	16	13	▼
Avg Days on Market	41	20	▼

Contact us to find more about your neighborhood market & what your home is worth!
Happy Holidays from our family to yours!


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103 Beacon Park- \$324,900


ON DEPOSIT

Oxford: 1 acre
lot, Oversized
2-car garage,
Vaulted ceilings,
in kitchen,
dining & living
room, 3 bedroom,
1.5 Baths, Hardwood
floors, Finished lower level, Craft room, 2
Decks.
22 Whiting Rd- \$389,900



REDUCED

Dudley: Survey completed, needs some
cosmetics, 3-4 bedrooms, garage, in-ground
pool
11A Paglione Dr- \$239,900

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Hobbies promote personal growth

Hobbies can help people escape the daily grind. Though it's easy to view hobbies as enjoyable ways to pass the time, they also can be vehicles that enrich your life.

Hobbies are especially good at helping people learn new skills. They also may help boost professional and personal development.

Hobbies play a vital role for a variety of reasons, and some hobbyists may be surprised to learn just how much their favorite form of escapism is benefitting their lives.

- Hobbies may help to relieve stress by keeping you engaged with something you enjoy. Reducing stress may help you remain calm and be more productive at home, at work and in school. Reduced stress also translates into improved mental and physical health.
- People who engage in hobbies experience new things and may interact with different people through their interests. This can give you various topics to discuss in conversation and make you more interesting to others. Learning skills through hobbies also means you will obtain specialized knowledge that you can impart on people with similar interests.
- Hobbies can be creative outlets that take your mind off of other things. For

people who have trouble with meditation and other mindful ways to shut off their brains, hobbies can be a form of escapism that leaves you alone with your thoughts. According to the self-improvement resource Personal Growth, most hobbies actually have a meditative effect on your thoughts because, no matter what you are doing, your awareness becomes completely focused on the hobby.

- Hobbies can improve your social life and foster creative bonds with others, providing great ways to meet and get closer to people who share your interests.
- Hobbies can help stave off boredom, providing productive outlets when there is nothing else available to fill the time. Hobbies can be more beneficial ways to spend your time than playing games on a phone or watching television.
- Hobbies also may be educational and enrich knowledge through skill building. People who start with one hobby may find connections to other ones, further developing their knowledge and skill sets.

If embracing new hobbies is on your list of resolutions for the upcoming year, individuals can rest assured that engaging in hobbies promotes personal growth in various ways.

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