

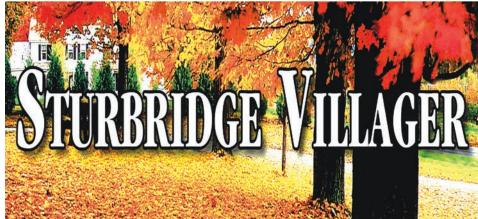
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Thursday-Friday, October 9-10, 2025

Two Masonic dynasties merge



2026 Officers for the newly formed Masonic Lodge the Major General Salem Towne Lodge of Southbridge: from left to right 1st row, Brother Kirkwood, Bro. Uwakwe, Bro. Reich, Bro. Lamarche, Master of Major General Salem Towne Lodge Bro. Davidson, Bro. Horon, Bro. St. Cyr, Bro. Shaw, Bro. Proper. 2nd row back left to right: Bro. Jezerski, Bro. Lefebvre, Bro. Tull, Bro. MacGillivray, Bro. LaVergne and Bro. Willard.



Dignitaries members of the Grand Masonic Lodge of Masons of Massachusetts from Boston. 1st row 2nd to right: Past Grand Master of Massachusetts Most Worshipful Brother Albert Ames. Center with colonial hat the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Massachusetts Brother George Forester Hamilton. All participated in this historical ceremony

BRO. JIMMY FALZONE SOUTHBRIDGE

WEBSTER -0nSaturday, Oct. 4, the Webster Masonic Lodge parking lot in Webster was packed with vehicles from all over the state. All the Master Masons that were present wanted to participate in and witness the merger of two great lodges, the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge of Southbridge and the Webster Masonic Lodge of Webster both in 24th Masonic District. Dignitaries from the Grand Lodge of Masons of Massachusetts

in Boston performed the ancient and historical merger ceremony of the two lodges. Here's a little bit of history of both

The Quinebaug Lodge was chartered in 1860, originally chartered in 1796 as Fayette Lodge under the Most Worshipful Grand Master Paul Revere during that time. The charter was lost during the mid-1800's and a new lodge was formed in 1860. The first regular monthly meeting of the Quinebaug Masonic lodge was held on Jan. 2, 1860, in a building owned by prominent citizen Larkin Ammidown, located on the north side of main street in Southbridge. Webster Masonic lodge was chartered in 1859, and chartered members were from the Olive Branch Lodge in West Sutton. Wearily of driving the six miles of bad roads to attend lodge meetings, a petition was submitted to the Grand Lodge to form a new lodge in Webster. Their first monthly meeting was held at the old Baptist church, standing on the site of the present stone church on East Main Street in Webster.

Due to the merger of these two Masonic dynasties a new name had to be chosen. Major General Salem Towne was chosen due to the historical value in our community. From 1796-1804, the Masonic meetings were held in Charlton, and the Masonic Lodge was called the Fayette Lodge. The meetings were held at the Major General cording to historical information obtained from Masonic genealogy. Both father Major General Sa-

Turn To MASONS page A10

Bylaw changes, firearms restrictions highlight warrant for Charlton's Special Town Meeting

BY JASON BLEAU

CHARLTON — The voters of Charlton are called to a special town meeting on Oct. 20, an annual gathering to discuss any new business or budget changes since the start of the fiscal year in July.

The 12-article warrant will tackle a variety of proposals including budget amendments, town bylaw changes, capital items, acceptance of a pair of roads as public ways, and both Select Board and Citizen Petition items pertaining to the status of municipal administrative buildings as prohibited areas for firearms. The meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Oct. 20 at the Charlton Middle School.

The warrant starts with a variety of financial items that are standards of fall special town meetings. These include unpaid bills, inter- and intradepartmental transfers, budget amendments, miscellaneous capital items and stabilization funds. It's not until the halfway mark of the warrant that the meeting will examine the more unique articles of the night.

Several bylaw changes will be addressed starting with two proposed alterations that would remove the elected status of the Town Clerk and add the position to the list of appointed offices. In May, voters overwhelmingly chose to change the position to an appointed post in a ballot vote during the annual town election.

Turn To CHARLTON page A10

Dudley teacher arrested on child endangerment charges

BY JASON BLEAU CORRESPONDENT

TAUNTON — A Dudley Charlton Regional School Salem Towne House ac- District teacher has been put on leave following an arrest for child endangerment after attempting to meet a minor he says he believed was of age.

A pair of press releases from the Dudley and Taunton Police Departments, respectively, confirmed lem Towne and his son, that Thomas Wilson of Southbridge, a Shepherd Salem Towne, Jr., were Hill Regional High School music teacher, has been charged with offenses related to child endangerment. The Taunton Police Department confirmed that an incident on Sept. 18 resulted in an investigation and Wilson's subsequent arrest. Wilson was charged with Reckless Sexual Endangerment of a Child, Enticement of a Child Under Age 16, and Possession of Child Pornography.

While the Taunton Police Department has not released extensive details about the investigation, WCVB news has reported that Wilson appeared meet our goal of \$10,000 in court on Oct. 3, where he admitted to driving to by Oct. 31. A donation Taunton to meet a 14-year-old girl he had connected with on Reddit who he believed was 18. Wilson has pounds of food for the since posted bail and is required to wear a GPS device and avoid contact with anyone under 18.

The Dudley Police Department issued a press release on Oct. 3 that clarified their involvement in the case. The department was first notified of the arrest on Sept. 20 after which they informed school officials tain food to supplement who "promptly took appropriate action by placing the teacher on administrative leave," according to When you walk, help Dudley Police Chief Marek Karlowicz.

"Throughout this process, Taunton Police have remained in contact with our department while their munitypantry.com for a investigation continued. In addition, the Dudley Police Department has assigned investigators to this For more information, case, which remains active and ongoing. Our highemail walescommunity- est priority is the safety, security, and well-being of the students in our community," said the chief in a

Wales Community Pantry hosting Walk-a-Thon fundraiser

WALES — The Wales Community Pantry announces its Oct. 19 - 31 Walk with Friends for Food Walk-a-Thon! Sign up to walk with some friends, coworkers, dog walking buddies, folks pushing strollers, seniors with friends, kids with families, teen teams, or as an individual! You choose the place, time and goals.

The Community Pantry has moved to Brimfield and the number of folks served had ballooned from 400 a month to nearly 500 a month since we moved. The

need is growing and with that comes increased expenses. 200 people pledg-

With 200 people pledging \$50 each, we can



Wales Community Pantry Walk with Friends for Food Walka-Thon has a goal of 10,000 steps for team members and individuals to raise \$10,000 this month! Your canine can even help. The pantry also provides pet food for those in need.

of \$10.00, can mean 500 pantry to distribute!

We are open Tuesdays 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and Thursdays 4-7 p.m. so monthly shoppers in need can obtheir groceries.

us stomp out hunger. Visit www.walescomlink to sign up to walk. foodpantry@gmail.com.

Turn To WILSON page A10

First registered healthcare apprentices graduate from QCC, UMass Memorial program

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College, in partnership with UMass Memorial Health, the Worcester SHARE union and the Massachusetts Division of Apprentice Standards (DAS), held a ceremony this week for the first graduates of the Medical Assistant Apprenticeship Program. This is the first registered healthcare apprenticeship program in Central Massachusetts.

Twelve UMass Memorial employees have successfully completed this training program to become nationally certified medical assistants. The participants underwent 2,000 hours of full-time, on-the-job training, complemented by eight weeks of classroom instruction.

The program uses an "earn-and-learn" model that allows employees to maintain their salary and benefits while in the program.

Kathie Manning, QCC's dean of the Center for Workforce Development and Continuing Education, credits DAS for funding a medical assistant pre-apprenticeship program, which provided supports that enabled students to earn a livable wage while advancing their careers.

"I've seen far too many students who must choose between working and getting an education. When we force them to make that decision, it doesn't benefit

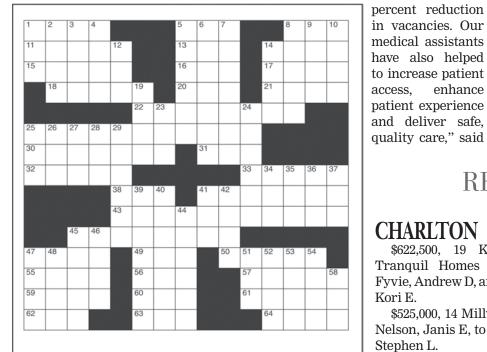
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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Comedic actor Rogen
- 5. Bits per inch
- 8. Tire pressure measurement 11. Angels great Mike
- 13. Own (Scottish) 14. Notable FI racing team
- 15. Upper bract of grass 16. Tax collector
- 17. Electronic countercountermeasures
- 18. Informal loan clubs 20. Skeletal muscle
- 21. Popular fish type
- 22. Salts of acetic acid
- 25. Arriving early
- 30. Worded 31. Single Lens Reflex
- 32. Amphibians 33. Warm greeting
- 38. Belonging to a thing 41. Segmented worm 43. Concerns
- 45. Audacious
- 47. Wings
- 49. Type of drug
- 50. Wind chill formula scientist Charles
- 55. Island close to the U.S.
- 56. "To the __ degree" 57. Daniel __, French composer
- 59. A way to march 60. Where golfers begin
- 61. Spiritual leader
- 62. Of she
- 63. Mental disorder concerning body
- odor (abbr.)
- 64. Tall, slender-leaved plant

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Engine additive 2. Amounts of time
- 3. Fragrant brown balsam used in perfume
- 4. Color properties 5. One who hands over
- 6. Thieves of the sea
- 8. Nocturnal rodents
- 9. Pouches
- 10. Systems, doctrines, theories 12. Greek alphabet letter
- 14. Greek goddess of youth 19. Satisfy
- 23. Partly digested food 24. Dictator
- 25. Parts per thousand (abbr.) 26. The 17th letter of the Greek
- alphabet
- 27. A major division of geological time
- 28. Angry 29. St. Francis of
- 34. Romanian monetary unit 35. Stale
- 36. Go quickly 37. Commercials
- 39. Canadian city
- 40. One who slices
- 41. Perform perfectly
- 42. Nest of pheasants
- 44. Tactile sensations
- 45. Sword 46. Climactic
- 47. Adrenocorticotrophin 48. Fisherman's tool
- 51. Swiss river
- 52. Plant that makes gum
- 53. A French abbot
- 54. One point east of northeast 58. Get free of

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D'Angelo.

"Helping others is something I always knew I was put on this earth for. Becoming a medical assistant allowed me to do that while building a relationship with my patients, coworkers, and providers, all while learning something new every

day," said Graduate Lindsey Leahy, who works at Spencer Internal Medicine, a part of UMass Memorial Community Medical Group.

Undersecretary of Labor in the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Josh Cutler, noted that apprenticeships have grown as a workforce tool, no longer just for the building trades and applicable to many industries, such as cybersecurity, biotech and advanced manufacturing. He also thanked Gov. Maura Healey and the state legislature for supporting the apprenticeship model.

"In Massachusetts...our greatest natural resource is our people; it's our skilled workforce. You are a shining example of us building and investing in our workforce," Cutler said to the grad-

Graduate Afia Damptey, who works at the Spine Center at UMass Memorial Medical Center, commented that she was apprehensive about the program at first because she hadn't been in school for so long.

"I didn't realize how much this program was going to change me and further my education," said Damptey. "At UMass Memorial Health, you can become whoever you want to be."

"Quinsigamond College played such an amazing role, ensuring all of us students were provided with everything we needed to succeed, especially our teacher, Cheryl DeCoff (QCC Assistant Professor of Medical Assisting, who constantly braved the storms of the unknown and the new to ensure we met our end goal," Leahy added.

REAL ESTATE

CHARLTON

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Lynn D'Ange-

Manning.

Excellence

\$622,500, 19 King Rd, Tranquil Homes LLC, to Fyvie, Andrew D, and Fyvie, Kori E.

\$525,000, 14 Millward Rd, Nelson, Janis E, to Richard, Stephen L.

\$500,000, 137 Dresser Hill Rd, Stearns, Michael P, to

lski, Hillary. \$360,000, 82 Ramshorn Rd, Seifert, Bonnie, and

Seifert, Gary, to Kopacz, Rachel, and Seifert, Timothy. \$110,000, Smith Rd #1,

White Development Corp, to Wall, Jason, and Hall, Anastasia.

HOLLAND

\$215,000, 43 Lake Dr, Przygocki, Bruce, to Naples, Gary, and Naples, Sarah I.

\$200,000, 61 Sturbridge Rd, Fontaine Kenneth R Est, and Snay, Renee, to Lisa Boudreau LLC.

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SOUTHBRIDGE \$765,000, 143 Clemence Hill Rd, Mckenna, Thomas J, and Chlapowski, Tracey T, to Labouef, James, and Labouef, Nicole.

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\$520,000, 7 Old South Rd, Marrero, Jaime, and Marrero, Roxana, to Melendez, Enid M, and Rivera, Jaime.

\$520,000, 9 Old South Rd, Marrero, Jaime, and Mar-Knutelski, Eryk, and Knute- rero, Roxana, to Melendez, Enid M, and Rivera, Jaime.

\$477,650, 855 Charlton St, Labouef, James, and Labouef, Nicole, to Cancel, Natasha, and Cruz, Luis.

\$450,000, 3 Blanchard Dr, Lahaina Corp, to Reed, Austin P, and Reed, Kaitlynn M.

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Church Listings

Central Baptist Church

256 Main St., Southbridge, MA 01550 Tel 508/764-6365; Worship 10:00 A.M. • Charlton Federated Church, 64 Main St.,

508-248-5550, Sunday worship 10:30 a.m. Summer worship is 9:30 a.m. www.fed-church.org • Charlton Baptist Church, 50 Hammond Hill Road, 248-4488, www.charltonbaptist.org, Sunday worship 10 a.m.

• Charlton City United Methodist, 74 Stafford St. 248-7379, web site: CharltonCityUMC.

Sunday worship and Children's church 10am •St. Anne St. Patrick Church, 16 Church St., Fiskdale (508) 347-7338 www.stannestpatparish.com

Saturday Vigil Mass at 4 pm, Sunday 8 am, 10 am, 12 noon, Youth Mass (September to May) 5 pm. Daily Mass Mon - Thurs 7:30 and 10 am, Fri and Sat 7:30 am

•Elm Street Congregational Church, 61 Elm Street, Southbridge, Ma 01550 Phone: 508-764-8085 • Sunday service 10:00 am

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

• Wayside Church, 6 Haggerty Road, 248-5144 · Assemblies of God Southern New England District Headquarters, Route 20, 248-3771, snedag.org, Office hours Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

• Living Word Church of Charlton, 10 Main Street - Grange building 1st Floor, Charlton, Ma 01507, Pastor Craig Bellisario, (508) 233-8349 Sunday Service 10:00am.

www.livingwordhcarlton.com info@livingwordcharlton.com • New Life Fellowship A/G, SNED Chapel, 307 Sturbridge Road, Rt. 20, Charlton, MA,

Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m. • Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale- 8 Maple St. Sturbridge, 774-304-1021 www.sturfed.org

Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m. • Bethlehem Lutheran Church- 345 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566 Phone 508-347-7297

Web: www.bethlehemsturbridge.org Services - Sunday 9:00 am Pastor Dan Purtell Holland Congregation Church

"Where the Bible is preached." 11 Sturbridge Road, Holland, 413-245-9926 Hollandchurch.org Sunday Service @ 10:00 am

Pastor Dan Maketansky **Holy Trinity Episcopal Church** 446 Hamilton St., Southbridge, MA 01550

Phone: 508-765-9559 Web: www.holytrinitysouthbridge.org Sunday Service 11:00 am

Pastor Dan Purtell

Cornerstone Bank supports Dismas House with \$3,000 donation for winter heating assistance opportunities to the their mission, particulism. Its support of Dis-Bank's local presence opportunities

nerstone Bank has donated \$3,000 to Dismas House of Massachusetts, Inc., to help provide winter heating support across the nonprofit's four residential programs for former inmates reentering society. The funds will help cover utility costs during the colder months, ensuring that residents have a safe, warm environment as they work toward rebuilding their lives.

Dismas House offers transitional housing, support services and community for individuals most in need of recovery, decent work and housing. With locations across Worcester County, the organization provides not only shelter, but also critical programs that foster stability and hope.

"Dismas House plays a vital role in providing dignity and opportunity for people in need across our community," said Todd Tallman, CEO of Cornerstone Bank. "We're proud to continue our support for

larly during the winter months when reliable heat is essential."

This most recent gift builds on Cornerstone Bank's ongoing partnership with Dismas House, which included a \$2,500 donation in 2024 to support youth hunger initiatives and a \$4,000 donation in 2023 for the same

Cornerstone Bank is committed to strengthening local communities through charitable giving and volunteermas House underscores the bank's dedication to addressing urgent community needs and improving the lives of neighbors across Central Massachusetts.

About Cornerstone Bank

Cornerstone Bank was formed in 2017, born of a long history of supporting the community, and providing a strong foundation to help people and businesses thrive. Serving Worcester County, Massachusetts. Cornerstone

and community-based banking model enables a unique ability to deliver outstanding service, with a personal touch. Cornerstone, which is a subsidiary of PeoplesBankCorp, MHC, operating independently under its own name and brand, provides the highest level of service and expertise for individuals, businesses, and community organizations with branch locations throughout Central Massachusetts. Cornerstone works to connect customers with

opportunities through a broad range of deposit and loan products and services. Built on Trust is not just a tagline, but also one of our guiding corporate values. Whether a business or personal partnership, Cornerstone stands on the foundation that relationships are built on trust. To learn about Cornerstone Bank's personal and business banking offerings, please visit cornerstonebank. com or call 800-939-9103.

"Music and Memory: The Accidental Creation of a 92-year-old Social Media Sensation" at Charlton Public Library

CHARLTON — On Wednesday, Oct. 22 at 2:30 p.m., Dr. Randi Lebar will present an inspirational talk about the wild ride she has taken with her mother, pianist Elaine Lebar (born in 1928), who went viral on TikTok in 2020 while living in a memory care unit

in Buzzards Bay.

Specifically focusing on the magic and power of music in dementia, the talk features many videos of Elaine, and also includes lessons Randi learned along the way about finding meaning and joy in their relationship, in spite of

her mother's mental decline. The presentation is sure to entertain a wide audience, and it will be especially educational and hopeful for those dealing with a loved one in any stage of cognitive decline.

Elaine Lebar began playing piano at the age of 3. She graduated from the High School of Music and Art in New York City, received a BA in music from Brooklyn College and an MFA in music education from the University of Missouri. She is an accomplished performer, accompanist and composer. And now, living

with dementia, Elaine has become a TikTok star with over 250,000 followers. Randi Lebar graduated from Cornell's College of Arts a BA in Chemistry and went on to receive an MD ty of Maryland School of

Medicine. She then served for 11 years in the US Navy, completing her Orthopedic Surgery residency at the Naval Hospital Oakland. After serving as an orthopedic surgeon in Okinawa, Japan, Dr. Lebar left the Navy and moved to Maine where she continued her orthopedic practice. Now retired from medicine, Randi lives in Sagamore where she knits, crafts, gardens, and pursues her passion for all forms of dance.

Everyone is welcome, and no registration is required.

Charlton Public Library is located at 40 Main St.

Southbridge police log

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Police Department reported the following arrests from Sept. and Sciences in 1978 with 22 through Oct. 6.

A 41-year-old male from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on Sept. 23 for Operating Under the Influence (Liquor-second offense), Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle, Leaving the in 1982 from the Universi-Scene of Property Damage, and a Marked Lanes Violation.

Bryant Glover, age 45, of Southbridge was arrested on Sept. 23 for Open and Gross Lewdness.

Careem Lee Rose-Simon, age 21, of Worcester was arrested on Sept. 25 for Receiving a Stolen Motor Vehicle-Joint Venture. Jean Manuel Castro Valentine, age 20, of Pawtucket, R.I. was arrested during the same incident for Receiving a Stolen Motor Vehicle-Joint Venture, Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of license, Leaving the Scene of Property Damage, multiple counts of driving at a rate of speed greater than was reasonable and proper, Failure to Stop for Police, a Marked Lanes Violation, Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle, Failure to Stop or Yield, a Motor Vehicle Lights Violation, and in connection with multiple warrants.

A 37-year-old male from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on Sept. 25 for Misdemeanor Breaking & Entering.

Gerardo L. Cruz Rivera, age 34, of Webster was arrested on Sept. 25 in connection with a warrant. Justin G. Lesslie, age 26, of Hudson was arrested on Sept. 25 for Interfering with a Police Officer (Common Law), Leaving the Scene of Property Damage, Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle, and

Joshua Allan Wadsworth, age 34, of Worcester was arrested on Sept. 26 on multiple counts of Shoplifting By Concealing Merchandise.

A 65-year-old male from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on Sept. 26 for Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of license (Criminal-subsequent offense) and Failure to Stop or Yield.

Shanequa A. Bonnie, age 30, of Worcester was arrested on Sept. 27 for Vandalization of Property,

Obstruction of Justice, Resisting Arrest, and Assault & Battery on a Police Officer. A 63-year-old male from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on Sept. 27 for Assault &

Battery with a Dangerous Weapon. Gilberto Alvarado, age 62, of Southbridge was arrested on Sept. 27 for Operating Under the Influence (Liquor-second offense), Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle, and Failure to Drive in the

Sonya Renee Mitchell, age 46, of Webster was arrested on Sept. 29 in connection with a warrant.

Dalton James Davis, age 26, of Sterling was arrested on Sept. 29 for being a Fugitive From Justice on a Court issued Warrant, operating a motor vehicle with No Inspection Sticker, and for not being in possession of a driver's license.

William Junior Torres, age 35, of Southbridge was arrested on Sept. 29 for Domestic Assault and Battery. A 45-year-old female from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest during the same incident for Domestic Assault and Battery.

A 20-year-old from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on Sept. 30 for Operating a Motor Vehicle after revocation or suspension of registration and operating an Unregistered and Un-

Steven Anthony Gardner, age 61, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 2 in connection with a war-

Omaira Torres Martinez, age 43, of Worcester was arrested on Oct. 3 for Operating Under the Influence (Drugs and Liquor), Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of license, Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle, Larceny of a Motor Vehicle (subsequent offense), Failure to Stop for Police, a Marked Lanes Violation, Failure to Stop or Yield, driving at a rate of speed greater than was reasonable and proper, and a Passing Violation.

A juvenile, age 14, received a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 4 for Simple Assault & Battery.

Lexmarie Berrios, age 24, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 5 for Domestic Assault and Battery, Disorderly Conduct, and Disturbing the Peace. Sean Elliot Yace, age 24, of Southbridge was arrested during the same incident for Disorderly Conduct and Disturbing the Peace.

Green Path Cannabis in Southbridge, Massachusetts, is proud to offer a monthly record expungement program! Each month, Green Path will choose one interested person to receive legal services to evaluate and assist their petitions to seal or expunge a criminal record of cannabis possession. Green Path will give hiring consideration to qualified participants as well as their spouses and children if an employment vacancy exists.

Please apply for consideration at greenpathcannabis.com or email kailyhepburn@kailyhepburnlaw.com.



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> Frank G. Chilinski PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER Brendan Berube Editor

Small town strength in an uncertain season

October arrives with its usual mix of contradictions — warm afternoons, cold nights, and that uneasy balance between harvest and frost. In towns like Southbridge, Sturbridge, and Charlton, this season always feels like more than a weather change. It's a time when our communities quietly take stock of where we stand — and what keeps us together.

We've seen a lot of change lately. Businesses have adapted to new realities, local governments are juggling budgets and bylaws, and schools are still finding footing after years of adjustments. It's tempting to focus only on the strain — what's been lost, delayed, or redefined. But there's a steadier story to tell: our towns are still here, functioning, growing, and looking out for one another in a way cities rarely can.

Look around. Volunteers still show up to run food drives, historical societies, and cleanup days. The library lights stay on late for students. Local fire and police crews, who live among the very people they protect, respond without hesitation. Every small-town festival, every select board meeting, every senior luncheon — these are quiet acts of civic persistence. They're the reason our towns work.

It's easy to overlook that kind of durability. The news cycle is built on noise, and small communities rarely make headlines for what they do right. Yet in a year when uncertainty seems to be the only constant, the stability of local life might be the most undervalued thing we've got.

As autumn deepens, let's remember that strength doesn't always look like growth charts or shiny new developments. Sometimes it's a teacher staying late to help a student. Sometimes, it's a farmer still cutting hay by headlight before the frost. Sometimes it's a neighbor dropping off soup unasked.

The world beyond our borders will keep getting louder. But here in our corner of the Bay State, quiet endurance has always been our way. That's something worth holding on to.

Letter submission policyLetters to the Editor must in-

clude 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.

PINI()N

The power of forgiveness Making the most

By Dr. RB McFee Charlton City UMC

Unless you have been off the grid in East Cupcake, there are few who haven't heard Erika Kirk share that she forgave the person who killed her husband. She gave a Divine gift.

It reminded me of a similar gift of Grace that an Amish family gave many years ago, when their daughter was killed by a young man. The Amish family, and their community not only forgave the killer, but included his parents in a special prayer service, under the notion they, too, needed God's healing, and to have a heavy burden lift-



THE PEWS

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pass against us," is often treated as scriptural fly over territory. We like the being forgiven part, just not the forgiving part.

To be sure, forgiving someone who hurt us, especially if it was their intent to do so, it is not easy. But if it was easy, God wouldn't ask us to do it. Like so many things in life, it is the hard that makes it worthwhile.

We don't get good at something without sacrifice and effort. We don't develop friendships, climb better, sail better, run fastsacrifice and effort.

forgiveness, apologizing single year. and saying "thank you."

Act of Goodness that we mere mortals 15 through Dec. 7 each year, is your have been empowered to give, a means chance to take a fresh look at your to accept a hurt, a sin against us – perceived or actual, then let it go, handing Medicare plan still fits your life. Then it off to our Creator, and in the process giving grace to those who have done ical and prescription plans need to be this – it is a powerful gift that can transform both the giver and the recipient.

though it is, is born by the perpetrator of harm, and the recipient. For those who have harmed another – whether a slight or a serious injury – the process of atoning and healing is made ment period to compare your options, more difficult without being forgiven. you might discover a plan that saves Nevertheless, asking for it, taking the money, offers better coverage or both. steps to atone can be a long, arduous can be hoped for.

Perhaps that is why Yom Kippur the Day of Atonement, is among the B) covers hospital stays and medical highest of holy days in Judaism, and something Christians might want to typically comes with no monthly preconsider adopting. I know I have.

est Jewish friends and I ask for forgive- ums — \$206.50 or more in 2026, depend-Consider just moments from death, ness, and atone for sins known, and ing on your income. They may also be with Jesus' last breaths on the Cross unknown. Let's face it, human feelings copays and deductibles. He takes the time to ask God to forgive are fragile, and sometimes we hurt those who have put Him there (Luke others without even knowing it. So my an all-in-one alternative to Original

> reflex or pro forma exercise. It has to be sincere. Otherwise it is meaningless.

Oh and if for some reason the other person chooses not to accept the apology, the atonement, after It is offered multiple times - God takes over. Put alone prescription drug coverage for differently the one apologizing is forgiven, and the one who won't accept the apology has to take it up with the Almighty.

to face the Lord's disappointment, as doesn't pay, such as copayments and He asks why didn't you forgive, well that's not on my "to do" list! Recognizing my imperfection, I offer, and accept a sincere apology, as do my friends.

If as Dr. Samuel Johnson once opined centuries ago (paraphrasing) 'friendships must be kept in constant repair' ...part of the tool kit for a healthy relationship, a healthy community, and a healthy family, needs to include forgiveness, regardless whether the person who hurt you atones, apologizes, or not.

of Medicare open enrollment



FINANCIAL Focus

> **TREVOR NIELSEN**

When you turn 65, Medicare beearn a degree, build a comes a vital part of your health care business, grow a garden, coverage. But signing up is just the beginning. Many people don't realize that Medicare isn't a "set it and forget er, swim farther, without it" program. In fact, you have the opportunity — and often the need — to The same is true with review and adjust your coverage every

The annual Medicare Open Enroll-Forgiveness – the Divine ment period, which runs from Oct. health care needs and make sure your you can determine whether your medswitched or dropped.

Just like your health can change The burden of injury - heavy from year to year, so can Medicare plans. Insurance companies may adjust their coverage and costs or even discontinue certain plans entirely. By taking time during the open enroll-

As a reminder, you have several opjourney that must be taken if healing tions when it comes to your Medicare

Original Medicare (Parts A and services such as doctor visits. Part A mium if you've worked for at least 10 Every year at Yom Kippur, my clos- years. Part B requires monthly premi-

Medicare Advantage (Part C) offers Medicare. These plans are offered by private insurance companies. They of-Now here's the thing. It isn't a mere ten bundle together hospital, medical and prescription drug coverage. They may also include extra benefits like vision, dental and wellness programs that Original Medicare doesn't cover.

> Medicare Part D provides standthose who stick with Original Medi-

Medicare Supplement (Medigap) policies help cover the out-of-I don't know about you, but having pocket costs that Original Medicare deductibles.

> When shopping for Medicare plans, there are several important areas you should consider to determine which options are right for you:

> Out-of-pocket costs such as monthly premiums, deductibles, copayments and any other expenses Medicare doesn't cover. Sometimes a plan with a higher premium saves you money overall because of lower copays.

> Prescription drug coverage deserves special attention. All Medicare plans for 2026 will include a \$2,100 cap on what you pay out of pocket for covered prescription drugs, up from \$2,000 in 2025. However, this cap only applies to drugs that your plan covers, making it crucial to verify your medications are included.

> Your health care needs for the coming year matter too. Do you have surgeries planned? New health conditions to manage? You'll want to make sure your potential plan covers the care you expect to need.

> Travel plans can also influence your choice. Original Medicare typically doesn't cover services overseas, so frequent travelers might want supplemental coverage for emergencies abroad.

> If you don't make any changes during open enrollment, you'll likely be automatically reenrolled in your

Turn To **FINANCE** page **A5**



BEYOND

By Dr. RB **McFee**

Perhaps some of you can recall the assassination attempt on Pope John Paul II. Not long after, the Holy Father went to the prison that housed the assassin, forgave the man, and prayed with him. Such prayer visitations would occur multiple times over the course of their lives.

Forgiveness is one of the most powerful gifts we can give, as well as one of the most therapeutic actions we can do. Studies show people who are able to forgive, to let go, and move on from hurts actually derive a clinical benefit manifest in a variety of ways, including improved mental health, and blood pressure. And yet it is one of the two most difficult things for people to give; gratitude being the other.

Ironic, given the fact forgiveness was one of the most important concepts Jesus tried to teach His Disciples, and us, throughout His ministry.

23:34), and who have sinned – a long list friends and I cover all bases! from Creation, to now!

At such a climactic moment in His life, Jesus knew those words would be remembered by Disciples, townspeople, and the many visitors from foreign lands celebrating the Passover in Jerusalem, and the many who have read the Gospels over the millennia.

Not that there haven't been other reminders – lots of them – for God's children to forgive. In one way or another "forgive," and various permutations of the word, is mentioned in the Bible nearly one hundred times, give or take, depending upon the translation.

God reminds us that true love cannot exist without forgiveness and by inference, without saying "I'm sorry."

As if Jesus was trying to put an "!" on the concept, even in The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9 0 13, Luke 11: 2-4) the importance of forgiving is mentioned. Jesus not only reminds us, He challenges our sense of fair play.... God forgives us, can we do any less?

Alas, "as we forgive those who tres-

SEND US YOUR NEWS!!!



U.S. Navy!

In the summer of 1803, six American warships sliced through the Atlantic, crewed by fewer than 2,000 barely trained men-farm boys, fishermen, and dockhands.

The newly formed United States was broke, its Navy skeletal, its trade raided by Barbary pirates from North Africa, bleeding off an estimated 20 percent of American maritime commerce.

Their orders: reach Tripoli and challenge a rogue regime that extorted even the greatest empires. Few expected them to return.

generations, For European powers had bought peace with gold but as Barbary raids on American merchants escalated, President Thomas Jefferson faced a choice: submit, or fight with a navy that barely existed.

When the Americans arrived, the enemy was waiting-light, fast, and ruthless. They were outnumbered, but not outmatched.

The Americans trapped them in port, daring the pirates to come out and fight.

However, just momentum was building, disaster struck. The Philadelphia, one of the strongest of the American warships, ran aground off Tripoli and

was seized with Bedouin fighters. all 307 aboard. The Positively captured ship was SPEAKING refloated, turned against its own TORY fleet, and now MOORE flew the flag of the enemy- one of

America's greatest warships, lost in a single

Refusing to let the ship be used against them, they launched one of the boldest raids in naval history: Under the cover of night, disguised as Maltese sailors, they floated into harbor on a captured pirate vessel, boarded the Philadelphia, and turned her into a floating inferno.

The raid ignited American morale, but the war dragged on-until one man dared to rewrite the story.

Enter William Eaton former US consul to Tunis, burning with vengeance, armed with a wild plan. Eaton's target? Derna—a coastal city, lightly defended and exposed to the desert. Eaton would cross the sands and strike it from behind. The goal was to show that the US could do what no European power dared: land troops in North Africa, raise an army, and defeat the pirates on their own soil.

In March 1805, William Eaton assembled a ragtag force of 8 U.S. Marines, 40 Greek and Italian mercenaries, about 100 Arab cavalry, and scattered

Fewer than 500 menfractured by language, loyalty, and purpose marched forward. They crossed hundreds of miles of desert where water vanished, men hallucinated, and camels collapsed in blinding sandstorms. Sun scorched by day, the cold bit at night. Food ran short, tempers flared, tribal help deserted, and the campaign nearly collapsed over broken promises.

The road to Derna was carved through hell.

After seven weeks, they arrived at the gates ready for war. Eaton attacked as US warships unleashed cannon fire from offshore. The fighting was brutal—gunfire ripped through tents, smoke choked the hillside, and Eaton was shot through the wrist, but pressed on with his arm in a sling. After fierce close combat, Derna fell, and for the first time in history, the Stars and Stripes flew triumphantly on foreign soil. It was this moment that inspired the famous line still sung today in the Marine Corps Hymn: 'to the shores of Tripoli'.

The victory stunned the Barbary world. Eaton marched across a wasteland and took a city no one thought could fall. pirates' resolve The broke, and they signed a peace agreement within weeks, and the American prisoners from

Philadelphia walked free. What began as a desperate gamble became one of the boldest military feats in the early history of the United States.

The message was clear: the United States would not just send ships; it would send men, cross deserts, storm walls, and bleed on foreign ground to defend its people and principles.
This October 13th

marks the 250th anniversary of the United States Navy—born in uncertainty, and defined by resolve.

From the shores of Tripoli to every ocean since, the US Navy, along with the US Marine Corps and the entire American military, has stood as a shield for freedom and a symbol of courage. To all who have served and continue to serve: Thank

Today, we face new adversaries—One nation with a fleet much larger than our own. Once again, we may be outnumbered, but we will never be outmatched.

Like Eaton before us, we'll rise to meet the challenge. May God bless the USA!

Toby Moore is a columnist, the star of Emmy Nominated A Separate Peace, and the CEO of Cubestream Inc.

Plant flavorful and nutritious garlic in Fall



Separate garlic cloves right before planting and plant the largest cloves with their papery

Lower your blood pressure and cholesterol, fight heart disease, boost your immune system, and add a bit of flavor to your meals by growing your own garlic. This vegetable has been used as both food and medicine for thousands of years.

Purchase firm, healthy bulbs of garlic sold for growing in the garden. One pound of garlic typically fills a 30' row but this can vary depending on the variety. It's best not to use garlic sold at the grocery store as it may have been treated to prevent sprouting and it may not be suitable for growing in your climate.



GARDEN MOMENTS **MELINDA MYERS**

Select the best variety for your growing conditions and preferred flavor. Hardneck garlic typically prefers colder climates while most softneck garlic prefers warmer climates, but this varies with the varieties

within each group. Hardneck garlic varieties develop a stiff flower stalk, tend to have larger cloves, and flavors ranging from mild to spicy. Softneck varieties vary their adaptability to long cold winters, cool moist springs and warm summers. They lack the stiff flower stalk so the leaves can be braided, and the bulbs tend to have a longer shelf life.

Garlic bulbs typically contain seven or more individual cloves. The larger the clove you plant, the bigger the bulb you'll harvest. Separate the cloves right before planting and do not remove the papery covering. Use the largest cloves for growing and the smaller ones to flavor your favorite fall and winter meals.

Grow garlic in a sunny location with well-drained soil. Prepare the soil by adding organic matter like compost and a low nitrogen slow-release fertilizer. Avoid high nitrogen, fast release fertilizers that promote top growth with smaller bulbs. Fertilize again in spring as growth begins.

Plant the cloves in the fall about six weeks before the ground freezes in cold climates and late fall or early winter in warmer regions. Space individual cloves six inches apart with the pointed side up and the base of the clove two to three inches below the soil surface. Space single rows 12 to 14 inches apart or double rows six inches apart with 30 INCHES between each set of double rows. For more intensive wide row and square foot growing, plant multiple rows with four to eight inches between cloves.

Spread a six-inch layer of weed-free straw over the soil surface after planting to conserve moisture and suppress weeds. This also provides added insulation in colder regions and helps prevent frost heaving that occurs when temperatures fluctuate, causing soil to alternately freeze, thaw and shift throughout the winter. Cover the straw with evergreen boughs in windy locations to help hold the straw in place.

Water newly planted garlic thoroughly at planting and as needed in fall to encourage the roots and a shoot to form. Water often enough to keep the soil evenly moist during the growing season. Inconsistent moisture when the plants are actively growing results in smaller and misshapen bulbs. Keep the soil around the plants covered with organic mulch to conserve moisture and suppress weeds.

Make this the season you plant garlic. Then enjoy the homegrown flavor and health benefits it provides.

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

FINANCE

continued from page A6

Don't let your Medicare plan run on autopilot. Take advantage of the annual open enrollment period — between Oct. 15 and Dec. 7 — to ensure your coverage continues to serve you well in the year ahead.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use This meeting is free and open to the public by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Trevor Nielsen, your local Edward Jones Advisor in Sturbridge at 508-347-1420 or trevor.nielsen@ edwardjones.com.

Order your Albanian pies and delicacies now from Daughters of St. Nicholas

ethnic delicacies by Oct. 31 from the Daughters of St. toes, Manicotti with Sauce, Vegetable Medley, Garden Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church.

Albanian pies are available: Spinach, Leek, Squash and Sauerkraut . Whole pies (12x17): \$45 each baked or frozen unbaked. Half pies (12x9): baked ticket sales are available at https://www.ticketleap. only \$23 each. Baking instructions will be provided for the frozen unbaked.

(butter cookies) four for \$5; Twist Cookies four for \$3; Date-Nut Filled Cookies \$2.50 each; Rolled Baklava \$3 each and Kadaif \$3 each.

To place an order, call the church number at 508-764-6226 by Oct. 31 and leave your name and phone number to receive a confirmation.

Orders to be picked up at St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church, 126 Morris St., Southbridge, on Nov. 24 from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Hydrant flushing underway in Southbridge

SOUTHBRIDGE — Southbridge Water Department will start its semi-annual hydrant flushing program on Sunday, Oct. 5 at approximately 9 p.m. and continue during overnight hours for approximately six to eight weeks between the hours of 9 p.m. and 5 p.m. Flushing will start in the Westville area and continue easterly throughout the town.

reservoir intake screens, flushing accumulated sedtion of each hydrant.

The Department requests that during this period learn how to live. customers check their water before washing clothes. or comments.

Gateway Players celebrate 50th anniversary

CHARLTON — Help us celebrate 50 years of Gateway Players Theatre! We will be holding our 50th Anniversary Gala on Nov. 1 at 6 p.m. at Heritage Country Club in Charlton. Please join us for food, drinks, music, dancing, and years of memories. The highlight of the evening will be the premiere of our 50th Anniversary video documentary, produced by Southbridge Community Television.

The menu will include Scallops Wrapped in Bacon, Vegetable Crudites, Carved Roast Beef, Baked Bone-STURBRIDGE — Order your Albanian Pies and less Lemon Parmesan Chicken, Roasted Red Pota-Salad an

Tickets are \$40 per person and can be purchased by calling Gateway at 508-764-4531. Online credit card events/tickets/gateway-players/50th-anniversary-gala Tickets sales are limited and must be pur-The following delicacies are available: Kourabias chased no later than Oct. 19. Recommended dress is semi-formal to formal.

> We hope you join us for this remarkable celebration of our past 50 years.

Friends of the Joshua Hyde Library celebrate Morrie's legacy at annual meeting

STURBRIDGE — Anyone who's ever been touched by the wisdom in "Tuesdays with Morrie" by Mitch Albom or who has heard of the book and want to know what it's all about should come join the Friends of the Joshua Hyde Public Library for its Annual Meeting at the Sturbridge Town Hall's upstairs Veteran's Memorial Hall on Tuesday, Oct. 14 at 6:30 p.m. current plan for the following year, as long as it's still The meeting will feature Morrie' son, Rob Schwartz, available and you continue paying required premiand photographer/teacher Heather Pillar who spent ums. The procedure will include the cleaning of the the last six months documenting Morrie's struggles with ALS. More than a quarter century later Moriments from the water mains and testing the opera-rie's wisdom still resonates with many people around the world. Morrie taught people how to live fulfilling lives with love. It is by facing fears of death that we

Customers may also get accumulated sediments in and all are welcome. Members of the Friends are intheir house laterals and experience some discolored vited to stay afterward for the Annual Meeting where water. This will clear after a brief run of water at you'll hear what we've been working on all year and the tap. Please contact the Southbridge Water De- be able to vote on the Slate of Officers. Please let us partment at (508) 764-3207 if you have any questions know if you're interested in running for a board position.

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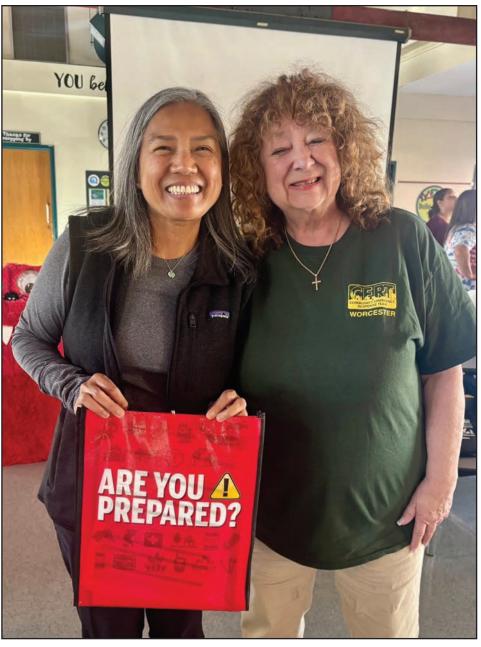
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Former Bay Path Nursing Academy director attends emergency preparedness workshop



Courtesy

Dr. Bolandrina and Lois Luniewicz of CMMRC.

HUBBARDSTON — In a time when natural disasters and public health emergencies are becoming more frequent and severe, proactive preparedness can be the difference between chaos and coordinated care. That was the message delivered loud and clear on Saturday, Oct. 4, as the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) hosted the "One Step Ahead... Before the Storm" Emergency Preparedness Workshop at Hubbardston Center School

The event, held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., brought together community members, volunteers, and emergency preparedness professionals from across the region for a day of collaboration, handson learning, and resilience-building.

Representing health, education, and volunteerism

Among the attendees was Dr. Gretheline Ramos Bolandrina, a long-time MRC volunteer, nurse educator, and former Academy Director of the Bay Path RVTHS Practical Nursing Academy in Charlton and her husband, Joseph Bolandrina of Athol, also a

Explore "New England Ghosts and Legends" with Jeff Belanger at Charlton Public Library

CHARLTON — The Charlton Public Library will be hosting Jeff Belanger on Thursday, Oct. 23 at 6 p.m. for a talk on "New England Ghosts and Legends."

This ghostly multi-media program will take you on a journey through the haunts in your backyard, and around the world. Pulling from presenter Jeff Belanger's 25 years of research for his books, podcasts, adventures, and the various television shows he's worked on, join one of the nation's premiere storytellers for a trip through the unusual and the unexplained.

Jeff Belanger is a storyteller, adventurer, journalist, and one of the most visible explorers of the unexplained today. The author of over a dozen books published in six languages, he is also the Emmy-nominated host, writer, and producer of the PBS and Amazon Prime series New England Legends and the weekly New England Legends podcast. He's the writer and researcher for the Ghost Adventures series, and he's been a guest on hundreds of television and radio networks and programs, including History, Travel Channel, Biography Channel, PBS, CBS Sunday Morning, NPR, BBC, and Coast to Coast AM.

Registration is required, and can be done at charltonlibrary.org or by calling the Library at 508-248-0452.

Charlton Public Library is located at 40 Main St. in Charlton. Additional parking is available at the elementary school and the town hall. long-time MRC volunteer. Representing both their commitment to community health and professional education, the Bolandrinas joined fellow volunteers such as Lois Luniewicz (of CMMRC), in refining emergency response skills and fostering connections vital for coordi-

nated disaster readiness.

"As a nurse, educator, and volunteer, I see the value of this kind of community engagement firsthand," said Bolandrina. "Preparedness is not just about knowing what to do; it's about building a network of people who are trained, informed, and ready to act

Training for the unexpected





5 Meadow Rd., Spencer, MA 01562

508-885-4033

www.charliesdiner.com

The workshop focused on three main objectives:

Fostering collaboration between area residents, CERT, and MRC members before emergencies happen;

Reviewing critical response skills for disaster events; and

Encouraging preparedness among individuals and families.

Participants rotated through a series of interactive sessions, including:

Emergency Preparedness Bingo – A fun, prize-filled game led by Judie O'Donnell, teaching participants about essential items to keep on hand for storms and power outages.

Stop the Bleed – Taught by Paul Laitenen and Arthur Elbthal, this crucial hands-on workshop equipped attendees with life-saving techniques to help injured persons before EMS arrives.

Social Media Messaging During Emergencies – Hosted by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), this session explored how effective messaging through social platforms can aid communication during crises.

Shelter Setup and Management – Instructed by Rich Curtis, this course detailed the steps to open, operate, and close a community shelter—something that requires more than just opening doors.

Remember the Pets – With insights from JoAnn Griffin, this session high-lighted the importance of including

pets in emergency plans, ensuring they remain safe and unharmed during disaster scenarios.

A community effort with national impact

ČERT and MRC programs are federally recognized volunteer initiatives designed to supplement professional responders by training local citizens in basic disaster response. From fire safety and medical aid to shelter logistics and emotional support, volunteers help fill vital roles when communities are overwhelmed.

For Bolandrina, the workshop was a perfect reflection of the mission she promoted at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy and through her public service.

"This is how we build resilient communities—by coming together to learn, practice, and prepare," she said. "It's empowering to know that we have the tools to help—not just in hospitals or classrooms, but right here in our neighborhoods."

Looking ahead

With hurricane season and winter storms looming, the timing of the workshop served as a call to action for all residents to review their personal emergency plans, check their supply kits, and consider how they can serve others during times of crisis.

As Bolandrina remarked, "When we prepare together, we respond better together."

* * * Friday's Child * * * *



Emma Age 15 Registration #9192

Emma is a bright, artistic, and resilient young girl with a wonderful sense of humor. She is kind, caring, and energetic, with a natural ability to connect with adults in meaningful ways. Emma is a talented artist who loves drawing and painting, and she also has a passion for helping others. She often talks about pursuing a career in a helping profession and has even expressed interest in the field of biology, which she enjoys learning about in her science classes. Active and adventurous, Emma likes spending time outdoors hiking, playing soccer, and shooting hoops.

She also enjoys creative hobbies such as knitting, writing, and reading, which allow her to express herself and explore new ideas.

https://www.mareinc.org/child/25085695902

Can I Adopt?

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

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



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LEGALS

CHARLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Charlton Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on October 22, 2025, at 7PM on the application of Heidi Correira.

The applicant has submitted a Request for Determination of Applicability for the installation of five Helical posts associated with the construction of a deck within 100-ft of South Charlton Reservoir. Address: 41 Leland Drive, Charlton, MA, 01507. Parcel ID: 73A-

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Charlton Conservation Commission will be conducted in person and via remote means. Members of the public who wish to participate can access the meeting remotely by request.

Copies of the RDA may be examined at the Conservation Office by appointment during business hours.

Thomas O'Mallev Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission October 9, 2025

CHARLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Charlton Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on October 22, at 7PM on the application of Brymace LLC.

The applicant has filed a Notice of Intent for the demolition and removal of an existing garage, re-pavement and extension of existing driveway, installation of a new foundation, and the replacement of a deck and stairs. All activities including vegetation management will be within 200-ft Riverfront Area. The project location is: 6 S Sullivan Road, Charlton, MA 01507. Parcel ID: 27-C-14.

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Charlton Conservation Commission will be conducted in person and via remote means. Members of the public who wish to participate can access the meeting remotely by request.

Copies of the NOI may be examined at the Conservation Office by appointment during business hours.

Thomas O'Mallev Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission October 9, 2025

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

225 Main Street Worcester, MA 01608 (508)831-2200 Docket No. WO25C486CA CITATION ON PETITION TO **CHANGE NAME**

In the matter of: **Alexis Crimson Rabuska** A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by

Alexis Crimson Rabuska of Sturbridge MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to: **Alexis Crimson Kenney**

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Worcester Probate and Family Court before 10 a.m. on the return day of 10/21/2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A Keamy, First Justice of this Court. Date: September 19, 2025 Stephanie Fattman, Register of Probate

(SEAL)

October 9, 2025

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT

Docket No. 25 SM 001804

ORDER OF NOTICE TO: Lisa M. O'Connor

and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 § 3901 (et seq) **Nationstar Mortgage LLC**

claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Sturbridge, numbered 73 Colonial Drive, Unit No. 73 of the Sturbridge Hills Condominium, given by Lisa M. O'Connor to "MERS", Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., a separate corporation that is acting solely as nominee for Fairway **Independent Mortgage Corporation,** "Lender"; and its successors and assigns, dated November 17, 2017, and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 58060, Page 159, 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 11/03/2025 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 9/25/2025

Attest: Deborah J. Patterson Recorder October 9, 2025

TOWN OF CHARLTON INVITATION FOR BIDS WINTER WASHED SAND

Bid packages for Winter Washed Sand will be available on October 6, 2025, and must be obtained from the Office of the Town Administrator prior to the submission of the bid. To obtain a copy of the bid package, contact the Office of the Town Administrator either by email: mary.devlin@townofcharlton. net, phone: (508) 248-2206, or pick up at the Town Administrator's Office, Charlton Municipal Offices, 37 Main Street, Charlton, MA 01507.

Sealed bids appropriately marked "Winter Washed Sand Bid" will be received, publicly opened and read aloud in Meeting Room 1, Charlton Municipal Offices, 37 Main Street, Charlton, MA 01507 on Thursday, October 23, 2025, after the bid closes at 1:00 p.m.

The Town Administrator in his capacity as Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to waive any minor informality in the bids and reject any or all bids and to make awards in a manner deemed to be in the best interest of the Town.October 2, 2025 October 9, 2025

In accordance with the Wetlands Protection Act. Chapter 131. Sec 40, a public hearing by the Holland Conservation Commission will be held on Tuesday 10/28/2025 at 6:30 p.m. in the Conservation Commission Room, second floor, in the Holland Town Hall, 27 Sturbridge Road, Holland, MA. This meeting is to review a Notice of Intent (NOI) filed by David Bauchiero Jr. for removal of 100 cubic yards or less from the edge of lake at drawdown at 46 Over The Top Road (Map R14-A-1). To comply with the Open Meeting Law, all public hearings are scheduled for 6:30 PM and, barring unforeseen circumstances, will be taken in the order in which they appear on the agenda. This meeting will be held in person and virtual; for virtual meeting login information contact Holland Conservation

(413) 245-7108 x114. **Conservation Commission** Town of Holland October 9, 2025

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

Court 225 Main Street Worcester, MA 01608 (508)831-2200

Docket No. W025C0483CA CITATION ON PETITION TO **CHANGE NAME**

In the matter of:

Wilson Michael Swasey A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by

Wilson Michael Swasey of Southbridge MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to: **Inara Sky Scarlet**

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Worcester Probate and Family Court before 10 a.m. on the return day of 10/21/2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A Keamy, First Justice of this Court. Date: September 18, 2025 Stephanie Fattman, Register of Probate October 9, 2025

NOTICE OF SALE

Pursuant to Mass General Laws Chapter I 05A, the contents of the following space:

H41 (Joseph Lemay) located at 25 Brimfield Road, Holland, MA will be sold to satisfy the owners lien of Storage Plus. Sale date is October 28, 2025 @2:00 PM, Inspection between I :30 PM and 2:00 PM on October 28, 2025. Sealed bids must be hand delivered by 2:00 PM on October 28, 2025. All goods must be purchased with cash as is, and must be removed within 48 hours of sale. Owner has the right to bid to protect his lien and to withdraw any unit upon settlement by the obligated party up for sale. For further information call (413)245-4388.

October 9, 2025 October 16, 2025

CHARLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Chariton Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on October 22, at 7PM on the application of Frank Zappulla. The applicant has filed a Notice of

Intent for the construction of a retaining wall within 100-ft of Glen Echo Lake. The project location is: 78 Glen Echo Shore Road, Charlton, MA 01507. Parcel ID: 12B-A-44.

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Charlton Conservation Commission will be conducted in person and via remote means. Members of the public who wish to participate can access the meeting remotely by request.

Copies of the NOI may be examined at the Conservation Office by appointment during business hours.

Thomas O'Malley Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission October 9, 2025

CHARLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION **PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Charlton Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on October 22, at 7PM on the application of Frank Zappulla. The applicant has filed a Notice of

at conservation@hollandma.org or call Intent for the construction of a retaining wall within 100-ft of Glen Echo Lake. The project location is: 78 Glen Echo Shore Road, Charlton, MA 01507. Parcel ID: 12B-A-44.

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Charlton Conservation Commission will be conducted in person and via remote means. Members of the public who wish to participate can access the meeting remotely by request.

Copies of the NOI may be examined at the Conservation Office by appointment during business hours.

Thomas O'Malley Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission October 9, 2025

> **Public Notice Massachusetts Department** of Environmental Protection **Division of Wetlands and Waterways MassDEP Boston Office**

100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900

Boston, MA 02114 Pursuant to 33 U.S.C. 1341 and M.G.L. c. 21 §§ 26 -53, notice is given of a 401 Water Quality Certification application for work in Waters of the US associated with the proposed replacement of two existing bridges in the Town of Southbridge, MA, by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation - Highway Division, Ten Park Plaza, Room 7360, Boston, MA 02116. This project will replace the Mill Street bridges over McKinstry Brook

(Bridge #S-21-009) and over the Quinebaug River (#S-21-003) (the Project) with new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant bridges. The bridges serve as an important transportation connection within Southbridge and currently lack suitable ADA compliant features. Additional information may be obtained from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation - Highway Division at the above address, Attention Courtney Walker or by emailing

Courtney.L.Walker@dot.state.ma.us. Written comments should be sent to MassDEP Wetlands Program, Attention Heidi Davis, 100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02114 or heidi.davis@mass.gov within 21 days of this notice.

Any group of ten persons, any aggrieved person, or any governmental body or private organization with a mandate to protect the environment who submits written comments may appeal the Department's Certification. Failure to submit written comments before the end of the public comment period may result in the waiver of any right to an adjudicatory hearing.

October 9, 2025

CHARLTON CONSERVATION **COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Charlton Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on October 22, at 7PM on the application of Wayne and Patricia Fitchett.

The applicant has filed a Notice of Intent for the construction of tiered retaining walls with steps and landscaping site improvements on the bank of Glen Echo Lake. The project location is: 211 Sunset Drive, Charlton, MA 01507. Parcel ID: 12A-D-12.

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Charlton Conservation Commission will be conducted in person and via remote means. Members of the public who wish to participate can access the meeting remotely by request. Copies of the NOI may be examined at

the Conservation Office by appointment during business hours.

Thomas O'Malley Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission

October 9, 2025

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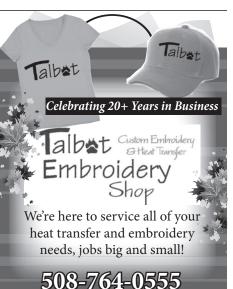
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CHARLTON

continued from page A1

The third bylaw change is a replacement the town bylaw regarding historic districts. The changes include alterations to a large selection of subsections including the definition of the district, the powers and duties of the Historic District Commission, applicant reviews, and rules regarding proposed altercations to historic properties and subsequent exclusions. The proposed changes are supported by the Historic District Commission and the Select Board.

A new proposal near the end of the warrant comes from Fire Chief Rob Barton seeking to accept a pair of provisions of Massachusetts General Law pertaining to firefighter compensations. These would allow permanent, intermittent, and call firefighters to be credited with full-time service for the purpose of calculating retirement benefits.

WILSON

MASONS

continued from page A1

Master Masons. General Salem Towne was an ac-

tive and zealous Mason

who reflected honor upon

his native town with his ability and learning.

Master Masons from all

around the community,

would travel to the Gen-

eral Salem Towne house

for these meetings. The

Towne family was very prominent in the com-

Major General Sa-

lem Towne house was built in 1796 in Charl-

ton. In 1952, the Wells

family of Southbridge,

who owned the American Optical Company in

Southbridge, purchased

the Salem Towne House. They then proceeded to

move the building to Old

Sturbridge Village (OSV)

in Sturbridge Mass. After moving the building,

munity at this time.

continued from page A1

statement. "The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District Administration has been fully cooperative during this investigation. We encourage parents and guardians to speak with their children and to

eral Law. the fall special town meeting has been made

directly with any questions or concerns." While our correspon-

dent was unable to con- $\,{\rm PM}$ tact school administration for this story, the incident does not appear to have involved any students that Wilson taught locally. The case remains according to authorities.

historical renovations. This beautiful historic house sits in front of the 3rd Thursday of the the OSV common where hundreds of visitors go to visit this museum deliving during that time. The Salem Towne House at Old Sturbridge Village

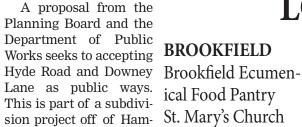
is the "crown jewel" and

centerpiece of the town

common.

The brethren that attended witnessed this ancient merger ceremony. Afterwards a delicious luncheon was served by the Webster Masonic Lodge and the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge members who are now proud to be called the "Major General Salem Towne Lodge". If you would like more information about Freemasonry and to find a lodge nearest you, visit our website at www. massfreemasonry.org

www.Stonebridge **Press.com**



Finally, two different, identically worded artiadministrative ings. Both articles, one Board and another as a citizens petition, seek to exempt town administraor in the case of the citizens petition town mufrom being defined as "prohibited areas" refirearms in accordance with Massachusetts Gen-

Town Clerk's office either physically or on the of Charlton Web site.

mond Hill Road.

sponsored by the Select Saturday 9:30 AM-11AM tive buildings or offices, Chip - In Food Pantry

buildings and property, 01507 garding the possession of AM-12 Noon

available through the Everyone is welcome. Clerk's page on the Town

BROOKFIELD

ical Food Pantry 4 Howard Street, Brookfield, MA 01506 cles pertaining to town Distribution: Wednesday 9:30 AM-11 AM:

CHARLTON

McKinstry Building nicipal administrative 37 Main Street, Charlton, MA Distribution: 3rd Saturday 9

St. Joseph's Church, Charlton The full warrant for Tuesday 6:30-7:30 p.m. Wednesday 9-11 a.m.

LEICESTER

Leicester Food Pantry St. Joseph-St. Pius X Parish contact our department 759 Main Street, Leicester, MA 01524

Distribution: Tuesday 5 PM-7

NORTH BROOKFIELD

St. Joseph's Food Pantry Located in the church hall an active investigation at 296 North Main St. North Brookfield

Distribution is the 1st Thursit underwent some major day of the month from 5:00-6:30PM

month from 12 Noon-1:15PM Any questions should be dipicting the lifestyle of rected to the Rectory office 508 867-6469.

St. Joseph's Food Pantry is a community partner affiliated with the Worcester County Food Bank.

OXFORD

Oxford Ecumenical Food Shelf Oxford Community Center 4 Maple Road Oxford, MA 01540 Distribution: Thursday 4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

LOCAL FOOD PANTRIES

ROCHDALE

The Lord's Cupboard Food Greenville Baptist Church 674 Pleasant St. Rochdale, MA Distribution: Every Monday from 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. Open to everyone.

SOUTHBRIDGE

Saint Vincent de Paul Society Food Pantry, Located in the St. Anne Church basement, 16 Church Street, Fiskdale, MA 01518 Stocked by donations Contact: 508-347-6398

St. John Paul II Food Pantry 279 Hamilton St, Southbridge, MA 01550 (508) 765-3701 Distribution: Tuesday 3-5 pm, Wednesday 9-11 am

Southbridge Food Share Located at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, lower level 446 Hamilton St, Southbridge, MA 01550 Southbridgefoodshare.org@

gmail.com Phone: 508-764-6583

SPENCER- EAST BROOK-FIELD -

RESIDENTS ONLY Mary Queen of the Rosary **Food Pantry** 60 Maple St, Spencer, MA 01562 Distribution: Thursday 10

AM-12 Noon

STURBRIDGE

Saint Vincent de Paul Society Food Pantry, Located in the St. Anne Church basement, 16 Church Street, Fiskdale, MA 01518 Stocked by donations Contact: 508-347-6398

WEBSTER

Webster-Dudley Food Share 4 Church St #2 Webster, MA 0570 Distribution: Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30 -11:00 am. Open to Webster and Dudley residents. Please call ahead: 508-943-9171

WEST BROOKFIELD

Sharing Cupboard Food Pan-First Congregational Church 36 North Main Street,

W.Bookfield, MA 01585 Distribution: Wednesday 10 AM-11:30 AM Thursday 7 PM-8PM





WANTED:

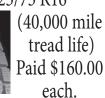
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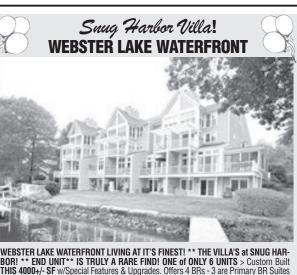


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* June Cazeault * Laurie Sullivan* Lori Johnson-Chausse * William Gilmore II * Maureen Cimoch * Bryan Pelletier





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Webster- 4 Perryville RD

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lot or build your

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DUDLEY- \$5000 BUYER INCENTIVE!



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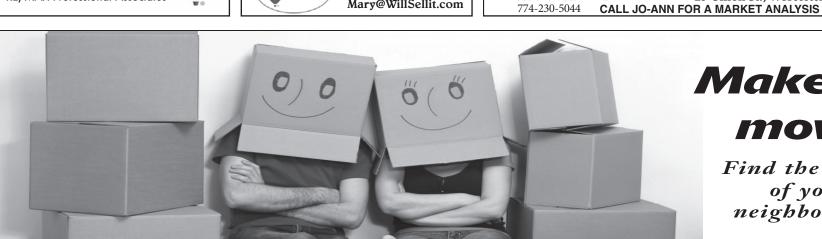


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A journey of heart: From Kenya to care

CHARLTON — For Michael Mutunga Wairimu, nursing is more than a job—it's a vow to serve humanity at its most vulnerable. His path into the profession wasn't linear, nor easy, but it was intentional. Rooted in empathy, resilience, and an unwavering belief in people, Michael's journey has taken him from classrooms in Kenya to nursing homes in Massachusetts—always with a focus on healing, hope, and heart. "My nursing journey was a commitment to the most profound parts of the human experience," says Wairimu. "We meet people where they are, in pain, in fear, sometimes even at the end. That connection—that trust—is sacred."

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caregiving emerged at an early age. After completing his education at Moi Ndeffo Secondary School, he pursued a Diploma in Psychological Counseling at Kenya Psychological Counselling College, followed by a Certificate in Computer Literacy from Egerton University. With a solid foundation in both emotional and practical care, he emigrated to the U.S., where he quickly immersed himself in community service and healthcare roles.

Nursing education & growth in Massachusetts

Wairimu graduated in June 2024 from the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy in Charlton, with a Certificate in Practical Nursing. He also earned certifications in Mental Health First Originally from Kenya, Aid Dementia Training,

> and BLS/ HCP CPR/ First Aid—credentials that showcase his commitment to quality care and continued growth. "The

strengths Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy were the learning

Wairimu's passion for school was well-equipped, and the faculty had great knowledge. They were there for us—not just as instructors, but as mentors."

Among those mentors were Dr. Ana Olivar, who instilled high standards (always do your best), and Dr. Adelina Healy, whom Wairimu describes as an "angel" in his academic journey. "She told me, 'You will make a good nurse in the future.' And she meant it. They took me under their wings and modeled true professionalism."

Wairimu also credits Dr. Gretheline Bolandrina, whose motivational words and tireless dedication to students left a lasting impact: "Thank you for always supporting us and sharing our little winnings.'

Clinical rotations & real-world training

Wairimu's clinical experiences strengthened both his technical skills and emotional intelligence. As a Student Nurse at Quaboag Rehabilitation Center (April 2024June 2024) and Holden Rehabilitation Center (January 2024 -April 2024). He administered medications, monitored vitals, assisted with activities of daily living, and collaborated with healthcare teams. He worked under close supervision to sharpen his judgment, professionalism, and bedside man-

Winter

Home (LPN, September 2025 - Present), administering medications, recording vitals, and compasproviding sionate bedside care. Jewish Healthcare Center (LPN, July 2024 - September 2024) Supporting patients with mobility, medications, and recovery. Venture Community Services (Direct Care Worker, March 2022September 2025): Teaching life skills, providing general care, and supporting emotional well-being. Open Sky Community Services (Direct Care Worker, July 2022 – June 2023) Supporting individuals in group homes through meal prep, appointments, and daily activities.

Westside House Nursing

He shared, "What makes a good caregiver isn't just the tasks. Its presence, patience, and persistence. You must listen—not just to symptoms, but to people."

Emotional challenges and hard-won resilience Wairimu speaks open-

ly about the emotional toll of nursing—the exhaustion, the burnout. the struggle to not carry work home and still be present for his family.

"There were times of deep self-doubt," he says. "I had to fight burnout and learn that asking for help isn't a weakness. It's how we survive."

His greatest personal success? "Resilience. I survived the toughest days and emerged a stronger, more skilled, more compassionate nurse."

Fatherhood, faith & fuel for the future



Now a proud father to Ella, his seven-month-old daughter, Wairimu finds renewed purpose in balancing work and family.

'She's my biggest inspiration," he says. "When I look at her, I'm reminded of why I work so hard. Every shift, every sleepless night—I'm doing it for her.'

He also draws daily motivation from the patients he serves—people who, despite their pain or limitations, teach him about courage.

The road ahead: A prudent nurse

For Wairimu, the NCLEX-PN was a tough battle, but he remained undeterred.

"I did not give up. I worked hard on my weaknesses, and I passed," he said.

MassHire Grant Α Recipient, active volunteer in community clinics and school screenings (Charlton BP Clinic, Shepherd Hill BP Screening, Charlton Middle School), Wairimu continues to serve and inspire those around him.

He closes, "This isn't just a job. It's a life of service. If you lead with compassion, stay teachable, and never stop fighting for your purposeyou'll always be on the right path."







M.T.W. 9:30-6:00; TH. FRI. 9:30-7:00; SAT. 9:30-6:00; SUN. 11-5





