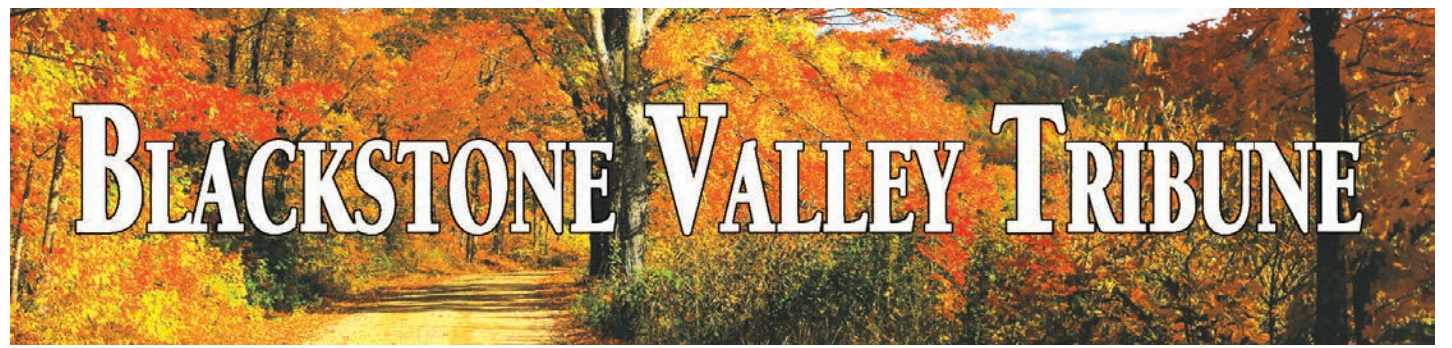


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Friday, October 4, 2024

Celebrating a prolific career

BVT Superintendent plans to retire at the end of the school year

UPTON — Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, a highly esteemed and nationally recognized leader in vocational-technical education, has been a cornerstone of the Blackstone Valley Vocational

Uxbridge Public Schools celebrates highest post-pandemic Math MCAS scores

UXBRIDGE — On Sept. 24, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released the latest statewide test scores (MCAS), and Uxbridge Public Schools Superintendent, Michael Baldassarre was proud. From 2021 to 2024, Uxbridge reports substantial growth, specifically in mathematics.

DESE groups MCAS scores into four categories – Exceeding, Meeting, Partially Meeting, and Not Meeting Expectations. Post-pandemic MCAS scores in Uxbridge show improvement in the percentage of students Exceeding or Meeting Expectations on these assessments. Uxbridge Superintendent Michael Baldassarre sees performance increases as confirmation that the district is on the right path.

From 2021 – 2024 big-time improvements in mathematics scores can be seen for students in chronically underperforming subgroups:

- In Grade 3, Economically Disadvantaged students showed a 24 percent and Disabled Students showed an increase of 13 percent in proficiency

- Economically disadvantaged students in Grade 5 showed an 11 percent increase in proficiency

- In Grade 6, Economically disadvantaged students showed a 20 percent and Disabled Students showed a 12 percent increase in proficiency

- In Grade 7, Economically disadvantaged students showed a 12 percent and Disabled Students showed an 11 percent increase in proficiency

Baldassarre noted, "Double-digit gains like this are a testament to the district's commitment to academic excellence. We are moving in the right direction."

While celebrating this success, the district acknowledges that work remains in English Language Arts (ELA) and is committed to continuing efforts to improve across all subject areas.

Principal Mark LaBossiere of Taft Early Learning Center expressed his satisfaction with the Grade 3 results, stating, "I'm happy with the MCAS results. In FY22 and FY23, Taft was below the state average for students scoring in the Meets and Exceeds categories. We still have more work to do, but in FY24, we were ahead of the state average in both ELA and Math."

Assistant Superintendent Karen Dwyer, while acknowledging that improvements like this involve every part of the organization, praised the schools' principals: Mark LaBossiere at the Taft Early Learning Center, Leanne DeMarco at the Whitin Intermediate School, and Michael Rubin at Uxbridge High School.

"The consistency in using the same curriculum in Grades K – 8 calls upon a whole team approach, which leads to increases in achievement like this," she said.

For more information, contact the Superintendent's office at mbaldassarre@uxbridge.k12.ma.us.



Courtesy

Dr. Michael Fitzpatrick

Regional School District since 1994, serving as the superintendent-director. His remarkable career, which includes significant advancements and achievements, has left a proud and profound mark. He has announced his plans to retire at the end of the 2024-25 school year, marking the end of an era.

"Leading this incredible organization and serving our district's families and students has been an honor," Fitzpatrick said. "After more than three decades in a role I have profoundly enjoyed, it is bittersweet to share that this will be my final school year as superintendent-director. The decision to retire has been made collaboratively with our district school committee and with forward-thinking and advanced planning with our leadership team for continued success."

Fitzpatrick became BVT's fourth superinten-

dent on Jan. 3, 1994. Previously, he was director of the Center for Vocational Technical Education at Fitchburg State College for four years, the director of statewide curriculum projects at Westfield State College and Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School District for three years, statewide conference coordinator for vocational-technical leadership personnel at Fitchburg State College and Westfield State College for 13 years and assistant superintendent at Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical School District for 13 years.

During his tenure, voters approved bond issues, significant repair projects, a major expansion, and the opening of new vocational and adult programs. The school has received a Silver Award and was named Pacesetter Site for High Schools That Work program of the Southern Regional Education Board in 1997, 2007-2010, and 2010-2013. The school was also named a Commonwealth Compass School by the state in 2003, one of six schools in the country to receive the 2004 National School Change Award from Fordham University, and earned designation as a 2005 Vanguard Model School by Mass Insight Education.

Fitzpatrick is the only superintendent in Massachusetts to have served as the president of the Massachusetts Association of Vocational Administrators, the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS), and the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools. Additionally, he served on the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) Executive and Governing Boards and as chairman of the New England School Development Council. Fitzpatrick was also named Massachusetts Superintendent of the Year 2011 by MASS and AASA.

At Blackstone Valley Tech, as educators prepare students to take what they have learned and find their true passion and purpose in their professional careers, the district will celebrate Fitzpatrick's prolific career, which exemplifies this sentiment with planned events throughout the school year. His last day as superintendent-director will be June 30, 2025. This timely notice allows the District School Committee to prepare for a smooth transition in its search for its next superintendent.

UHS Principal to present on post-COVID education recovery

UXBRIDGE — Dr. Michael Rubin, the Principal of Uxbridge High School, has been selected as one of two national principal leaders to present on post-COVID recovery efforts at the upcoming RESTART Network conference. The Research on Education Strategies to Advance Recovery and Turnaround (RESTART) Network focuses on identifying and

disseminating evidence-based strategies for accelerated student recovery, especially among those disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

RESTART's national symposium is a virtual event that pulls together educators and other stakeholders from across the world in an effort to discuss ways that education continues to evolve, while also prioritizing ways that schools have acknowledged fatigue and frustration. Dr. Rubin will share his expertise on successful innovations and improvements implemented at Uxbridge High School, addressing challenges such as academic recovery, social-emotional well-being, educator retention, and chronic absenteeism. His presentation will highlight universal support strategies, adult support initiatives, and key messages for education policymakers, leaders, and researchers. He will be presenting alongside the NASSP State Coordinator for the state of California.

"I'm honored to represent Uxbridge High School and share our experiences with the RESTART Network," said Dr. Rubin. "The past few years have presented unprecedented challenges, but they've also sparked incredible innovation in education. I look forward to discussing how we can build on these positive changes while addressing ongoing issues in our schools."

Now in his tenth year as Principal of Uxbridge High School, Michael Rubin has a track record of educational innovation and leadership. He has successfully led Uxbridge High School's designation as a Commonwealth of Massachusetts Innovation Pathway school, one of the first four in the state to earn this distinction, and he also chairs of the Board of Advisors to the Blackstone Valley Hub for Workforce Development.

Under Dr. Rubin's leadership, Uxbridge High School has gained recognition as a member of the National Consortium of Secondary STEM Schools and the CAPS Network. It is the only comprehensive high school in Massachusetts to have earned Project Lead the Way program distinction for the past four years. Dr. Rubin has presented at state and national levels on UHS' commitment to authentic learning, building partnerships with local industry, leveraging student learning styles, and focusing on proficiency and skills-based competencies in traditional schools. His efforts contributed to UHS being named one of the top five schools in the "Innovation Impact" category at ASU/GSV in 2024.

In the past three years, more than 70 schools have visited UHS to learn from the school's leaders, teachers, and students. Rubin was named Massachusetts High School Principal of the Year in 2020 and recently was honored with the Administrator Award from MassCUE.

Family letters of Abby Kelley and Stephen Foster to be performed at Uxbridge Quaker Meetinghouse

Courtesy

(Right) "The Family Letters of Abby Kelley and Stephen Foster" will be performed at the Uxbridge Quaker Meetinghouse on Sunday, Oct. 6 at 1 p.m.

UXBRIDGE — Before cell phones, even before the common use of the telephone, people wrote letters to stay in touch. While the fine art of writing a personal letter may have passed us by, you are invited to step back in time on Sunday, Oct. 6 at 1 p.m. to enjoy a correspondence rich in detail about every day life and the burning issues of the mid-nineteenth century.

The Uxbridge Quaker Meetinghouse Association is pleased to present "The Family Letters of Abby Kelley and Stephen Foster," a free performance by Lynne McKenney Lydick and Thomas Lydick. If you were lucky enough to hear Lynne transform herself into Abby Kelley Foster at last fall's presentation, then you know how riveting her presence can be. Joined by her husband Tom, this dynamic couple takes us back to the 1840s and '50s, as passionate speakers who traveled the country for the American Anti-Slavery Society.

Abby and Stephen Foster endured long periods of separation while one of them went on a speaking tour and the other stayed at home with their young daughter. The letters provide a glimpse into their everyday life, the passion that they felt for their cause and the challenges that separation brought about.

Don't miss this special free performance at the historic 1770 Quaker meeting-house, located at the corner of Quaker Highway and Aldrich Street in Uxbridge. Mark your calendar for Sunday, Oct. 6 at 1 p.m. as Abby Kelly Foster and Stephen Foster come alive through the private letters of this very public couple.



Small Stones Festival call for art closes Oct. 14

GRAFTON — The 2025 Small Stones Festival of the Arts closes Oct. 14, or when approximately 500 submissions

have been received. Fine art painting and fine art photography and all forms of two-dimensional fine artwork are accept-

ed with a maximum of five entries per artist. For details, visit <https://smallstonesfestival.org/>.

A distinguished panel of six jurors will select 144 works to appear in the exhibit and cash prize winners in each of the categories. A hardbound exhibition catalog showcasing the juried artwork will be available at the festival and online. An opening ceremony and reception will be held Jan. 25 at the Brigham Hill Community Barn, 37 Wheeler Rd. in N. Grafton. The public is welcome to attend.

Since the festival began in 2018, many central Massachusetts artists' work has been juried into the fine art and photography exhibition. The 2024 festival included the following artists' work: Lelise Breault, Sue Dion, Brandi Van Roo and Sarah Trudeau of Douglas; John Andonian of Linwood; Maria Buckley and Roberta Oakley of Northbridge; and Carol Frieswick and Candace Imming of Whitinsville.

The festival will run Jan. 25 - Feb. 2 with extended hours. The Blackstone Valley Art Association and the Worcester County Camera Club have collaborated to provide the free fine art and fine art photography festival.

The mission of the Small Stones Festival of the Arts is to elevate the practice and appreciation of art in the Blackstone Valley and beyond. Grafton Arts, Inc. is the financial sponsor of the festival.

The festival organizers appreciate the support of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, Grafton and Millbury Cultural Councils, Homefield Credit Union, and Yesod Foundation, Inc.

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\$565,000, 8 Goddard St, Martinelli, Donald J, and Martinelli, Denise A, to Medina, Jamilto G, and Medina, Teodorico G.
\$439,900, 5 Williams St, Krajewski Winifred A Est, and Laquerre, Kathleen, to Goldberg, Daveed, and Barrett, Kelley.
\$355,000, 2 Rivers Edge Rd #2, Barrett, Cynthia V, to Alencar, Israel, and Alencar, Cynthia V.

DOUGLAS

\$739,000, 43 Perry St, Fitzpatrick, Joseph, to Groux, Stephanie, and Groux, Dominick.
\$565,000, 34 Hemlock St, Fuller, Keith K, and Blue Castle Cayman Ltd, to 21 Century Mill LLC.
\$100,000, 287 South St #10, Desousa, Gil, and Desousa, Piedade, to Benjamin, Eduardo, and Benjamin, Angela.

NORTHBRIDGE

\$610,000, 233 Sand Trap Ct #233, Coughlin, John P, and Coughlin, Angela K, to Khubbar, Anandjot, and Khubbar, Manjeet.

UXBRIDGE

\$355,000, 95 High St #C, Deorsey, Jeremy A, and Deorsey, Kristy-Lee B, to Alves-Santos, Sebastiao J, and Da Costa Santos, J F.

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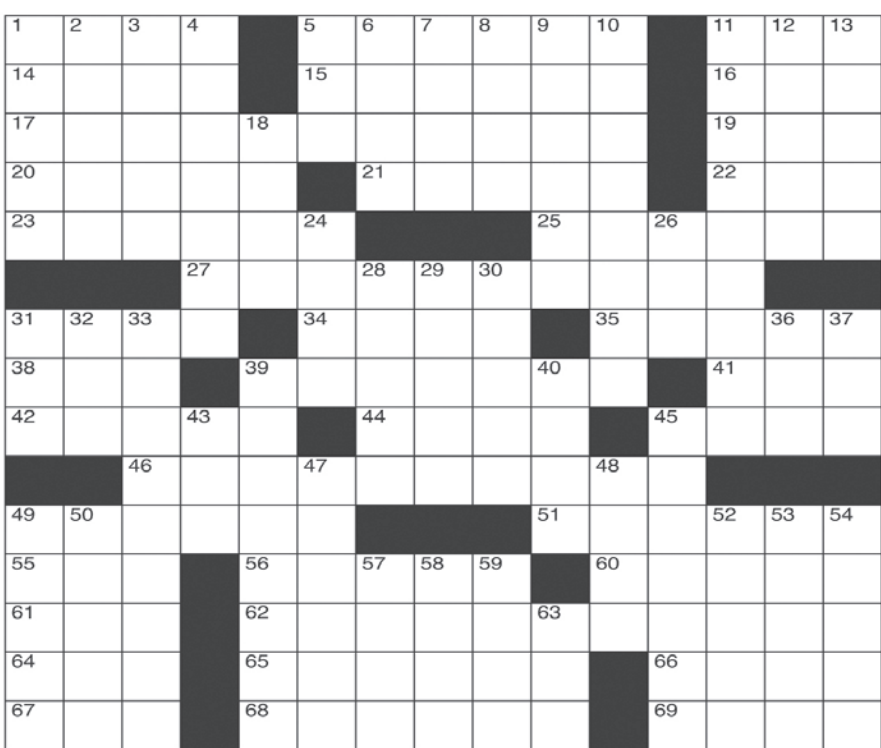
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OR send to Blackstone Valley Tribune P.O. Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550
TO SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR:
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OR send to Blackstone Valley Tribune P.O. Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550

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PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER FRANK G. CHILINSKI 860-928-1818 EXT. 103 frank@salmonpress.news
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OPERATIONS DIRECTOR JIM DINICOLA 508-764-6102 jdinicola@stonebridgepress.news
EDITOR BRENDAN BERUBE 508-909-4106 news@stonebridgepress.news
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CLUES ACROSS

- Separate with an instrument
- State clearly
- One-time MLB speedster Gordon
- Broad in scope
- Lacking social polish
- Amount of time
- Frame
- Automobile
- Caps
- High school dances
- Utilize
- Checked
- One-sided
- Having an extreme greed for wealth
- Potted plants
- We all have one
- Lake north of the Kalahari
- Unidentified flying object
- Aging persons
- Small amount
- Mother of Perseus
- Ornamental waist box
- Officials
- Uncertain
- A cotton fabric with a satiny finish
- Extensive, treeless plains
- Your consciousness of your own identity
- Consumer advocate Ralph
- Notable Spanish sports club
- Body part
- One's responsiveness
- Woman (French)
- Ready and willing to be taught
- Muslim ruler title
- Unhappy
- Gradually disappeared
- Able to think clearly

CLUES DOWN

- Brushed
- Water sprite
- Ones to look up to
- Monetary units
- We all have one
- Marine invertebrate
- One who institutes a legal proceeding
- Outer
- Parallelograms
- Uncomfortable feelings
- Cross to form an X
- Remove
- Some pages are dog-__
- Capital of Ukraine
- A citizen of Denmark
- Eighth month (abbr.)
- Hindu queens
- Acids structurally related to amino acids
- Rider of Rohan in Tolkien
- Wet dirt
- Russian city
- Observed
- Irate
- Travelers need them
- Musical composition
- Auction
- Form of "to be"
- Women
- Inspire with love
- Think Japanese ankle sock
- Appears
- Old World lizard
- The lead dancer: __ ballerina
- Protein involved in motion
- Rosalind Franklin biographer
- Popular 1920s style art __
- __ Blyton, children's author
- Abnormal breathing
- A place to rest

PUZZLE SOLUTION



SNHU announces Summer 2024 President's List

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Jackeline Lopez of Northbridge
Michael Kiley of Whitinsville
Kristina Brenn of Whitinsville
Javon Brown of Uxbridge
Jocelyn Forgette of Uxbridge
Abigail Hanscom of Uxbridge
Christian LeCour of Uxbridge
Robert Gagne of Northbridge
Julia Bertolet of Douglas
Nicholas Carr of Douglas
Jordan Espanet of Douglas

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is a private, non-profit, accredited institution with a 92-year history of educating traditional-aged students and working adults. Now serving more than 200,000 learners worldwide, SNHU offers approximately 200 accredited undergraduate, graduate and certificate programs, available online and on its 300-acre campus in Manchester. Recognized as one of the "Most Innovative" regional universities by U.S. News & World Report and one of the fastest-growing universities in the country, SNHU is committed to expanding access to high quality, affordable pathways that meet the needs of each learner.

Millbury Senior Center

TOMMY RULL ENTERTAINMENT
Monday, October 28th 12:30 P.M. - 1:30 P.M.
Pizza will be served

CRAFT CLASS
Wednesday, October 17th 1 P.M. - 2 P.M.
Class is \$10 per person
Price may vary based on project
Call or stop by the center to RSVP 508-865-9154

FLORAL ARRANGMENT CLASS
Wednesday, October 2nd
First Wednesday

Thursday, October 10th 1 P.M. - 3 P.M.
price is \$20
Call the center to sign up!

BETTER BREATHERS CLUB
Tuesday, October 29th 10:30 A.M. - 11 A.M.

SENATOR MOORE'S OFFICE
Meet with a representative from Senator Moore's office!

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TRANSPORTATION
All appointments will be accepted by the WRTA

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SENIOR CENTER
Classes!
ZUMBA CLASSES Mondays at 1 P.M. (Class is \$3)
LIGHT EXERCISE CLASSES Mondays and Fridays 9:30 A.M. - 10:15 A.M. (Free!)

TAI CHI
Tuesdays 9:30 - 10:30 A.M. (class is \$3)

LINE DANCING CLASSES
Wednesdays at 10:30 A.M. (Class

of the month between 11 - 12 P.M.
All are welcome to meet and discuss issues of importance or looking for assistance
Any questions please call 508-865-9154

Transportation Hours are Monday through Thursday from 8 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. & Fridays 8 A.M. to 11:30 A.M.
Rides have to be scheduled by 4:30 P.M. the day before by calling 508-752-9283

For more information on regards to transportation call the center at 508-865-9154

is \$3)

YOGA Thursdays 9 - 10 A.M. (Class is \$3)

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES!

MAHJONG Mondays at 12:45 P.M.

CRIBBAGE Monday through Friday 8:30 A.M.

BLOOD PRESSURE CLINIC Every Tuesday from 9 A.M. - 10 A.M.

SOCIAL BINGO Wednesdays at 1 P.M.
Bring your pennies!

PITCH Thursdays 1 - 3 P.M.

COLORING Thursdays at 10

Our Outreach worker, Julie Fitzgerald, is happy to answer any questions, call to RSVP 508-865-9154!

The menu is available on the town website, www.townofmillbury.org
Or our Millbury Senior Center Facebook page.
A 48 hour reservation is required. Call the center at 508-865-9154

"MEMORY CAFE"
Please join us on Tuesday, October 29th at 2 P.M.
Refreshments will be served
A Memory Cafe is a monthly gathering for people with memory loss / challenges and their care partners. It is a time to socialize, make new friends, and have a good time

Our appointments are on Tuesdays & Thursdays 10 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Call for an appointment & required documentation 508-865-9154
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Douglas Adult Social Center

331 Main St. (508) 476-2283
Hours of operation: Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; Friday 9 a.m.-noon

DAILY ACTIVITIES: All our daily activities are free of charge.

Monday: Painting class 9:45 to 11:45, Balance & Strength Exercise 12 pm, Mat Yoga 2 pm

Tuesday: Walking club 9 am, Cribbage 9:30 am, Zumba 9:30 am, Bingo 12:00 pm, Technology Class 1pm (call to make an appt.)

Wednesday: Balance & Strength 10 am, Darts 10 am, MahJong 1 pm

Thursday: Walking club 9 am, Chair Yoga

9:30 am, Pitch 9:30 am, Hand and Foot card game 12:30 pm
Friday: Balance & Strength 10 am

SEPTEMBER EVENTS:

Wellness clinic dates Monday September 23 & Monday September 30.

Stop in between 10 and 12 for a blood pressure check, or to discuss concerns you may have.

Flu Shot Clinic on Monday September 30, from 10 am to 1 pm. Please call to schedule your appointment to come in for the flu vaccine.

HannaFord Pharmacy will be here giving the vaccine and your vaccine will be added to your medical chart.

Please bring your insurance card and ID. There is one form that will be available to fill out and sign.

OCTOBER EVENTS:

Closed on Monday October 14, in observance of Columbus Day.

Our annual SMILE DAY celebration will be on Thursday October 3 @ 11:30. FREE luncheon & dessert will be served. Our surprise entertainment will begin @ 12:30. Please sign up before September 30.

FREE Veteran's breakfast Thursday October 10 @ 9. Please call the center to sign up.

Hoarding presentation on Thursday October 10 @ 11:30. Deb

will be here to discuss the topic and answer any questions you may have. Lunch will be available for \$4.00, stuffed shells & dessert. Please sign up before October 4.

Lunch & a movie on Thursday October 17 @ 11:30. "The Boys in the Boat" follows the University of Washington rowing team, and their quest to compete in the 1936 Summer Olympics. Lunch is available for \$4.00 & menu will be announced later. Please sign up before October 11.

Hearing aid cleaning with Darci Thursday October 24 from 10 to 11. Please call the center to schedule a time to see her.

Bemis Nursery will be here on Thursday October 24 @ 11:00. We will be making a fall birch log centerpiece. The cost for this event is \$25.00 and must be paid when you sign up. Please sign up before October 15.

Uxbridge Lions car show rescheduled

UXBRIDGE — The Sixth Annual Uxbridge Lions Club Car Show has been rescheduled to Saturday, Oct. 19, due to inclement weather. The club is ready to host participants from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Valley Chapel parking lot, 14 Hunter Rd. in Uxbridge. This year the Southern Worcester County Bar Association joins the Uxbridge Lions in their main fundraising effort.

The registration fee for every car category is only \$15, and admission is free. Judges will choose the top twenty-four with an additional Best in Show singled out. Fans will elect the People's Choice Award.

Local businesses can support the Lions' charities and projects by purchasing sponsorships at various levels from \$50 to \$250 in exchange for on air announcements at the event and display signs. Contact Diane Seely at dmseely@hotmail.com.

A novelty this year is a Zulu Nyala safari to South Africa to be offered in a live auction. It consists of six nights' lodging, all meals and two safaris each day.

Last year, there were over one hundred vehicles to enjoy, along with enter-

taining music, picnic fare, local vendors, and the Sweet Wise Ice Cream Truck.

"Attending the Lions Car Show is a great way to enjoy the height of autumn and

support a great service organization," says Mike Sulham, President.

M.U.R.S.D. 2024-2025

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Children ages K- 6. Part time, Flexible hours.
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Mendon: Clough School 508-634-1588
Upton: Memorial School 508-529-6212
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10 North Ave Mendon, Ma. 01756
llaczka@mursd.org



TOWN OF POMFRET PART-TIME FINANCE MANAGER/TREASURER

The Town of Pomfret seeks to hire a PT Finance Manager/Treasurer responsible for the management of Town funds as required by CT General Statutes. Responsibilities to include receipt and deposit of town funds, reconciliation of accounts, investment of town monies, preparation of audit requirements and work with auditors during annual audits, perform any and all duties as may be required with this position and as required under CT General Statutes. Must work in cooperation with municipal officials and provide financial reports as needed. Must be able to work independently.

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PRESIDENT & PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Don't believe everything you hear

Election season is upon us, and with it comes the barrage of campaign ads, glossy fliers, and endless political chatter. While these tools are designed to catch our attention, it's crucial to remember that not everything we hear or see in campaign materials is the truth. Smear campaigns are the dark side of politics—filled with half-truths, cherry-picked data, and sometimes outright lies meant to sway our opinions.

It's easy to get caught up in the sound bites and headlines, but it's our responsibility as voters to dig deeper. Before you decide on a candidate, do your own research. Look beyond the fliers in your mailbox and the dramatic ads on TV. Seek out multiple sources of information, read up on the issues, and fact-check statements. Use reliable, unbiased resources to get a clearer picture of where each candidate truly stands. Be an informed voter.

Remember, the most genuine candidates are the ones who show up to serve their communities and work for what's best for all of us, not just to win votes. These candidates can be found at every level of government, but they may not always be the loudest or flashiest. By doing your own homework and looking for those who prioritize the well-being of their fellow Americans over party politics or personal gain, you can cast an informed vote that reflects your values. So, don't just take campaign ads at face value—take the time to research and choose the candidate who is truly committed to making a difference.

OPINION *Opinion and commentary from the Blackstone Valley and beyond*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dawn Staley would make a better candidate than Kamala

To the Editor:

A women's basketball coach would be a better Presidential candidate than Harris. If Dawn Staley, stellar Coach of the South Carolina University Gamecocks, were running for President, many would consider voting for her: Dawn Staley would smoke Kamala Harris. Why? Staley is hard working, straight shooting, disciplined.

With all the talk about racism in America, there is a lesson to be learned in watching women's college basketball. It's a time to witness the greatness of America in black people who know how to succeed: find something you are good at, be disciplined, and work hard. Harris knows nothing about that.

Dawn Staley, coach of the South Carolina Gamecocks, this year won the Women's college Final Four, beating the gargantuan Iowa team with a seemingly unbeatable star player; Caitlin Clark. Clark is now the darling of the Women's NBA.

Clark will go on to greatness, no doubt, but the mighty Gamecocks denied her a win at the Final Four. And the credit goes to Coach Staley, her Freshman players, and a deep powerful bench of relentless hardworking sports women.

Staley did not start out on easy street in Canada like Harris. Staley is born and bred in gritty America. When Staley was young, her parents moved from South Carolina to a North Philadelphia housing project. Her stay-at-home Mom raised five children. Dad worked. Coach Staley said her Mom was a woman of "faith" and

raised her kids to "abide by her rules. You lived clean -- you're good, you live a happy life." Staley's Mom was a disciplinarian. More Moms in poor communities can follow Mrs. Staley's book.

High school was the charm for Staley. She excelled at basketball and was named the national high school player of the year in her senior year at Dobbins Vocational High School. Vocational high school. Not an Ivy League Academy.

Staley didn't need no Boston Latin or Exeter Academy. Nope. She did it the old fashioned way: talent plus hard work. At the University of Virginia, she earned a degree in Rhetoric and Communications. Pretty fancy! But during all four years in college, she led her team to four NCAA tournaments and three Final Fours.

After graduation, she played professional women's basketball. She represented the United States at the World University Games in 1991. She played for Team USA and in 1994 was named the USA Basketball Female Athlete of the Year. She led the 1996 team to the gold medal in the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics.

In 2000, while still playing for the Women's National Basketball League (WNBA), coaching started to open as a career for Staley.

Initially, she had no interest in coaching anywhere. In 2000, she was on the Olympic team, practicing in Philadelphia, while the women's basketball Final Four was being played in her hometown. The Temple University athletic director approached her and convinced her to visit the campus. He casually led her to a con-

ference room with an interview committee. She did not know she was being interviewed for the job. She was not interested.

But the Athletic director changed his tack: he challenged her to name some ways to turn the Temple women's basketball program around. She took the challenge. In a few years, her team qualified for the NCAA tournament.

By 2008, the University of South Carolina came knocking. Another challenge: Staley had to build the women's basketball program from nothing. She improved their record each year; and by 2014 they were in the Final Four. In 2016, Staley led her team to win the first national title in school history. In school history!

By 2021, she signed a seven-year \$22 million contract with South Carolina and became the highest paid Black (male or female) college basketball coach in the country. In 2022, the Gamecocks defeated UConn to win a second national championship. Coach Staley is the first coach to defeat UConn's Geno Auriemma and two other major college coaches in the same season!

She now adds the NCAA 2024 title to her resume. Harris has nothing to compare.

Advice to young women: Find something that you do well. And find someone who will pay you to do it. That equals success in our beloved America, no matter your religion, color, gender or ethnicity. God bless America.

*Bev Gudanowski
Uxbridge*

Community Preservation Act will preserve Douglas' rural character

To the Editor:

Douglas is about to vote this November on adopting a Community Preservation Act. The town would generate funds through a small surcharge (1.5 percent is proposed) based on property taxes. The exemptions include the first \$100,000 of the property tax, as well as exemptions for seniors and low-income residents.

This adds up to a small amount of money per year from every residence, but a large gain for the town. It will generate a state match of funds, allow us to

apply for significant grants, and give the town money to use on things that keep getting deferred. We could preserve the things that make Douglas someplace we want to live, with open space and recreation areas, historical building preservation, and affordable housing for seniors.

I moved to Douglas 30 years ago because it was quiet, had lots of open space, trees, beautiful farms, and historic significance. I am all for funds that will allow the town to buy historic farms and open space, improve existing ball fields

and possibly fund new recreation areas, and preserve some of our beautiful historic buildings for the next generations. I don't want to see us turn into another town that is crowded, with one house on top of another and no trees or open space.

Please help keep the rural character of Douglas and vote for Question #6, adoption of a CPA in Douglas.

*Kathy Sugrue-Richards
Douglas*

The new boyfriend... a parable for our times

To the Editor:

Your adult daughter wants to bring her new boyfriend home for dinner. She hasn't mentioned him much, so this comes as quite a surprise. All you know is that his name is Don... and he's been divorced twice, is separated from his third wife, a former nude model, and has some disturbed offspring. You start to feel butterflies in your stomach.

The next evening, your daughter and Don arrive in a limousine chauffeured by someone named Hannibal Lecter, who Don says is a great guy. You notice right away Don's stooped gait, the paunch, the oversized clothes, the orange tinged skin, and...the comb over! You ask yourself... "how old is this guy?"

You suppress the turmoil in your gut, and welcome Don to your home. He immediately starts talking about himself: he is a successful businessman - 'no one has ever been this successful'; he's a great golfer, who beats Tiger Woods regularly, (and don't believe those rumors about his cheating - that's just fake news); he has political aspirations, because the world is crumbling, and only he can fix it. He hasn't even taken his coat off yet. Your stomach is starting to rumble.

Your daughter mentioned that Don's favorite foods were from KFC and McDonalds, so you have buckets of fried chicken, burgers, and Diet Coke on hand, plus a large bottle of ketchup. Over dinner, you learn that Don is a conspiracy theorist who believes that COVID was a hoax, and that elections are rife with fraud. He is proud to say that he never wore a mask, and the fact that he nearly died of COVID had nothing to do with not being vaxed, he just hadn't swallowed enough bleach. Despite his distrust of

the post office and mail-in ballots, he voted by mail because he was busy planning peace in the Middle East, and developing concepts for a nationwide health plan. Just in case the country called on him.

During the course of conversation, it slips out that Don cheated on his three wives. Seems he suffers from an uncontrollable attraction to women, which makes him "just start kissing them" and "grabbing them by the [privates]." That conviction and fine for indecent assault were just sour grapes! You are starting to squirm in your seat. You also learn that his successful business career has included six bankruptcies. He was found guilty of business fraud, and buying the silence of a porn star; but the judge and jury in those cases were biased and corrupt. Ever the entrepreneur, Don is now selling things that his minimum-wage friends must have - bibles, NFT's, gold sneakers, pieces of cloth, crypto, and now watches! He is having a great time reliving his grievances, between tales of border walls, and nicknames he's invented. You are starting to feel nauseous... was it the fried chicken or Don's flatulent odor?

Over coffee, Don tells you how windmills cause cancer; and how electric batteries will kill you if your boat sinks. You ask yourself "Aren't all boat batteries 'electric' batteries? To demonstrate his value as a worthy provider; Don tells you how he gets work done at his properties, and never pays the people who do the work!! What a character! You think - "ugh, what a lack of character!" Everyone is a sucker according to Don, especially those soldiers who died defending America! What was in it for them? Don says he was smart enough to dodge the draft five

times... he'd never put America before his own self-interests! Anyway, he knows more than the generals do. And those bone spurs didn't affect his ability to play golf 187 times during his last job. Your husband whispers that you are starting to look pale.

Over dessert, Don makes his case as a prospective son-in-law. He tells you that he knows how to treat a woman with respect. He is super smart - he knows it and you know it - even though one of his professors said he was the dumbest student he ever had. He doesn't attend church, but reads the bible regularly, even though he can't quote any passages. He pontificates that if it were up to him, the government would force women to have unwanted babies; force them to be indoctrinated in Christianity, starting in grade school; prohibit them from reading certain books; and make sure that everyone was straight, white, gender specific, and unquestionably faithful... to him. Don tells you that the secret to peace and prosperity is a strong, authoritarian leader; elected for life, and with total immunity from the law. Just like those revered leaders in Russia, Hungary and North Korea. In fact, Don, Vlad, 'Rocket Man' and Lil' Vic O, together with Clarence Thomas, all attend summer camp at Harlan Crow's Bohemian Grove! Your daughter's future is in good hands! Your own hands and feet have gone numb.

Before he leaves, Don asks to borrow \$200 for gas, because of inflation, and something Biden did to gas prices. You notice that your cat is missing, and start to wonder what the childless cat ladies next door are having for dinner?

With some help from your husband, Don gets down on one knee and asks for

your daughter's hand. Well, you think it was 'hand'. You suddenly realize that your husband is slapping your face, trying to revive you. You think to yourself "why would anyone let this guy marry their daughter; let alone hold public office?"

The End.

To Word Salad Jane - a 'threat to democracy' is not changing your mind on an issue - that's called learning and evolving. A 'threat to democracy' is Trump attempting to overthrow a free and fair election. A 'threat to democracy' is Trump saying he wants to be a dictator 'for just one day', or 'elect me and you won't ever have to vote again.' A 'threat to democracy' is Trump trying to have Jimmy Kimmel taken off the air. A threat to democracy is Trump saying he believed Putin, over his own national intelligence people. A 'threat to democracy' is the lies and misinformation spewed by your guy, Fox News, Newsmax and assorted bloggers. Maybe you haven't heard what happened in Ohio after the lies about Haitians eating pets? You got one thing right though - we do know Trump's policies. We have seen the chaos caused by ending Roe v. Wade. His tariffs nearly destroyed the farming industry, yet he's promising to impose tariffs on everything manufactured outside the U.S. He is incapable of learning from mistakes. As for "yellow caution flags," read up on the psychologist's petition that I mentioned last week. It's at Change.Org. Then tell us why you and Bev continue to support this serial abuser of women. Yes, we are "still waiting."

*Rick Bevilacqua
Whitinsville*

The Taliban thanks us

To the Editor:

"In Afghanistan, the Taliban reintroduced stoning for women accused of adultery.

Great job on that exit from Afghanistan, Kamala!" Is this true? First, did the Taliban reintroduce stoning for women? Yes, in fact, and it turns out the Taliban is an equal opportunity abuser. They both practice misogyny and misandry. The guys have started to realize that in coming for women's freedom, it was only

Letter submission policy

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

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

going to take time before the Taliban came after them. What a surprise! New laws mandate fist-long beards, no haircuts against Islamic law, no non-Muslim

To the Editor:

Good grief and golly geez, Thelma, Alabama and Louise!

Don't take my word for it. There's a crisis of leapfrogging faith that is presently plaguing our pair of weekly contributors in their poorly concocted and ridiculously presented, left-wing conspiracy theories.

First up comes the bit of left-wing conspiratorial news that clearly violates the legal, ethical, moral and patient privacy standards as such have been set and refined over the generations, Set by both psychiatrists and psychologists in their mutually respectful agreements of proper mental health practices as well as medically proper deferment of power.

Oh, my gosh, without ever examining or talking directly to their alleged patient, a group of psychologists who are not medically trained or certified as doctors improperly diagnosed Donald J. Trump with "probable" dementia. Then those same fools actually signed their names to publicly presented documents

clothing, and it's a real no-no to look at women that you don't 'own.' Let's evaluate the 2nd statement with some critical thought. Check to see if the informa-

A crisis of faith

that unilaterally declared Trump unfit for virtually any job whatsoever based on their "medical" opinions that they do not legally possess. Thus opening the door to the lot of them getting their credentials revoked. As well as getting slam-dunked in civil court with patient compensation lawsuits under their malpractice insurance that, in their totality, ballpark within the multi-billion-dollar range.

Meanwhile, our other hapless hero of hopelessly left-wing causes has once again, in her weekly devotions to the political left's brand of Christian nationalism, gone over to the dark side of Chinese fortune cookie economics as well as introducing us all to harebrained movie critiques. Doing so in order to hide from herself and us the obviously bleak financial news. That after many prices have doubled over the past four years, items have only dropped by a relative pittance. With fast food joints, such as Dominoes and Dunkin, lowering their prices because people can no longer afford the cost of even the cheapest of fast food.

tion is "real, if it has good arguments, if it is misleading." So let's start with the obvious - who was responsible for

SEE LETTER PAGE A10

With that particular letter to the Editor then driving itself right over the cliff like a classic car. Since no movie reviewing professional of note ever claimed that the "core message" of the female buddy movie, Thelma and Louise, involved the two women fleeing from "patriarchal oppression" on their weekend getaway gone wrong.

And so once again, our dynamic duo of left-wing extremist doctrine, in their weekly contributions, continue to falsify, concoct and distort the news and its associated facts and truths to fit their beliefs. Doing so in ways that always lead us to the same curious question.

How on earth are we readers expected to conclude that Donald Trump is, in any logically discernible or measurable way, a bigger liar and more untrustworthy, as well as more openly and blatantly disrespectful and disparaging of the honestly expressed opinions and beliefs of others, than those two letter writing geniuses?

*Stephen Gambone
Northbridge*

Spice Up Your Space with DIY Fall Scents

Scents are powerful - just a small whiff of certain smells can fuel emotions. From altering moods and sparking memories to creating calm and promoting focus, fragrance can be very influential in our everyday lives.

Autumn in New England offers an abundance of native sights and scents that can be captured as everlasting fragrance for the home. Read on for a few simple recipes to bring the spectacular fragrance of the fall season indoors for months to come.

Autumn Potpourri Mix: This all natural potpourri mix recalls walks along country roads this time of year. A few drops of essential oil may be added to boost the scent as the mixture ages.

Note: This makes a great host or holiday gift.

Ingredients: Dried slices of two Red or Golden Delicious apples (or other hardy New England variety); dried slices of one orange; eight cinnamon sticks; one tablespoon nutmegs; three tablespoons whole cloves; 2 Whole nutmegs; Filler: acorns, dried leaves, bark pieces, pinecones, etc.

Directions: Break up (or smash) the cinnamon sticks and some of the whole cloves to release fragrance. Mix together all ingredients, gently folding in apple and orange slices last. Place in an open bowl or pack in a clear glass jar for gift giving or later use.

Pie Spice Sachets: The sweet scent of freshly baked apple and pumpkin pies can be resurrected every time you reconstitute these essence filled sachets. Best of all, these can be used both to scent the air and to spice up cider!

Ingredients: 2 tablespoons pumpkin pie spice; 4 teaspoons ground cinnamon; 2 teaspoons nutmeg; 2 tablespoons applesauce

Mix the applesauce and spices together in a bowl. Dough will be very stiff. Pinch off small pieces of dough and roll into balls. Press down to form discs, about an inch or so. Bake in a 275 degree oven for about two hours or until fully dry and firm. Allow to cool and harden.

To use for simmering potpourri: Drop one disc into a couple of inches of simmering water.

To use as spice sachet: Drop disc into

Preheat oven to 275 degrees and bake for 1 1/2 hours until dry and firm. Cool. Use as a simmering potpourri by simply dropping in boiling water. To use as a spice, drop into container of simmering cider.



TAKE THE HINT
 KAREN TRAINOR

Autumn Wax Tarts (Recycled candles): Making fragrance tarts is easy (and free) if you've collected all your autumn fragrant candle ends throughout the year.

Ingredients: Leftover candle wax; foil cupcake wrappers.
Directions: Carefully melt leftover candle bits in a double boiler or in the microwave. Remove wicks and black bits from melted wax. Line a cupcake pan with aluminum foil cupcake wrappers. Pour about an inch of wax into each aluminum wrapper. Allow to cool, then remove wrapper from tin and peel off tart.

Great Gourds! Now that your house boasts the aroma of autumn, why not do a little decorating, compliments of Mother Nature? Gourds are plentiful this time of year, and let's face it, gourds have only one main claim to fame: Their interesting colors and shapes make them a fantastic fall decorating tool.

Talented and imaginative artisans have formed everything from utilitarian bowls to musical instruments out of gourds, although mainstream offerings are likely to include a creative mix of baskets, candleholders, birdhouses and vases.

Gourds, both large and small are plentiful and whimsical, with a high "personality quota." Tossing interestingly shaped gourds in a bowl creates an instant centerpiece. Or place handfuls of colorful gourds around an outside entryway display to fill the gaps between pumpkins, mums and cornstalks.

Gourds, with their contrast of color and textures, are the perfect candidate for an interesting craft project. Whether you choose to make a vase, bowl or birdhouse, drying, cutting and cleaning the gourds are important chores to complete.

Much like carving a Jack-O-Lantern, the top of a gourd must be cut off and the inside scraped clean. Here's the method to dry gourds, as noted in previous columns:

To do: Scrape out all inside dried mem-

branes and seeds. This can be tedious, but it is necessary to avoid rot. To ensure a smooth inside surface as for gourd bowls, sand inside with a wire brush drill attachment.

To dry out decorative thin-skinned gourds, clean them in warm, soapy water containing a household disinfectant. Dry gourds with a cloth and spread them on newspaper in a warm, dry place. After a week, wipe them with a cloth moistened only with disinfectant. Again, spread gourds to dry, now in a warm, dark, damp-free spot for about a month. Every other day, turn them. When seeds rattle inside, they are properly seasoned. Small, thin shelled gourds will dry in less than a month, and large ones can take up to six months. If mold appears during the drying process, scrape it off with a knife. Thin-shelled gourds dry best when hung in a mesh bag.

You can finish your bowl or vase by staining, painting, or using leather dye on it. The leather dye provides a vintage look and is easiest to apply for a first time project. After the dye has dried, apply a protectant, such as varnish or wax.

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

Take advantage of open enrollment

If you work for a midsize or large company, you may soon be able to review your employee benefits package, as we are entering the open enrollment season. So, consider your options carefully, with an eye toward making changes appropriate for your needs.



FINANCIAL FOCUS
 DENNIS ANTONOPOULOS

Here are some of the key areas to look at:

- **Retirement plan** – Depending on your employer, you could change your 401(k) or similar retirement plan at any time of the year, but you might want to use the open enrollment season to review your contribution amounts. If your salary has gone up over the past year, you might want to boost your pre-tax contributions (including catch-up contributions beginning at age 50). At a minimum, try to put in at least enough to earn your employer's match, if one is offered. At the same time, look over how your contributions are allocated among the various investment options in your plan. You'll want your investment mix to reflect your goals, risk tolerance and time horizon.

- **Life insurance** – If your employer offers group life insurance at no cost as an employee benefit, you may want to take it – but be aware that it might not be enough to fully protect your family should anything happen to you. You may have heard that you need about seven to 10 times your annual income as a life insurance death benefit, but there's really no one right answer for everyone. Instead, you should evaluate various factors – including your mortgage, your income, your spouse's income (if applicable), your liabilities, the number of years until your retirement, number of children and their future educational needs – to determine how much insurance you need. If your employer's group policy seems insufficient, you may want to consider adding some outside coverage.
- **Disability insurance** – Your employer may offer no-cost group disability insur-

ance, but as is the case with life insurance, it might not be sufficient to adequately protect your income in case you become temporarily or permanently disabled. In fact, many employer-sponsored disability plans only cover a short period, such as five years, so to gain longer coverage up to age 65, you may want to look for a separate personal policy. Disability policies vary widely in premium costs and benefits, so you'll want to do some comparison shopping with several insurance companies.

- **Flexible spending account** – A flexible spending account (FSA) lets you contribute up to \$3,200 pre-tax dollars to pay for some out-of-pocket medical costs, such as prescriptions and insurance copayments and deductibles. You decide how much you want to put into your FSA, up to the 2025 limit. You generally must use up the funds in your FSA by the end of the calendar year, but your employer may grant you an extension of two and a half months or allow you to carry over up to \$640.
- **Health savings account** – Like an FSA, a health savings account (HSA) lets you use pre-tax dollars to pay out-of-pocket medical costs. Unlike an FSA, though, your unused HSA contributions will carry over to the next year. Also, an HSA allows you take withdrawals, though they may be assessed a 10 percent penalty. To contribute to an HSA, you need to participate in a high-deductible health insurance plan.

Make the most of your benefits package – it can be a big part of your overall financial picture.
This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Dennis Antonopoulos, your local Edward Jones Advisor at 5 Albert St., Auburn, MA 01501 Tel: 508-832-5385 or dennis.antonopoulos@edwardjones.com.

Synchronicity

Have you ever felt that no matter how hard you push, things won't work out? We all have goals—big dreams or small wins. Maybe it's starting a business, landing that dream job, or leaving early to catch the game.

Whatever it is, the harder we try sometimes, the more stressful it gets when things don't go as planned.

But what if the solution isn't to push harder? What if, instead of battling against every obstacle, you step back and let things unfold? There are two ways to get what you want: you can scheme and plot your way through or loosen your grip and let the pieces fall into place naturally.

Instead of battling every obstacle, what if the solution was something different—something called Synchronicity?

Take the guy who wants to leave work early for the big game. He spends the morning coughing, hinting that he's "a little off," and Googling fake illnesses to sell his story. By lunchtime, he's sneezing dramatically and whispering, "I think I'm contagious." But just as he's about to slip out, his boss drops a stack of reports on his desk. "I need these done before you go." Now, he's stuck working twice as hard because he tried too hard to force things.

Now, imagine someone else with the same goal, but instead of scheming, they're honest: "Hey, I've got tickets to the game. Any chance I can leave an hour early?" Maybe the boss says yes, maybe not. But, letting go can open the door to Synchronicity—when things align ideally it's like life is giving you a little nudge. Perhaps the boss is a fan and says, "No problem, I'm leaving early too!" Or an afternoon meeting gets canceled, and leaving is suddenly easy.

I first became intrigued by this idea of Synchronicity after listening to a lecture by physicist and ex-NASA scientist Tom Campbell.

He said, "When you stop trying to control life, the magic happens."

He made me realize that sometimes we get so caught up in forcing our plans to work out that we miss the unexpected opportunities when we just let go. When you step back and allow things to happen naturally, it's like the universe quietly whispers, "Relax, I've got this."

Campbell says, "When something does happen—a hurdle that pops up in front of you—that's okay. You deal with it and go on. Don't get upset with it... You'll find that things start happening just as you need them, just when you want them. You'll go from having nothing but hurdles to no hurdles at all—everything just starts to work well."

Think about that for a second. What if you trusted that things would work out instead of stressing and struggling to make everything perfect?

Campbell's point is simple: "When you realize that you don't have to control anything, you'll see that you don't need to control anything."

Maybe life isn't about pushing harder—it's about stepping back and letting the puzzle pieces fall into place on their own. Imagine you're headed out to watch the

POSITIVELY SPEAKING
 TOBY MOORE

big game and suddenly hit a major traffic jam. Your first instinct might be to freak out, curse your luck, and start weaving in and out of lanes to compensate for lost time. But what if there's a reason you're stuck? What if that traffic jam is working in your favor?

Later, you find that without the traffic jam, you would have ended up in the middle of a deadly five-car pileup just a few miles ahead. That frustration of being late could've actually saved your life.

When you stop fighting every obstacle and let things unfold, you might find that setbacks are Synchronicity in disguise, keeping you exactly where you need to be.

So, the next time life throws a wrench in your plans, take a deep breath and consider that maybe, just maybe, it's not a roadblock—it's a detour leading you somewhere better.

When you let go of control, life surprises you in ways you never imagined. Trust the process, embrace the unexpected, and remember that sometimes, not getting what you want might be life's way of giving you exactly what you need.

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GARDEN MOMENTS
MELINDA MYERS

Put fall leaves to work in your landscape. This valuable resource makes a great mulch in planting beds, adds organic matter and nutrients to the soil, provides habitat for many

beneficial insects, and is insulation for ground-dwelling queen bumblebees, toads, and more.

Leave any disease-free leaves in garden beds but pull them away from the trunks of trees and stems of shrubs. Mulch piles against

trunks or stems create a moist environment that is more subject to rot and disease. It also provides a hiding place next to these plants for voles that feed on bark over winter.

Avoid thick layers of leaves, six or more inches deep, in garden

Consider fall leaves a gift from nature



Melinda Myers

Mowing fallen leaves on lawns to shred them into smaller pieces adds organic matter and nutrients to the soil as the leaf pieces decompose.

beds. They can block sunlight and smother the plants below. Pull leaves off the crowns of perennials and move the excess leaves to gardens with little or no mulch. Use your mower to recycle fall leaves that land on the lawn. As you mow the grass you'll shred

the leaves into smaller pieces. If they are the size of a quarter or smaller your lawn will be fine. As these leaf pieces decompose, they add organic matter and nutrients to the soil.

When the lawn is overwhelmed with leaves burn a few extra calories and rake them into nearby planting beds. Whole leaves provide the best habitat for overwintering insects. Spread the leaves over the soil surface to help insulate the roots, conserve moisture, sup-

press weeds, and improve the soil as it breaks down.

If your garden beds are already filled with leaves or this is not practical, attach the bagger to the mower to shred and collect the excess leaves on the lawn. Only use grass clippings collected from lawns and leaves not treated with a weed killer this fall.

Dig extra shredded leaves into vacant annual flower and vegetable gardens or incorporate SEE GARDENING PAGE A10

Fall Clearance Sale!

We are in the process of selling out some of our current stock to make room for new 2023 models. Because of this, we are offering savings throughout the store!

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see store for details

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Selling antiques and collectibles



ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES & ESTATES
WAYNE TUISKULA

The antiques business has changed over the years with the internet creating new ways to sell antiques and collectibles. That said, some of the tried-and-true methods continue to provide good returns.

I've found that offering antiques and collectibles to a wide range of bidders at auction will yield the best results for more



valuable items. Attorneys and estate personal representatives understand that consigning to a well-publicized auction is a way of doing their due diligence to ensure that either the estate or them-

selves are getting fair market value for their items. Many estate companies also consign top pieces to get the best results for their clients.

There are many different options for selling the belongings in an estate. Here are some things to consider when selling your personal property. Central Mass Auctions and many other local auction houses focus on antiques and collectibles. We handle a wide variety of antiques and collectibles, but I occasionally suggest another auction house for certain types of items.

Some people need to sell the contents of finely appointed homes with name brand furniture, the latest electronics, snowblowers, and other power equipment and don't have antiques. One option available to them is a traditional estate sale. An estate sale company prices the items prior to the sale. The sale is advertised and scheduled to run for a day or two (typically on a weekend). If it's organized by an estate sale company, they'll let their followers know the sale will be taking place and advertise elsewhere. With a big sale, potential buyers may line up at the door with only a limited number being admitted at a time. Buyers typically pay cash (some companies accept credit cards) and take the items home that day.

Sometimes a seller prefers an online auction at the estate. With an online auction, a sofa might be labeled lot # 1, end tables lot # 2, table lamps lot # 3, etc. The auction runs for several days. Bidders place bids until the auction end date and time. The winning bidders have a

scheduled pick-up date, typically on a Saturday. Many online auction companies also offer shipping of items for winning bidders who live outside of the sale area.

There are times when there may not be enough items to run a sale at the site, but there are still different options available. It isn't as prevalent as it once was, but some companies still do entire estate buyouts. After the family has divided up an estate there may be just a few pieces of furniture left and a consignment shop could be an option. Donating remaining items helps local charities and may make you eligible for tax benefits. Sometimes things are of little to no value, and you may need a trash removal company or dumpster.

Selling a collection or estate contents can be a difficult process. Along with selling the more valuable items for clients, I try to offer them a roadmap for getting remaining items sold.

We have a major two session online auction taking place right now. Session I with historical and gambling memorabilia and a wide variety of other items ends on Oct. 22. Session II with art, gold and estate jewelry, sterling silver flatware and holloware, and coins ends on Oct. 23. Please visit our Web site, <https://centralmassauctions.com>, for links to upcoming events.

Contact us to consign items or for auction information at: Wayne Tuiskula Auctioneer / Appraiser Central Mass Auctions for Antique, Collectibles Auctions and Appraisal Services info@centralmassauctions.com or (508-612-6111).

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- Sipping craft beers from our featured beer truck, Oakholm Brewing Company
- Browsing unique creations from craft and artisan vendors
- Crafting and games
- Enjoying live entertainment, hayrides, and a petting farm

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The Overlook has been awarded Best of Central Mass Senior Living Community by Worcester Telegram & Gazette seven years running.

Join Toastmasters to improve your presentation skills

MILFORD — Speech Invaders Toastmasters welcomes the public to join our club. Toastmasters International is a nonprofit educational organization that teaches public speaking and leadership skills through a worldwide network of clubs. Toastmasters prepares you for being your best during work presentations, wedding



speeches, accepting or presenting awards, communication skills, confident in interviews, sharing your ideas in meetings, and those three-minute elevator sales pitches when someone asks what you do for a living. Our goal is to become effective communicators, debaters, and leaders within the self-paced Toastmasters International program. Our club is open to all who are interested in improving self-confidence, networking, or communication skills. While

we work together to provide a mutually supportive and positive learning environment, we also have a great deal of fun!

We meet every Thursday from noon to 1 p.m. You can join in-person at Waters Corporation, 5 Technical Dr. in Milford MA 01757, or virtually through Microsoft Teams. To see our club calendar and to get the meeting link to join virtually, visit our Web site at <https://speechinvaders.toastmastersclubs.org/calendar.html>. For additional information about the club, reach out to Jennifer Gough at jennifer.gough@waters.com or

Abigail Epplett at abigail_epplett@waters.com. To learn more about the official Web site at www.toastmasters.org, visit Toastmasters International, visit

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Plummer Place all abuzz

NORTHBRIDGE — Ken Warchol, a sixth generation beekeeper and a life-long resident of Northbridge presented to a full-house at Plummer Place this week about the honeybee and its relationship to man. Warchol, who has kept honeybees since 1955 and is a past president and current member of the Worcester County Bee Club, shared with the audience an engaging and informative presentation on the life of the honeybee and the hobby of beekeeping.



As a beekeeper who ran 40 beehives for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and a member of the Harvard University study on why the honeybees are dying, Warchol's care and concern for the honeybees, along with his enthusiasm in sharing his knowledge about them, could be felt throughout the room!

"This was a great presentation of Agriculture and a member of the Harvard University study on why the honeybees are dying, Warchol's care and concern for the honeybees, along with his enthusiasm in sharing his knowledge about them, could be felt throughout the room!

on honeybees. I learned that honeybees pollinate 40 percent of the world's food supply. Mr. Warchol was quite a storyteller!" shared Carol Snow, one of the attendees. "We are so grateful to Ken for bringing such a quality program here to our local seniors and older adults," shared

Amy Cowen, program and volunteer coordinator. At the conclusion of the presentation, audience members enjoyed sampling several different kinds of honey from all over the world. For more information on Plummer Place or its programs and events, please call (508) 234-2002.

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VILLAGE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Historical Walking Tour October 19th

Have you ever wondered about why our Village church looks the way it does? Or what our stained-glass windows symbolize & what our bell tower looks like inside? Or did you know that there is a VCC Ministers section of Pine Grove Cemetery? These, and many questions about our church history will be answered by Rev. Ethan Drutchas during a historical walking tour of the VCC and Whitinsville area this Fall. During this tour, we will address the places, people and events who have shaped the story of our congregation. Join us at **10:30am October 19th** for a 2-hour exploration of the history and architecture of the VCC and its relationship to the wider story of Whitinsville, MA. We will begin at Village Church 5 Church St. Whitinsville, MA. All planning to attend should RSVP at office@vccucc.org

Free VCC Sunday Seminar Series

Rev. Ethan Drutchas will be hosting a seminar series titled, **"What is Protestantism?"** Over the course of 9 sessions, we will be covering the origins, history, strains of thought, and core beliefs of the Protestant tradition. During these seminars, we will cover the important context of who and what shaped the tradition we witness today. Join us once a month at 11 am in Mason Hall. Schedule and topics will be:

- September 29th**- Definitions & Earliest Origins
- October 20th** - Antecedents & Context of the Reformation
- November 17th** - The Reformation and the Reformers
- December 8th**- Growth & Conflict: Protestantism, late 16th & 17th c.
- January 19th**- Faith & Reason: Protestantism, 18th c. Enlightenment
- February 16th**- Religion, Romantics, & Revolution: Protestantism, 19th c.
- March 16th**- Modernism & its Discontent: 20th c. Protestantism in Europe, America, and the World/Cold Wars
- April 6**- The Sacred and the Secular: Protestantism in the 21st Century
- May 11th**- Protestantism: A Summation

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Plummer Place

Home of the Northbridge Senior Center

(508) 234-2002

Plummer Place Café is catered by The Neighborhood Kitchen right here in Northbridge. We will serve delicious meals on Tuesdays for \$8.00 per meal right here at Plummer Place. You must call to sign up, space is limited. Please note we are no longer serving lunch on Mondays.

We are accepting donations for our Plummer Place Café. Heavy duty plasticware utensils, heavy duty plates large and small, bowls, napkins, plastic cups, crystal lite packs, bottled water either large or small, creamers, decaf coffee and regular coffee, Shaw's gift cards. We appreciate all donations to help our café run successfully!

Calling all singers: join our first ever Plummer Place Singers Group. Raienne Richards will lead you as a group, to develop your skills, to enjoy the camaraderie, and to perhaps sing for others. If you would like to join this group, please call the Center to sign up. They will meet every Thursday at 2:30pm, and the cost is \$5 per week.

"Writing Your Way" will meet Thursdays from 2:00-3:30pm. They will meet every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month. All writers are welcome to share your writing with others, get motivated to write your story, and get feedback from fellow writers! Lori Gannon is the instructor for this class, call the Center

for more information. \$5/class.

Medicare Healthcare, explained by Joseph Best, a licensed, independent Medicare agent, Tuesday, October 15th at 9:30am. Joe will be here to answer questions on Medicare Advantage plans, Medicare Supplement Insurance, or Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage. There will be a question-and-answer period following his presentation. Sign up in our main office.

The Blackstone Muleskinners Concert, Wednesday, October 16th from 1:00-2:00pm. The Professor on the doghouse bass, Don on banjo and guitar, Marty on harmonica and percussion, and the amazing Savory Crackers on guitar and lead vocals will

be at Plummer Place to provide some of the best and finest back porch, roadhouse, foot stompin' music around central Mass. Sign up in the main office

Halloween Harvest Party, Thursday, October 31st from 12:00-1:30pm. Davis Bates celebrates Halloween at Plummer Place, come ready to sing along! \$10/person with a 2-ticket limit. Northbridge residents have priority. Costumes highly encouraged. Supported in part by a grant from the Northbridge Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency, State Rep. David Muradian and Unibank. Tickets are on sale now at the Plummer Place front office.

LEGALS

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE OF THE COLLECTOR OF TAXES NOTICE OF TAX TAKING

TO THE OWNERS OF THE HEREINAFTER DESCRIBED PARCELS OF LAND AND TO ALL OTHERS CONCERNED YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT ON **Thursday, the 31st of October, 2024 at 12 O'clock PM, at the Douglas Municipal Center**, pursuant to the provisions of general laws chapter 60, section 53 as amended, and by virtue of the authority vested in me as collector of taxes, it is my intention to take for the TOWN OF DOUGLAS the following parcels of land for non-payment after demand, of the taxes due thereon, with interest and all incidental expenses and costs to the date of taking unless the same shall have been paid before that date.

Cheryl J Vaidya, Collector of Taxes

LIST OF PARCELS TO BE TAKEN

BIANCO, ZACHARY D
BIANCO, ALEXANDER D
LAND located at 56 SHORE ROAD
Containing 0.115 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 284 Parcel 57
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds Book/Page 65318-324
FY-2024 RE TAX \$45.97
Plus Interest & Costs

BREMNER, JASON
LAND & BUILDING(S) located at 24 MAKOWSKI DRIVE
Containing 4.680 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 268 Parcel 11
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds Book/Page 68649-391
FY-2024 RE TAX \$2,598.54
Plus Interest & Costs

BREMNER, JASON
LAND located at 385 SOUTHEAST MAIN ST
Containing 5.650 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 268 Parcel 13
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds Book/Page 58823-72
FY-2024 RE TAX \$1,383.10
Plus Interest & Costs

BUCHANAN, KEVIN L
LAND & BUILDING(S) located at 84 SOUTH ST
Containing 2.069 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 224 Parcel 16
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds- Book/Page 19948-132
FY-2024 RE TAX \$6,006.94
Plus Interest & Costs

CIBAO DEVELOPERS LLC
LAND located on THOMAS CIRCLE
Containing 1.03 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 263 Parcel 18.8
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds- Book/Page 54037-396
FY-2024 RE TAX \$167.54
Plus Interest & Costs

CIBAO DEVELOPERS LLC
LAND located on THOMAS CIRCLE
Containing 0.929 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 263 Parcel 18.9
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds- Book/Page 54037-396
FY-2024 RE TAX \$355.99
Plus Interest & Costs

DEVEAU, DAVID S
DEVEAU, ALLYSON V
LAND & BUILDING(S) located at 78 HIGH ST
Containing 1.060 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 256 Parcel 7
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds- Book/Page 33329-289
FY-2024 RE TAX \$4,932.02
Plus Interest & Costs

FLORIDA MASS PROPERTIES LLC
SUBSEQUENT OWNER: EF HOLDCO WRE REO ASSETS LLC
LAND & BUILDING(S) located at 17 ARNOLD ROAD
Containing 0.115 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 284 Parcel 87

Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds- Book/Page 70047-163
FY-2024 RE TAX \$529.66
Plus Interest & Costs

FRED HUTNAK DEVELOPMENT CORP INC
LAND located on UXBRIDGE ST
Containing 1.710 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 166 Parcel 2
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds- Book/Page 21962-57
FY-2024 RE TAX \$36.77
Plus Interest & Costs

FRED HUTNAK DEVELOPMENT CORP INC
LAND located on UXBRIDGE ST
Containing 0.387 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 166 Parcel 20
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds- Book/Page 21962-57
FY-2024 RE TAX \$25.36
Plus Interest & Costs

KEATING, PATRICIA A
BUILDING(S) located at 22-01 CHARLES ST
BEING A CONDO
Assessor's Map/Parcel 141-32-001
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds Book/Page 55897-72
FY-2024 RE TAX \$3,562.52
Plus Interest & Costs

KIRKPATRICK, SUSAN A
LAND & BUILDING(S) located at 51 LEDGESTONE ROAD
Containing 5.160 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 110 Parcel 32
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds Book/Page 39162/146
FY-2024 RE TAX \$515.33
Plus Interest & Costs

MCNELLY, TIMOTHY G.
LAND & BUILDING(S) located at 17 WIXTEAD COURT
Containing 0.460 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 142 Parcel 65
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds Book/Page 49776-330
FY-2024 RE TAX \$4,149.29
Plus Interest & Costs

NQOW LLC
LAND located at WHITIN HEIGHTS
Containing 1.00 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 160 Parcel 16
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds Book/Page 60361-374
FY-2024 RE TAX \$45.97
Plus Interest & Costs

NQOW LLC
LAND located at WHITIN HEIGHTS
Containing 8.50 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 160 Parcel 22
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds Book/Page 60361-374
FY-2024 RE TAX \$1,936.06
Plus Interest & Costs

NQOW LLC
LAND located at WHITIN HEIGHTS
Containing 1.280 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 160 Parcel 23
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds Book/Page 60361-374
FY-2024 RE TAX \$89.23
Plus Interest & Costs

JOHN W PERRY TRUSTEE
362 SOUTHEAST MAIN STREET REALTY TRUST
LAND & BUILDING(S) located at 362 SOUTHEAST MAIN ST
Containing 3.521 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 268 Parcel 2.1
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds Book/Page 68230-207
FY-2024 RE TAX \$1,421.81
Plus Interest & Costs

ROSE, JOSEPH & ROSE, HEATHER
SUBSEQUENT OWNER: ROSE, HEATHER
BUILDING(S) located at 31 COMPASS POINT DRIVE
BEING A CONDO
Assessor's Map/Parcel 117-61-063
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds Book/Page 70973-15
FY-2024 RE TAX \$1,344.74
Plus Interest & Costs

SHRAYER, ANN M, SHRAYER, LISA A & SHRAYER, KEITH E
LAND located on LEDGESTONE ROAD
Containing 2.580 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 110 Parcel 1.2
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds Book/Page 37820-56
FY-2024 RE TAX \$1,145.92
Plus Interest & Costs

SHRAYER, ANN M, SHRAYER, LISA A & SHRAYER, KEITH E
LAND located on LEDGESTONE ROAD
Containing 2.18 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 110 Parcel 1.1
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds Book/Page 37820-57
FY-2024 RE TAX \$1,130.03
Plus Interest & Costs

SHRAYER, ANN M, SHRAYER, LISA A & SHRAYER, KEITH E
LAND located on LEDGEWOOD DRIVE
Containing 7.74 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 102 Parcel 4
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds Book/Page 16415-194
FY-2024 RE TAX \$2,984.95
Plus Interest & Costs

TOWLE, MARK STEPHEN SR TR & TOWLE, DOROTHY ANN TR
THE M & D TOWLE FAMILY TRUST LAND & BUILDING(S) located at 75 GROVE ST
Containing 1.38 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 144 Parcel 17
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds- Book/Page 58653-241
FY-2024 RE TAX \$1,233.74
Plus Interest & Costs

ESTATE OF WALENTY, STEPHEN W
JR LAND located on SOUTHWEST MAIN ST
Containing 0.256 acres more or less
Assessor's Map 254 Parcel 1
Recorded at Worcester Registry of Deeds Book/Page 5477-6
FY-2024 RE TAX \$52.73
Plus Interest & Costs

Respectfully Submitted By:
Cheryl J Vaidya, Treasurer/Collector
10/4/2024
October 4, 2024

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS Worcester, MA Probate and Family Court WO20P0017EA ORDER OF NOTICE

At a Probate and Family Court at Worcester, in the for said county of Worcester, on the twenty-eighth day of August in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Four

On the representation of **Mark Labbe for Michael Labbe**, late, of Worcester, deceased, praying that the Court will receive and examine all claims of creditors against said estate; of said deceased will probably be insufficient for the payment of debts;

AND IT IS DECREED that the said claims of creditors of said insolvent estate will be received and examined at the Probate Court to be held at Worcester, in the for said County, on the with day of October, 2024 And also on the first day of April 2024 at ten o'clock in the forenoon respectively, and that said shall give due notice to all known creditors of the time and place of hearings, and that an order therefore issue accordingly
Kathryn M. Bailey, Judge of Probate Court
September 20, 2024
September 27, 2024

(SEAL)
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT
Docket No. 24 SM 003373
ORDER OF NOTICE

TO:
Judith Oliva
and to all persons entitled to the ben-

efit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq):
NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing

claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in **Uxbridge, numbered 3 Nature View Drive, Unit No. 34, Building No. 8, of the Olde Canal Village Condominium**, given by **Judith Oliva to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Caliber Home Loans, Inc., its successors and assigns, dated April 28, 2022, and recorded in Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 67511, Page 325**, and now held by the Plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before 11/04/2024 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act.
Witness, **GORDON H. PIPER** Chief Justice of this Court on 9/20/24.

Attest:
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
October 4, 2024

(SEAL)
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT
Docket No. 24 SM 003225

ORDER OF NOTICE

TO:
Trisha Begnoche
Daniel V. Begnoche
and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 § 3901 (et seq)
NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing

claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Northbridge (Whitinsville), numbered 7 Overlook Street, Unit No. 7 of the 5-7 Overlook Street Condominium, given by **Trisha Begnoche and Daniel V. Begnoche to "MERS", Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., a separate corporation that is acting solely as nominee for United Wholesale Mortgage, "Lender"; its successors and assigns**, dated August 24, 2018, and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 59308, Page 354, and now held by Plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before 10/21/2024 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act.
Witness, **Gordon H. Piper**, Chief Justice of this Court on 9/9/2024

Attest: **Deborah J. Patterson**
Recorder
October 4, 2024



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OBITUARIES

Joseph E. Renault, 95

Uxbridge - Joseph E. Renault, 95, passed away on Monday, September 23, 2024 at UMass Memorial Medical Center in Worcester.

Born in Uxbridge, he was the son of the late Louis and Rena (Bombardier) and lived here most of his life. He is survived by his daughter, Janice Moulton and her husband Ken of Oxford, two sons Robert Renault and his wife Lisa of Millville, and Ronald Renault of Uxbridge; seven grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, a niece and several friends. He was predeceased by his wife of 70 years, Madeleine (Cadorette) Renault and a brother Joseph M. Renault.

Joe worked as a machinist for many area companies, including Whitin Machine Works in Whitinsville, Standard Fittings in Framingham,



Smith Valve in Westboro, and West Hill Machine Co. in Mendon. He retired in 1994.

Outgoing and friendly, Joe was talented and handy. He built his two homes and could fix anything. He enjoyed fishing at the Cape, gardening, nature, camping, building models, and most of all spending time with family. He loved music and sang with his wife in the Messengers singing group. He is also Polka Paul's biggest fan. He was a member of the former Good Shepherd Church.

According to his wishes, there will be no calling hours. Private service and burial will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, PO Box 6704, Hagerstown, MD 21741. To leave a condolence message, please visit www.jackmanfuneralhomes.com

William Ernest LaPan, 93

Douglas- William Ernest LaPan, 93, of Douglas, MA, passed away peacefully on Mon., September 23, 2024.

Born in Upton on January 7, 1931 he was the son of the late Harry and Nettie (Burnham) LaPan. Bill was married to the love of his life - Sis. They celebrated their 75th Wedding Anniversary together in January of 2024. His heart was broken when she passed away and his family has peace knowing he is finally back with her. Bill was also predeceased by his 5 brothers, Roland Arthur, Donald, Walter, and Lloyd and 3 sisters, Lucille, Phyllis, and Geraldine.

Bill is survived by his son, Kent and his wife LouAnn of Maine; a granddaughter, Missy and her husband Kenny of Charlton; and a great-grandson, Ryan Ward; 2 step grandchildren, Julie Bangma and her husband Dan Willsey of Amity, ME, and Jennifer Bangma and her companion Tim Cote of Grafton; He also leaves behind many nieces, nephews, cousins and good friends.



Bill spent most of his years as a truck driver and a member of the Teamsters Union. Once he retired, he spent a short time working for the Town of Douglas and also doing errands for a contractor. He loved being outdoors, tending to his yard and gardens, or just sitting in the swing out back. His passion and love of dogs was inspiring.

In his younger years, Bill and Sis would take the Harley out for long rides. Bill was humble and kind, and was the gentlest, most caring person anyone could ever have had a chance to call a friend. He will be truly missed by so many.

His graveside service will be held on Saturday, October 12th at 11AM in Evergreen Cemetery. There are no calling hours. In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Dog Orphans Inc., PO BOX 767, Douglas, MA 01516. To leave a condolence message for his family please visit: <http://www.jackmanfuneralhomes.com>

GARDENING

FROM PAGE A6

them into the soil as you prepare new planting beds. They will break down over winter, improving the drainage in heavy clay soils and increasing the water-holding ability in fast-draining soils.

Bag shredded leaves you want to save for next season. Tuck them out of sight for winter under trees or around the foundation of your house for added insulation.

Create compost with fall leaves, plant-based kitchen scraps, and other landscape trimmings. Do not use meat, bones or dairy that can attract rodents, charcoal ash, and human, pet

or bird droppings that may contain disease organisms. Avoid diseased and insect-infested plant debris, perennial weeds, and weeds gone to seed. These can survive in compost piles that don't produce sufficient heat to kill them and end up back in the garden in the compost.

Oak and large maple leaves make great mulches and additions to the compost pile but break down slowly. Shred them with your mower or leaf shredder first for quicker results.

You can compost black walnut, laurel, and eucalyptus leaves that contain chemicals toxic to other plants. Shred them first to speed decomposition and when they are fully decomposed the compost is safe to use in the garden.

As you begin putting the fall leaves to work in your landscape you will start considering them a gift, not a curse, from nature.

Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, including *Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition* and *Small Space Gardening*. She hosts *The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything"* instant video and DVD series and the nationally syndicated *Melinda's Garden Moment* radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine. Myers' Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

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To learn more about adoption from foster care visit www.mareinc.org. Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) can give you guidance and information on the adoption process. Reach out today to find out all the ways you can help children and teens in foster care.

LETTER

FROM PAGE A4

the Doha agreement with the Taliban that established withdrawal parameters from Afghanistan on Feb. 29, 2020? Wouldn't it be reasonable to hold that party accountable? That person/party would have had the opportunity to negotiate for American priorities.

The Trump administration negotiated the Doha Agreement. The peace agreement included a cease-fire among the principals, including NATO troops, and a withdrawal of all foreign forces. Also, al-Qaeda would be prevented from operating under the Taliban, the Taliban would not attack our troops, and negotiations with the actual Afghan government would commence. Realize Trump excluded the Afghan government from negotiations. Excluding the government excluded their women's voices as well. And we know Trump is good at forgetting the voices of 'women.' His agreement did not include any specific provisions to protect women's rights. Trump has been criticized for not considering human rights. Additionally, he was criticized for legitimizing the Taliban while delegitimizing the Afghan government's position.

As early as March 2020, our government had collected intelligence that "the Taliban do not intend to honor the promises they made in the signed deal with the US." (NBC) Trump responded, "the Taliban could 'possibly' overrun the Afghan government after US troops withdraw." Apparently, Taliban sources were thought to say similar things in Pakistan (NBC). Liz Cheney noted: "the agreement includes concessions that could threaten the security of the US and lacks disclosed mechanisms to verify Taliban compliance." Curtis, a part of the negotiations, told AP, "The Doha agreement was a very weak agreement, and the U.S. should have gained more concessions from the Taliban."

Esper told CNN, "Trump undermined the agreement and weakened US leverage in negotiations by impatiently calling for troop reductions in the country."

Rice commented that troops were likely to be withdrawn "before a lasting peace is achieved."

The Taliban and Afghanistan were supposed to start peace negotiations immediately, but that never came to fruition. Trump decided that 5,000 Taliban prisoners should be freed as a part of the agreement. Trump strengthened the Taliban with this move. It increased violence, and was mostly done without Afghan approval. Trump, the par excellence negotiator, gave away a major bargaining chip very early in the whole process.

What was Trump really after? The conjecture is that he wanted the troops out no matter what - soldiers home for Christmas. He demanded his special envoy, Khalizad, work with 'an almost impossible deadline.' (NBC). The belief was that "Trump was determined to

pull US troops out regardless of what the Taliban do" (NBC). The deal was likely required for 'Trump's re-election campaign. And the Taliban's desire, "representatives say the group views the peace process as a way of securing the withdrawal of American occupiers after which it will attack the US-backed Afghan government." (NBC)

Realize both administrations had criticism coming their way by the time this was over. The situation wasn't stable to begin with because Trump required a huge drawdown of troops as part of the agreement, and Biden felt he couldn't increase troops prior to evacuation. Surprises happened next that were not planned for: "rapid gains by the Taliban, President Ghani fled Afghanistan, and the government in Kabul collapsed." "And with him went the organized police forces and army."

The April 2024 final DOD report on the Abbey Gate suicide bombing: "confirmed that a lone ISIS-K suicide bomber had carried out the attack and that the attack could not have been preventable at the tactical level." Additionally, "Based on our assessment, consolidating the perimeter was a sound tactical decision."

There was some intelligence, that likely was overlooked, that the Taliban was gaining in military strength overall. But no one seemed to forecast that Ghani would physically leave his country and that the country itself would fall so quickly.

A state dept report noted that those surprise events were the worst cases that should have been planned for by both administrations. "The decisions of both Presidents to end the U.S. military mission in Afghanistan had serious consequences for the viability of the Afghan government and its security." Trump was nailed for the deal plus and Biden for some decisions with the evacuation, handing over Bagram Air Base to the Afghans being one. Due to the surprises noted above, the report berated both as they needed "to plan better for worst case scenarios, to rebuild and strengthen the Department's core crisis management capabilities, and to ensure that senior officials hear the broadest possible range of views including those that challenge operating assumptions or question the wisdom of key policy decision."

We are left again questioning Trump's negotiating prowess. Perhaps if he had real concern for the women of Afghanistan, the Doha agreement might have considered their rights. Like the Taliban, Trump still believes he knows what is best for 'his' women. Recently, Trump reminded American women what is best for them: "You will no longer be abandoned, lonely, or scared. You will no longer have anxiety from all of the problems our country has today," "You will be protected, and I will be your protector." "I am your protector. I want to be your protector... you will no longer be in danger... you will no longer be thinking about abortion." And he seems to know what is best for Ukraine as well. Trump, the 'appeaser and ambassador for Russia' describing Ukraine, referred to its people as "dead" and the country itself as "demolished." (AP) Trump's remarks celebrated Russia, saying that wars are "what they do." His negotiating strategy is for Ukraine to have made concessions. He can have it over quickly. Sounds like another failed Doha agreement. We are reminded again and again, whether in Doha or Ukraine or with the rights of women anywhere, that this narcissist will ultimately only look out for himself and whatever will make him look good. That leaves us to conclude that 'there are times when a well-placed pawn is more powerful than a king' (Benjamin Franklin). Realize only in voting are we more powerful than the would-be 'king' - Trump, the ultimate legend in his own mind.

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• Oct. 16, at 10 AM

Uxbridge
Tri-River Family Health Center
281 East Hartford Avenue
• Oct. 28, at 2 PM

Webster
Webster Senior Center
5 Church Street
• Oct. 17, at 10 AM

Virtual Seminars
via Zoom (online)
• Oct. 21, at 2 PM
• Oct. 26, at 10 AM

Enjoy these benefits[†] and more:

- ✓ \$0 monthly plan premium HMO & PPO plan options
- ✓ No medical or prescription drug deductibles
- ✓ \$0 or low copays for Tier 1 and Tier 2 prescription drugs
- ✓ Copays as low as \$0 for physical and occupational therapy, labs, and x-rays
- ✓ Prepaid benefit card allowances for fitness, mental health apps, Weight Watchers, hearing aids, eyewear, and more
- ✓ \$0 copay preventive dental service and generous comprehensive dental coverage

More locations, dates and times available.

Call our Benefit Information Center at
(844) 513-0529 (TTY:711)
or visit MassAdvantage.info/SeminarsNow

Representatives are available October 1 - March 31, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., 7 days a week;
and April 1 – September 30, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. Monday – Friday.
Calls are answered by licensed sales agents.

Mass Advantage is an HMO and PPO plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in Mass Advantage depends on contract renewal. †Premium and coverage may vary based on plan selection. For a complete list of benefits, visit MassAdvantage.com. Other providers are available in our network. For accommodation of persons with special needs at meetings, call toll-free (844) 513-0529 (TTY:711). We can also help with registering for a seminar or rescheduling due to inclement weather.

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- In order to be eligible for the disclosed Tier I and Tier II interest rate, Annual Percentage Yield (APY), and refund of domestic ATM Surcharges the following conditions must be met in a given statement cycle.
- A minimum of 8 posted and settled debit card purchase transactions during the statement cycle. Not all purchase transactions post or settle on the day they occur.
- Active enrollment in e-statements – you must sign into your online banking account at least once every 12 months to keep enrollment active.

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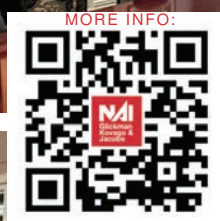
9,536-SF HISTORIC OFFICE BUILDING
FOR SALE



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- Large Executive Offices with Elegant Finishes and High Ceilings
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- Listing price: \$550,000
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- Lot size: 13,939 SF
- Loading docks: (1) tailgate height
- Basement: partial | Unfinished



JAMES GLICKMAN
Principal

508-769-5007

jglickman@glickmankovago.com



JONAH D. GLICKMAN
Vice President

508-868-3765

jdglickman@glickmankovago.com