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Thursday-Friday, November 6-7, 2025

Monarch Orchard celebrates grand opening



Members of the Charlton Select Board welcome Monarch Orchards to the community.

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — It's been quite a few years now since the previous owners of Charlton Orchard sought to sell the property, resulting in a controversy that divided the town of Charlton. However, years after the dust settled, the orchard now officially has new life, but this time serving as a uniting force for the community. Like a butterfly emerging from its slow transformation in a cocoon, Charlton Orchard is now officially reborn as Monarch Orchard.

The venue held its official grand opening on Oct. 25, with new owners Alanna and Justin Tomer welcoming guests to a special celebration including music, vendors, games, and more. Speaking about his new business venture, Justin Tomer said he fell in love with the property from the start and eventually he and Alanna decided to take a chance and purchased the property to continue its legacy as an orchard producing numerous different kinds of produce.

"We've been just putting in as much work as we can

to open it up and clear a lot more land and make it available for people to come in an enjoy," Justin Tomer said. "It's amazing to see the people and it gives you goosebumps. You see how happy everybody is, and it brings another life to the orchard. It feels like something that's been needed."

Alanna Tomer spoke about how special the grand opening was as she greeted guests during a ceremony which included appearances by elected officials from the state and Charlton's Select Board.

"It's been a long road to get here and a lot of hard work, but today we have so much to celebrate," said

Alanna. "Monarch Orchards was once just a scribble on a piece of paper, an idea, a dream, and now we are here standing proudly on this land seeing it all come to life."

Before the Tomer's came along, the fate of Charlton Orchard proved divisive among the people of Charlton. Prior to 2020, the potential sale of the property for use as what would have been one of the largest cannabis growth sites in the country resulted in lawsuits and heated debates, although many simply wanted to see the property remain as an orchard.

This controversy was referenced by state and local lawmakers, who kept their



Alanna and Justin Tomer, the new owners of Monarch Orchard, formerly Charlton Orchard.

statements vague enough to recall the struggle, but focused more on the positive and what the orchard has since become.

"We know in this community some years ago this might have been used for something else and that caused a bit of a stir to say the least," said State Rep. Paul Frost, whose territory includes part of Charlton, including Monarch Orchard. "To have this go back to what it was originally here for and have them nurture this land and make it a jewel of the community is a great endeavor."

Charlton Selectman Steven Koronis agreed noting that while he wasn't on the Select Board during the years of the controversy, he was keenly aware of how important preserving the property was to

the townsfolk.

"There were so many people that were saying why can't someone buy up the orchard and keep it an orchard. That was the common thread. Regardless of which side of the argument you were on, everybody wanted that and this is proof that sometimes it takes just a matter of time before someone is brave enough to do it," said Koronis.

Now the future looks bright for Monarch Orchard. Even as the fall and winter months approach, the family is hard at work preparing for exciting springs and summers ahead in 2026 and beyond steeped in local tradition and a desire to preserve and build upon the small town, pick-your-own-food aesthetic that many loved about the orchard for so many years.

Gateway Players presents

"A Candle in the Window"

SOUTHBIDGE — Gateway Players Theatre in Southbridge presents "A Candle in the Window," the final production of our 50th Anniversary Season. This play is written by L. Don Swartz. Performance dates are Dec. 5, 6 & 7. The performances are held at Fellowship Hall of Elm Street Congregational Church, 61 Elm St. in Southbridge. Entrance is on Park Street (around the corner). Directed by Eric Hart, Produced by Lynn Boucher. Presented by permission through special arrangement with Eldridge Plays and Musicals.

Tickets are \$18 for adults and \$15 for seniors and youth under 18. Tickets may be reserved by calling Gateway at 508-764-4531. Online credit card ticket sales are available at <https://www.ticketleap.events/tickets/gateway-players/a-candle-in-the-window>

The cast includes Billy Bolster, John Golden, Peter Cooper, Pat Haddock, Linda Bouthillier. Dawn Sedlier, Tito Aviles, Chamira Santiago, Peter Amarel, Ducati Sedlier, Reilly Ireland, Lily Ruggiere, T.J. Lee, Kirstin Smaltz, Elise Servant and Norah Stern.

A small group of weary travelers discover the power of the season while trapped in a lonely train station on Christmas Eve. As a blizzard rages outside, the troubled people are forced to turn to each other for companionship. Trying to make them more comfortable is the old stationmaster, Charlie. When the clock strikes midnight, there is a knock on the station door and seven youngsters appear. They've seen the station lights from the nearby church where, in secret, they've been practicing the story of the nativity which they plan to present at regular service. They offer to perform their play for the travelers and afterward, speak to the travelers individually, giving advice which is seemingly wise beyond their years. The next morning, as a new, younger stationmaster lights a Christmas candle, we realize the mysterious stop in the travelers' journey was more than accidental and has given them a renewed spirit and resolve.

FISKDALE — The Tantasqua Hall of Fame Committee is proud to announce the inductees for the Class of 2025, recognizing a distinguished group of three student athletes at a ceremony on Wednesday, Nov. 26 at the high school cafeteria.

J.J. Howland, tight end, captain and MVP of the 2016 Western Massachusetts championship team, will lead off the ceremony. Howland was a four-year varsity starter who went on to play Division 1 football for Yale University and professional football for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

From the Class of 2014, football lineman Bobby Law will be recognized for his relentless style of play on both sides of the ball. In nominating Law for the honor, Coach Joseph Beveridge called him a "one-man wrecking crew." He was team captain in his senior year and a member of the Worcester Telegram and Gazette Super Team before going on to excel



J.J. Howland

at Deerfield Academy and Union College.

Stephen Tieri earned his place in the Hall of Fame nearly 30 years after his outstanding accomplishments on the soccer field and baseball diamond in 1986. He made the soccer varsity team at the age of 13 and went on to score 20 goals as captain his senior year. He was also captain of the baseball team and earned the Wyman and Stewart Award given by coaches in recognition of his dedication and excellence in both sports.

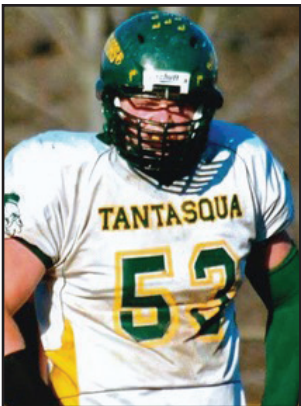
"These are three extraor-



Steve Tieri

dinary student athletes," said William Emrich, chair of the committee. "We're proud to be able to recognize their contributions."

The Hall of Fame started in 2010 as a "method of acknowledging outstanding athletic abilities and contributions to the proud Tantasqua community," according to the committee's Policy and Procedure guide. It has inducted 41 players and contributors, whose accomplishments are enshrined in a permanent display in the athletic foyer at Tantasqua High School.



Bobby Law

"The display not only recognizes those who helped build the Warrior spirit, but also inspires today's youth to strive for excellence in sports," Emerich said.

The ceremony is set to start with light refreshments and a meet and greet at 6 p.m., followed by opening remarks and formal inductions at 6:45 p.m. The high school is located at 319 Brookfield Rd., Fiskdale.

Tantasqua plays Shepard Hill in the annual Thanksgiving game the following day at 10 a.m. at Tantasqua.

Community invited to celebration of love, healing, and community spirit

STURBRIDGE — Juno's Place and Burt's Brigade are thrilled to announce the Grand Reopening of the Wolfie's Legacy Memorial, a beloved community space rebuilt after being destroyed during a devastating winter storm. To celebrate the return of this cherished memorial, the public is invited to join a Pizza Party & Celebration at Juno's Place on Saturday, Nov. 2, from 1-4 p.m.

For years, the Wolfie's Legacy Memorial has served as a comforting sanctuary where grieving pet parents

could honor the memories of their beloved companions. Visitors from across the country have sent tags, collars, photos, handwritten notes, and keepsakes—each one representing a story of love, loss, and healing.

After a powerful storm brought down a tree that destroyed the original gazebo in January, the teams from Juno's Place, Burt's Brigade, and their supporters refused to give up. Months of dedication, and kindness made it possible to rebuild the memorial—stronger,



safer, and more beautiful than before.

"This memorial isn't just a structure—it's a symbol of love, hope, and connection," said the Juno's Place and Burt's Brigade teams. "We're so grateful to everyone who helped make this possible. The new Wolfie's

Legacy Gazebo will continue to be a place where every heart that has loved and lost can find peace."

The new cedar-shingled structure, generously donated by Reeds Ferry Sheds of New England, features improved accessibility, a durable foundation, and special additions such as the symbolic Rainbow Bridge entrance and the Whisper Phone Booth, where visitors can privately speak their final words to their pets.

The reopening party will feature pizza, refreshments,

and community fellowship as friends gather to celebrate the memory of Wolfie—a small rescue dog whose short but powerful life inspired the creation of the original memorial. Guests are encouraged to bring a memento of their pet to add to the memorial.

"Wolfie's spirit continues to bring people together," said a representative from Juno's Place. "This celebration is for everyone who's ever loved a pet, said goodbye, and found healing through shared compassion."

Southbridge police log

SOUTHBIDGE — The Southbridge Police Department reported the following arrests from Oct. 20 to Nov. 3.

A 31-year-old male from Worcester received a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 21 for Operating an Unregistered and Uninsured Motor Vehicle.

A 40-year-old female from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on Oct. 21.

A 47-year-old male from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 22 for Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle.

A 21-year-old male from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on Oct. 22.

Brett T. Cordeiro, age 29, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 22 for Larceny of a Motor Vehicle and Daytime Felony Breaking & Entering into a Vehicle.

Brandon Cunningham, age 27, of Southbridge was arrest-

ed on Oct. 22 for operating an Unregistered and Uninsured Motor Vehicle and Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of license.

Troy Carlos Malito, age 32, of Brookfield was arrested on Oct. 22 for Violation of an Abuse Prevention Order.

A 51-year-old male from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on Oct. 25 for Attempting to Break Into a Depository.

A 33-year-old female from Worcester received a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 27 for operating an Unregistered and Uninsured Motor Vehicle.

A 56-year-old male from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on Oct. 30.

Caiden Garcia, age 19, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 31 for Assault & Battery.

Luis N. Luna, age 25, of Providence, R.I. was arrested on Oct. 31 in connection with a warrant for Failure to Stop for Police.

Giovanni Joseph Anderson, age 24, of Guild, New Hampshire was arrested on Oct. 31 for Obstruction of Justice, Failure to Stop or Yield, Failure to Yield at an Intersection, and Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle.

A 48-year-old male from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on Oct. 31 for Assault & Battery on a Police Officer and Disorderly Conduct (subsequent offense).

Zachary Joseph Wonderlie, age 19, of Southbridge was arrested on Nov. 2 for Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of license.

Community Calendar

November 7-14

Friday, Nov. 7
The week kicks off with cheer and song,
At Jacob Edwards Library, come along!
Storytime starts at 10 a.m., free—
A tale or two for you and me.
Saturday, Nov. 8
The Sturbridge Senior Center opens wide,
For crafts and coffee from 9 to 2 inside.
Handmade gifts and pies to share,
A neighborly feel fills the brisk autumn air.
Sunday, Nov. 9
At Charlton Town Common, just after dawn,
The flags are raised and veterans drawn.
A service at 11 a.m., solemn and proud—
Honor resounds through the gathered crowd.
Monday, Nov. 10
At Hitchcock Academy, history rings,
A talk on “Local Heroes” and the stories it brings.
Come listen at 6 p.m., lend an ear,

To the voices of valor we hold so dear.
Tuesday, Nov. 11 — Veterans Day
Parades roll through with banners high,
As trumpets echo against the sky.
Southbridge, Sturbridge, Charlton too,
Stand tall for those who once wore blue.
Gather at Town Hall, 10 a.m. sharp,
The music of memory strikes every heart.
Thursday, Nov. 13
Book Club meets where readers dream,
At 6:30 p.m., by the library’s gleam.
Coffee, cookies, and thoughts profound—
Good company all the way around.
Friday, Nov. 14
Before the chill takes over the night,
Join Holy Trinity Church for delight—
A Harvest Supper from 5 to 7, warm and sweet,
With fellowship, laughter, and plenty to eat.

REAL ESTATE

Charlton
\$595,000, 24 Stoneybrook Rd, Krech, Susan L, to Fuhrmann, Fara L, and Fuhrmann, John A.
\$470,000, 9 Tucker Rd, Wilbur, Sierra, and Wilbur, Nicholas, to Morrill, Steven.
\$250,000, 66 Brookfield Rd, Milosh, Richard J, to Sikora, Derek J, and Sikora, Andrew.
\$30,000, Old Worcester Rd, Avedian, Melissa A, to J Dubois Contracting LLC.
Holland
None

SOUTHBIDGE
\$445,000, 32 Willow Ln, Vongratsamy, Heng, and

Vongratsamy, Donna M, to Copeland, Colleen S, and Copeland, Patrick.
\$338,000, 300 N Woodstock Rd, Reindel, Brandyn, and Reindel, Christine, to Simonin, Daniel.
\$310,000, 136 Eastford Rd, Kenneway, Laura, and Kenneway, Carol, to Wood, Mary L, and Ostiguy, Roger E.

STURBRIDGE
\$2,218,500, 220 Hemlock Path, Mills, Paul A, to Varga, Amy R.
\$500,000, 50 Sturbridge Hills Rd #50, Cheney, Susan E, to Cournoyer, Rose M, and Ciukaj, Richard S.

VILLAGER ALMANAC

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SOUTHBIDGE TOWN HALL
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8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Thursday: 8 a.m.-8 p.m.
Friday: 8 a.m.-12 p.m.

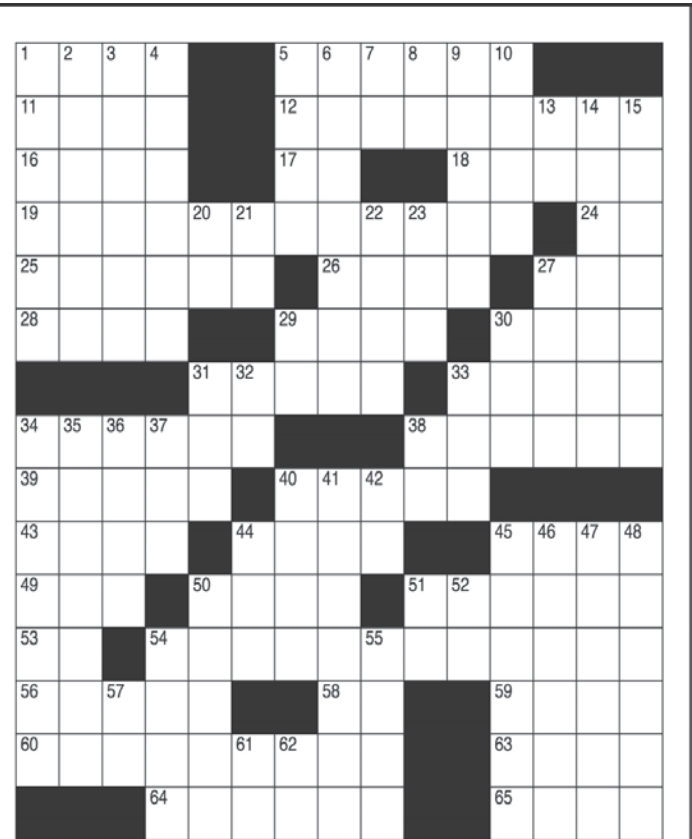
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Tuesday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Wednesday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Thursday: 9 a.m.-8 p.m.
Friday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Saturday: 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (May 25 will be our last open Saturday until Labor Day) Sunday: Closed

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Tuesdays 7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Friday Closed
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For library hours please check www.charltonlibrary.org
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For emergencies, dial **911**
FIRE DEPARTMENT (248-2299)
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Charlton City (01508) (800) 275-8777
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Heritage School (508) 248-4884
Charlton Middle School..... (508) 248-1423
Shepherd Hill Regional High School (508) 943-6700
Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School (508) 248-5971 or (508) 987-0326

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Weekdays 9:00-4:30 and Sat. 9:00 -12:00
STURBRIDGE 508-347-6463
Weekdays 8:30 – 5:00 and Sat. 9:00 -12:00
BRIMFIELD: 413-245-3451
Weekdays: 9:00 – 4:30 and Sat. 9:00 -12:00
WALES: 413-245-9808
Weekdays 8:30 – 12:30 and 2:00 – 4:30 and Sat. 9:00 – 12:00

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.org
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
• **Faith Baptist Church**, 515 Dennison Drive, Southbridge
Phone number 508-764-6132,
Worship Service: Sunday 10:00 a.m.
• **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.livingwordcharlton.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.bethlehmsturbridge.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
• **St. John Paul II Parish**
279 Hamilton St., Southbridge
Rev. Carlos Ardila, Pastor
Weekend services Saturday 4 p.m., Sunday 8 a.m., 10 a.m., and noon
Weekday masses 8:30 & 8:45 a.m., St. Mary’s Church (508) 765-3701



CLUES ACROSS

1. Popular wine __ Spumante

5. Greatly impressed

11. __ and that

12. Uttered with passion

16. Boats

17. Veteran actor Harris

18. Casserole with game

19. Reprehensible acts

24. They precede C

25. Says under one’s breath

26. Taxis

27. It transfers genetic info

28. NFL great Randy

29. Where college students sleep

30. Major European river

31. Taco condiment

33. -frutti

34. Polish city
38. Astronomy unit

39. Khoikhoi peoples

40. Bears QB Williams

43. Scrambled, fried, boiled

44. Price indicators

45. One-time world power

49. When you hope to get somewhere

50. Farm building

51. Choose carefully

53. Magnum was one

54. One who combines

56. Nursemaids

58. Partner to Pa

59. Notable river

60. Officially honors

63. Colorless compound

64. A fancy chair

65. Email function

CLUES DOWN

1. The central area in a building

2. Religion of Japan

3. Leggings

4. Officially distributes

5. Arabian Sea seaport

6. Spanish doctors

7. It cools your house

8. Currency of Poland

9. Slowly moves into

10. Days (Spanish)

13. Unit of volume

14. Emit

15. With two replaceable hydrogens

20. Title for a man

21. Equally

22. Scarlett’s home

23. One-time tech titan

27. Subway dwellers

29. One-tenth of a liter

30. Central European river

31. Distress signal

32. Expression of sympathy

33. The bill in a restaurant
34. Football equipment

35. Dance music

36. Russian river

37. Cosmetics giant Mary __

38. Gym class

40. Automobiles

41. Roman honorific

42. Losses in sports

44. Skin tone in summer

45. Distant planet

46. Critical humor

47. Illegally obtained

48. Go back over

50. Home appliance brand

51. Unit of radioactivity

52. Home of the Flyers

54. Short official note

55. Emit coherent radiation

57. Anno Domini (in the year of Our Lord)

61. Most common noble gas (abbr.)

62. Toward

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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P.E.O. Chapter R to host informational meeting on educational funding for women

WORCESTER — Women seeking financial assistance for their educational goals are encouraged to attend an upcoming informational meeting hosted by P.E.O. Chapter R of Worcester. The event will focus on the variety of low-interest loans, grants, scholarships, and awards available through the Philanthropic Educational Organization (P.E.O.).

The P.E.O. Sisterhood is a U.S.-based international women's organization that was founded in 1869 by seven young women at Iowa Wesleyan College. Dedicated to its mission: "where women educate, motivate, and celebrate women," P.E.O. has grown to nearly a quarter of a million members across the U.S. and Canada, passionately committed to advancing women's education.

The organization's philanthropic work is extensive. P.E.O.



proudly sponsors six international philanthropies that provide financial assistance to women at various stages of their academic journey. These programs include:

- P.E.O. Program for Continuing Education (PCE): Provides need-based grants to women whose education has been interrupted and who must return to school to improve their marketable skills.
- P.E.O. STAR Scholarship (STAR): A competitive scholarship for exceptional high school senior women entering post-secondary education.
- P.E.O. Educational Loan Fund (ELF): A low-interest loan program to assist qualified women students in securing a higher education.
- P.E.O. International Peace Scholarship (IPS): A scholarship for international women students to pursue graduate study in the U.S. and Canada.
- P.E.O. Scholar Awards (PSA): Merit-based awards for women pursuing doctoral-level degrees.

In addition, P.E.O. owns and supports Cottey College, an independent, baccalaureate-granting liberal arts and sciences institu-

tion for women in Nevada, Missouri. Chapter R, led by Christine White (paws@townisp.com) invites the public to learn how these resources can provide opportunities for women pursuing various educational paths, including those returning to school, seeking career development, or continuing their academic studies.

Event Details
Attendees will receive details on eligibility requirements and the application processes for the organization's various financial programs. All P.E.O. financial projects require a recommendation from a local chapter, making this local information session a crucial first step.

- What: Informational Meeting on P.E.O. Educational Funding
- Who: P.E.O. Chapter R, Worcester
- Where: Shrewsbury Public Library, Meeting Room A
- When: Tuesday, Dec. 2, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Join the mission Chapter R is also actively seeking new members who share their commitment to empowering women through education. The meeting offers a great opportunity for women interested in philanthropy and fellowship to learn more about the organization's work and how to join the local chapter in their mission to motivate, educate, and celebrate women.

Dementia Care and Support: A Community Conversation at Charlton Public Library

CHARLTON — On Wednesday, Nov. 13 at 6 p.m., Dementia Friendly Charlton will host a presentation on caring, supporting, and communicating with someone living with Dementia at the Charlton Public Library. After the presentation there will be a Question & Answer panel with experts and community leaders. Panelists include local first responders, elder services staff, and representatives from the financial and faith communities.

Everyone is welcome to attend this informative session. Registration is appreciated, 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.

Southbridge Historical Society meets Wednesday

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Historical Society will meet on Wednesday, Nov. 12 at 7 p.m. at the Ruth Wells Center for the Arts, 111 Main St.

This evening's program is "History Beneath Our Feet," presented by Wally Hersee of the Sturbridge Historical Society. Hersee is a photog-

rapher, amateur historian, and writer on the Sturbridge Historical Society's Facebook page.

In the summer of 2024, Hersee formed a group of local volunteers that soon became gravestone preservationists. They began a project to clean the gravestones in the North Cemetery in Sturbridge for both clerical and preservation reasons. Cleaning the stones of organic matter and dirt preserves the, and allows the information on them to be recorded properly. This enables families and genealogists to learn more about their families.

As always, this program is free and open to the public.

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EDITOR

Honoring those who served, in every season

Every November, the wind grows sharp, the flags hang proud, and our towns pause to remember. Veterans Day arrives not as a holiday of fireworks or gifts, but as one of reflection—a moment for gratitude measured not in words but in quiet acknowledgment. In Southbridge, Sturbridge, Charlton and surrounding communities, that gratitude takes many forms. It’s seen in the Boy Scouts who line Main Street with flags before dawn. It’s heard in the toll of the bell outside Town Hall. It’s felt in the firm handshake of an aging veteran who still stands straight when the anthem plays.

These gestures, simple as they are, remind us that service is not confined to history books or battlefields. It lives here, in the veterans who coach youth teams, volunteer at food pantries, and sit patiently in meeting halls when their towns debate budgets and bylaws. They’ve already given enough—and yet they give still. In small towns like ours, remembrance has weight. We know the names etched on the granite. We see the faces at the Legion breakfast or the VFW fish fry. Many of us grew up watching parades from the curb, waving at our grandfathers, mothers, or uncles in uniform. Veterans Day belongs to them, but it also challenges the rest of us. It asks us to keep faith with those who served—to ensure that their courage is matched by our care. That means supporting organizations that help veterans find work, housing, and healthcare. It means checking in on neighbors whose lives were shaped by military service. It means teaching our children why freedom is fragile, and who paid for it.

As the last of the autumn leaves fall across the Southbridge Common, the flags at half-staff remind us: some debts cannot be repaid, only remembered. So this week, take a moment. Attend the ceremony, offer a thank-you, or simply stand in silence when the bugle calls. In that stillness, we honor not only the veterans of war, but the enduring spirit of service that holds our small communities together.

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.

OPINION

Come as you are

The other day. I was praying about what to write, when I heard a song played on our local Christian music station Q90.1 “Come as you are...” * “Come as you are.”

Then not long after that I reached out to friends who invited me to a party. When I texted what could I bring, their text reply “come as you are.”

Point is “come as you are” seems to be the theme, so let’s go with it.

“Come as you are” is a powerful invitation. Think about it. It is an unvarnished statement of heartfelt hospitality. It is pure welcome. It is a gift. And it is sensibility felt by others that the comment truly comes from the heart.

“Come as you are” really means you are enough. It is the hallmark of people who know how to make others feel at home.

“Home” can be a residence, or in the broader sense the spiritual dwelling for a faith family – our house of worship.

But how often do people feel that sense of hospitality in church settings, let alone other environments? Especially if folks are shy, lonely, going through challenges, a crisis of faith.

At one point or another we have all experienced the need for human contact expressing kindness and hospitality, even

when we “come as you are” may not be our best.

That’s when houses of worship have to convey you are enough.

You can tell a place has the spirit of welcome because you can immediately feel just come because you are enough. The invitation “come as you are” is authentic, organic, natural; people make you feel you are what matters. The Bible, the Torah, and religious traditions throughout

history encourage fellowship among believers, a sense of welcome to visitors, and hospitality for those exploring a journey of faith, regardless of where the travelers find themselves, even on the sidelines, or starting block. Jesus made this abundantly clear with all who met Him... “come as you are,” because you are enough.

Thankfully several houses of worship, and opportunities in our area where the spirit of welcome, and hospitality is as natural as the invitation “come as you are.”

And that can mean visit our church, or one of the others in town or nearby, partake of var-



BEYOND THE PEWS

By DR. RB MCFEE
CHARLTON CITY
UMC

ious faith based services and focused events—specialty services (Thanksgiving Eve, Advent, Blue Christmas), small group hang outs, music, theatrical events, avail yourself of our ministries – food pantry (obtain food, participate), thrift store (purchase, donate, volunteer) community meals, Pastor’s assistance programs, Bible exploration sessions, volunteer opportunities (even if you aren’t a member) - just “come as you are” is our collective faith based community as well as CCUMC invitation.

Consider the many church luncheons and suppers from Charlton to Woodstock and Putnam Connecticut, where a broad range of denominations and houses of worship host community meals, support activities, and more!

Speaking of which, Charlton City UMC is trying some new things this Thanksgiving and Christmas season (Blue Christmas service Dec. 20 at 6:30 p.m.).

And new
November Family Friendly

dinner on Saturday, Nov. 15, 5 to 7 p.m.

Music will be provided by Jim Perry a well-known local performer.

Fun free activity... create a take home thanksgiving themed craft for children.

Menu is of course turkey with mashed potatoes, stuffing, butternut squash sweet peas and pearl onions, turkey gravy and cranberry sauce plus homemade pumpkin pie with whipped topping. Call 508 248-7379 to reserve a table or order a take-out. Remember to leave your name and phone number in case we need to reach you. CCUMC is located at 74 Stafford St., Charlton. Adults \$15, children five and younger are Free, children \$7, Family Max \$50.

Check out us and other houses of worship in our community.

If you are searching for a place to start your faith journey, are curious why those of us who are committed to God often have an inner peace even during the storms of life, then please reach out, call, visit.

Just know, from Charlton Mass to Putnam Ct there are clergy, lay leaders, priests, rabbis who will share this sentiment...

“Just come as you are”... You are welcome, you are enough.

*Come as you are, by Crowder

Smart financial moves to make before year-end

As the year winds down, it's the perfect time to make some smart moves before the calendar flips to 2026. Think of it as a financial tune-up that could help with saving money and setting you up for success in the months ahead. Here are some things to consider.

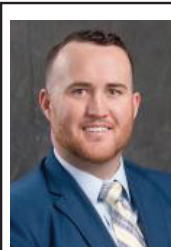
- Don't forget about required withdrawals. If you're 73 or older, you'll need to take your required minimum distribution from traditional retirement accounts to avoid a 25 percent penalty on any amount you should have withdrawn but didn't. This rule also applies to some people who inherited retirement accounts, including certain Roth accounts.

- Use your flexible spending money. Got money sitting in a flexible spending account at work? Remember, these accounts follow a "use it or lose it" rule. Check with your HR department about your plan's specific deadlines for spending the money and submitting receipts. Whether it's that dental work you've been putting off or new prescription

glasses you need, now's the time to use those funds before they disappear.

- Boost your retirement savings. Consider ramping up your pretax retirement contributions before year-end. Not only will this help your future self, but it might also reduce your current tax bill. If your workplace plan allows it, you can even set up automatic increases for next year so you won't have to remember to do it later.

- Share the wealth through gifting. In 2025, the current tax rules let you give family or friends up to \$19,000 per person without affecting your lifetime gift tax exemption. Married couples can combine their allowances to give up to \$38,000 per person. Plus, you can pay someone's tuition or medical bills directly without these payments counting against your gift limits at all.



FINANCIAL FOCUS

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- Navigate new tax changes. The recently passed One Beautiful Bill Act has made several tax provisions permanent, including lower individual tax rates and higher standard deductions. However, it also introduces new changes that might affect your situation. It's worth sitting down with a financial advisor or tax professional to understand how these updates impact your specific circumstances.

- Examine your investments. Take some time to review your investment portfolio. Ask yourself: Did your investments perform as expected this year? Do they still match your goals and comfort level with risk? You might need to rebalance things to get back on track.

- Build up your emergency fund. It's ideal to have enough

cash saved to cover three to six months of living expenses in an easily accessible account. This safety net can prevent you from having to raid your retirement savings when unexpected expenses pop up.

- Review your estate planning documents. This is especially important if you've had major life changes like marriage, divorce or a new baby. Don't forget to check the beneficiary designations on all your bank and brokerage accounts as well as life insurance policies – these often override what's written in your will.

Taking care of these financial housekeeping tasks now can help you start the new year on solid ground.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Trevor Nielsen, your local Edward Jones Advisor in Sturbridge at 508-347-1420 or trevorniel-sen@edwardjones.com.

Food security

But out of that dust, compassion took root.

Ordinary citizens—neighbors, church groups, and volunteers—refused to wait for government relief that was still tangled in red tape. In living rooms and church basements, they poured kettles of soup, handed out bread loaves, and opened their doors to strangers. These homegrown soup kitchens ran on donations, not directives.

In Detroit, Capuchin friars opened a humble kitchen that would serve thousands each day, surviving on faith and flour. Even Chicago’s most unlikely philanthropist, Al Capone, set up a soup line—not out of sainthood, of course.

Across the nation, gymnasiums became dining halls, union halls became food depots, and women’s auxiliaries became engines of mercy. The system was imperfect and chaotic, but it worked.

No one knows exactly how many Americans were starving, but by 1932, a quarter of all families had no wage earner at all. Hunger was not a number—it was a cold morning, an empty pot, a mother whispering to her child, “We’ll find something tomorrow.”

POSITIVELY SPEAKING

TOBY MOORE

Out on the plains, where the dust blotted out the sun, the same story unfolded. Farm wives gathered wild berries. Neighbors shared seed and sugar. Churches turned barns into relief depots. At train stations, small-town committees left buckets of milk and bread for migrants heading west. And in California’s orchards, locals organized food drives for the endless wave of families who had lost everything but their will to survive.

By the late 1930s, those collective acts of kindness—migrant relief kitchens, church pantries, and conservation efforts—had begun to turn the tide. Fields were reseeded. Families found work. The wind still blew, but hope had returned to the soil.

Things may change by the time you read this, but as of now, the federal government shutdown has halted the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program—known to most as food stamps or EBT. More than 42 million Americans rely on that card to buy groceries and feed their families. A judge has ordered the administration to make the payments, but delays mean refrigerators are empty.

Wherever you stand on the issue, I hope we can all agree

that when the system pauses, the people must not.

Throughout our history, when hardship struck—whether in the breadlines of the Great Depression or the barren fields of the Dust Bowl—it wasn’t bureaucracy that saved us. It was we, neighbors, who refused to look away. Church volunteers stirring soup at dawn. Farmers who shared seed they could barely spare. Americans have always filled the gap with compassion and courage, long before any program or policy could.

That’s the tradition we inherit. That’s what makes this country strong.

So go to the store. Pick up some rice, beans, noodles, pasta sauce, peanut butter, honey, and bread—whatever lasts and nourishes. Drop it off at your local food pantry. Share this with your friends and encourage them to do the same.

Please don’t wait for permission or for Washington to solve it. The United States is swimming in food; no one should go hungry.

America’s greatness has never come from government checks—it has come from human hands, and from hearts that move.

That’s the American way.

Monson Arts Council hosting annual Holiday Craft Fair

MONSON — The Monson Arts Council 46th Annual Holiday Craft Fair is a major fundraiser for the Monson Arts Council as well as several other non-profit groups. The Fair opens on Saturday at 9 a.m. and closes at 4 p.m., and then reopens on Sunday at 11:30 a.m., closing at 4 p.m.

The fair features more than 65 crafters located in four buildings all within a short walking distance. The buildings are Memorial Hall, the United

Methodist Church, the Universalist Church, and the House of Art. Luncheon is served in the Methodist Church.

This fair distinguishes itself from other fairs, by featuring only hand-crafted items. All locations offer a wide variety of gifts, decorations, and collectibles, including stained glass, pottery, bath products, books, candles, clothing, holiday decorations, jewelry, quilts, soft sculpture, hand crafted greeting cards, and much more.

Starting at 4 p.m. on Saturday, a Holiday Carol Sing will begin in front of Memorial Hall. Jordyn Doyle will be leading the sing along this year. We encourage everyone to come out and help us ring in the holiday season by participating in the Monson Community Carol Sing along.

The singing will precede Santa’s arrival on a fire truck at about 4:30 p.m., and the town holiday lights will be turned on. All of the children gath-

ered can follow Santa into Memorial Hall to meet him and enjoy some refreshments. All are welcome.

You are encouraged to join this annual craft fair and our Monson Community Carol Sing and get a head start on your Christmas shopping.

For information or directions, please contact Wendy Murakami at 413-896-8666 or email info@monsonartscouncil.org.



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Help gardeners track the weather and rainfall in their backyard. You can find decorative and functional low- and high-tech thermometers in a wide range of prices. Consider giving them a rain gauge to help monitor rainfall so they know when and how much to water.

For the indoor gardener, paint a pot, preferably one with drainage holes, that they can use to display their favorite plant. If your budget allows, add potting mix and a plant or gift certificate so they can select a new or favorite plant from the garden center. Include a pair of snips to help them trim, groom and keep their indoor plants looking their best.

Purchase a fun watering can or decorate one with decoupage. This is a fun gift for kids and adults to make for family and teachers. Just select a plastic or metal watering can, gather pictures, and secure and seal them to the watering can with a suitable material found at craft stores.

Dress up your favorite gardener's gear with colorful tools like the British Meadow Pruner & Holster Set endorsed by the Royal Horticultural Society. The pruners have a comfort grip and are perfect for cutting small branches and stems and the floral holster will keep them handy when gardening. This makes a great gift for gardeners that appreciate aesthetics as well as quality tools.

And what gardener doesn't need a good bypass hand pruner with two sharp blades to make clean cuts. Look for one with a large three quarter inch cutting capacity if your gardener does extensive pruning. Select one with narrow, comfortable nonslip grips like those on the ClassicCUT® Bypass Pruner for those with small- to medium-sized hands. Stuff one in their



Kids gardening tools make a great gift for the youngsters in your life.

stocking, combine it with a new garden book, or wrap it up as it makes a great gift on its own.

Don't forget the youngsters on your list. Research shows children exposed to the outdoors and gardening are more focused, do better in school, and have less severe ADHD symptoms. Girls raised in a landscaped environment are more confident and less subject to peer pressure. By encouraging them to garden you might be helping them acquire a lifelong skill and get help planning,

planting and tending the garden.

Giving them their own kid-sized garden gear (coronatools.com) can make gardening more fun and easier as they garden by your side or in their own garden plot or container. Look for tools designed to fit children's hands like Corona's kids 3-piece garden tool set that has everything a young gardener needs to dig, explore, plant and tend their garden. A kid-sized wheelbarrow is just the right size for hauling plants, soil and mulch.

Courtesy — Corona Tools

Don't let the hustle of the holiday season put a damper on your gift giving. Keep in mind this act of kindness generates happiness in ourselves and others.

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"* instant video series and the nationally syndicated *Melinda's Garden Moment* radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine and was commissioned by *Corona Tools* for her expertise to write this article. Her Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy continues longstanding partnership with Big Y



Courtesy

Gretheline Bolandrina at the Sturbridge Big Y.

CHARLTON — For more than a decade, Big Y Supermarkets has been a steadfast supporter of the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, contributing to the growth and success of future nurses through generous donations, scholarships, and community partnerships.

The partnership between Big Y and Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy reflects a shared commitment to education, community health, and service — values that have shaped both institutions for years.

In 2013, Big Y supported then Professor Gretheline Bolandrina's clinical group, as the nursing students gain real-world experience and complete the hands-on training essential for their licensure, at the end of term and last clinical night, Big Y provided snacks.

By 2016, their generosity extended to holiday cheer, with the Practical Nursing Academy receiving \$25 Big Y gift card and packaged in a festive mug — a thoughtful gesture recognizing the hard work and dedication of a lucky student during a rigorous academic year.

The collaboration continued in 2019 when Big Y proudly awarded the Big Y Scholarship to Deanna Scaramangos, of Paxton, acknowledging her excellence and potential in the nursing field. Deanna completed the program, passed her NCLEX-PN on her first attempt, and was gainfully employed.

Big Y's involvement has not been limited to student recognition. In 2020, with Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services providing Mental Health First Aid Training, promoting awareness and resilience among healthcare students and professionals — a vital focus amid the growing need for mental health support in healthcare, again, Big Y provided snacks.

Throughout 2021, Big Y continued to show its support for Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy's mission and the broader community. Most recently, in 2023, Big Y once again demonstrated its commitment to humanitarian efforts by encouraging customers to donate to the American Red Cross Hawaii Wildfires Relief, matching community compassion with corporate leadership, a project that the practical nursing students fully embraced.

From scholarships and student support to community outreach and disaster relief, Big Y's contributions exemplify what it means to invest in people — especially those preparing to serve others in nursing and healthcare.

Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy extends heartfelt thanks to Big Y for its partnership and for nurturing a spirit of compassion, education, and community care that continues to inspire students year after year.

Sheriff's Office announces annual Winter Coat Drive distributions



REGION — With winter fast approaching, the Worcester County Sheriff's Office and Worcester County Reserve Deputy Sheriff's Association are preparing for their Annual Winter Coat Drive. Their goal is to distribute 4,000 brand-new warm winter coats to those in Worcester County who need them, helping them stay comfortable during the winter months.

Distributions are planned on Nov. 4 at 10 a.m. at the Webster Dudley Food Share, 4 Church St., Webster, and Nov. 6 at 10:30 a.m. at the El Buen Samaritano Food Pantry, 39 Piedmont St., Worcester.

During the first weeks of November, Sheriff Lew Evangelidis and his team will distribute thousands of coats

directly to local service organizations and community members. These coats will help keep people warm during the colder months and represent the support and care from local law enforcement.

The annual coat drive attracts many community sponsors, including Saint Francis Community Health Care, The Gun Parlor, Mercadante Funeral Home, Cliff & Susan Rucker Foundation, The Krock Family & Commerce Associates, CareOne at Millbury, The Overlook, Diamond Auto Group, KAL Construction & Remodeling, Chop Chop Convenience, Falcone Enterprises, NEPBA Local 550 Worcester County Correction Officers, Pat's Service Center, Quality

Companies, Rockland Trust Bank, and Pam Massad, in Memory of "Duddie" and Bette Massad. Many other community organizations and businesses have also stepped up to support the initiative.

"The Worcester County Sheriff's Office Winter Coat Drive aims to strengthen connections with law enforcement across different communities in Worcester County," Sheriff Lew Evangelidis commented. "When we distribute these jackets, the recipients express a tremendous sense of gratitude. This time of the year is special for the Sheriff's Department, and we are excited to connect with the community members we serve."

DA hosts event highlighting holistic approaches to recovery

WORCESTER — On Oct. 23, Worcester County District Attorney Joseph D. Early, Jr. welcomed community members, including recovery advocates, health and wellness professionals, and law enforcement personnel to Veterans Inc. in Shrewsbury for a half-day event organized by the Prevention and Support Network. This event focused on supporting individuals and families affected by substance use disorders (SUD) through holistic, mind-body approaches to recovery.

Keynote speaker Linda Geraghty, a trauma-informed yoga instructor and family recovery specialist featured in the award-winning documentary *Our American Family*, spoke about the deep connection between trauma and substance use. Drawing from both professional expertise and her own experience, she emphasized how recovery requires attention to one’s entire system – body, mind, and family – not just the symptoms of addiction.

“Addiction is relentless. We often try to hide it while our families get sicker. Engaging in open conversations is crucial to truly understanding this disease, and that understanding is vital for the family's healing,” said Linda Geraghty.

Geraghty highlighted the ways in which stress and trauma can live in the body, and how practices like yoga, breathwork, and mindfulness can help release those patterns, restore regulation, and rebuild trust in oneself and others. Geraghty underscored the importance of supporting families, emphasizing that addiction affects loved ones as profoundly as those experiencing it firsthand, and that breaking generational cycles of trauma and addiction begins with compassion, communication, and consistent support. Her work integrates trauma-informed principles to help families navigate recovery with understanding, boundaries, and resilience – key themes that resonated with many in attendance.



A legacy of leadership, a heart for nursing Bay Path honors retiring Academy Director

CHARLTON — Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy and Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School bid a heartfelt farewell to its longtime leader, Dr. Gretheline Ramos Bolandrina, Academy Director, who retired on Thursday, Oct. 30. The event marked the end of a remarkable 12-year tenure defined by leadership, compassion, and dedicated service to the nursing community.

Under Dr. Bolandrina’s direction, the Practical Nursing program flourished, earning recognition for its academic rigor and the signature human touch she infused into every aspect of the curriculum. Her influence shaped generations of nurses, inspiring them to lead with professionalism, excellence, and heart.

A heartfelt celebration of service

Colleagues, faculty, and administrators from Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School gathered to honor Dr. Bolandrina’s contributions.

The celebration featured a special presentation by Superintendent Kyle Brenner, who unveiled the gift to Dr. Bolandrina an engraved Standard Chair of Gardner. This handcrafted piece from a renowned local family-owned company symbolized the respect and enduring legacy she leaves behind. Dr. Bolandrina was visibly moved by the thoughtful gesture.

A festive luncheon accompanied a beautifully designed cake that read: “Keep on Doing Amazing Things — Bay Path Will Miss You!” The atmosphere was filled with shared memories, laughter, and warm wishes, underscoring the deep affection colleagues hold for her. As the event concluded, Dr. Bolandrina’s husband, Joseph, assisted in carefully packing her office belongings, including the commemorative chair, marking a poignant close to her time at Bay Path.

A nurse’s final reflection

In her farewell message via email, Dr. Bolandrina reflected on the essence of her nursing journey, emphasizing the importance of compassion over confrontation: “Not every battle in nursing is meant to be fought with words. Some are won through silence, grace, and steadfast professionalism... Because in the end, nursing is not just about clinical skill or knowledge — it is about the heart.”

She encouraged future nurses to

embody this spirit: “We are not defined by how others treat us, but by how we continue to care, especially when it’s hardest. Choose empathy. Choose growth. Keep moving forward.”

Dr. Bolandrina expressed deep gratitude for her twelve years, calling Bay Path “a place where ordinary people became nurses and perseverance bloomed into purpose.”

New adventures await

While her chapter at the Academy closes, Dr. Bolandrina looks forward to exciting new adventures. She plans to spend time with her grandson, Tidus, visit her son Chef Gino’s Worcester restaurant, KuruKuru Ramen, and tend to her extensive tropical and rare plant collection (@Gretheline_plants).

“Dr. Bolandrina’s impact on the Academy and the nursing community will endure,” said a PN faculty member. “Her leadership, kindness, and dedication leave a lasting legacy. The momentum she helped build will carry forward in every graduate who serves the community and the greater good. The best is yet to come.”



Courtesy Superintendent Kyle Brenner with Dr. Gretheline Bolandrina.

A panel of local wellness professionals expanded on these ideas, offering practical insights into how holistic methods can complement traditional treatment and recovery pathways.

Panelists included Kellie Hamilton, founder of A Better Path to Wellness; Phil George, clinical biochemist; Jacqueline Monteiro, wellness practitioner and recovery coach; Anthony Bizzotto, president and co-founder of Revive of the U.S.A., Inc.; and Heidi Moody, personal trainer and L3 CrossFit coach. Each spoke about the ways nutrition, movement, mindfulness, and community engagement contribute to sustainable recovery and overall wellbeing.

Throughout the event, attendees also took part in guided mindfulness exercises and movement breaks, offering moments to practice the very mind-body techniques discussed during the program. These activities encouraged participants to experience firsthand how mindfulness and movement can support focus, stress relief, and emotional balance.

District Attorney Early commended the speakers and attendees for their shared commitment to exploring new, compassionate approaches to supporting recovery throughout Worcester County. He noted that addressing addiction requires collaboration across every part of the community – treatment and health care providers, families, schools, clergy, law enforcement, and local organizations – working together to reduce stigma and create lasting change.

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November events at Charlton Public Library

For further details and to register for programs, please visit our website (charltonlibrary.org)

Additional parking is available across the street at Town Hall and at the Elementary School.

The library will be closed Nov. 11, 27, and 28

Movies @ The Library

All showings are on Tuesdays at 1:00 pm ONLY unless noted - Dexter Hall - no registration required.

November 4: **THE BOYS IN THE BOAT.** The Boys in the Boat is based on the #1 New York Times bestselling non-fiction book written by Daniel James Brown. The film is about the 1936 University of Washington rowing team that competed for gold at the Summer Olympics in Berlin. This inspirational true story follows a group of underdogs at the height of the Great Depression as they are thrust into the spotlight and take on elite rivals from around the world. 2023. Rated PG-13. 123 minutes. Featuring Hadley Robinson, Courtney Henggeler, Joel Edgerton, Callum Turner, and Chris Diamantopoulos.

November 18: **THE LAND OF THE LOST.** The Land of the Lost is a comedy about how discredited scientist Dr. Rick Marshall proves his outrageous theories on time travel are true, but in the process he gets stranded with his partners in a strange world full of unusual creatures. His loyal research assistant, Holly, and a firearms enthusiast, Will, help Marshall attempt to get back home. 2009. Rated PG-13. 92 minutes. Cast includes: Will Ferrell, Anna Friel, Danny McBride, Jorma Taccone, and John Boylan.

November 25: **SON IN LAW.** Having gotten a taste of college life, a drastically changed farm girl returns home for Thanksgiving break with her best friend, a flamboyant party animal who is clearly a fish out of water in a small farm town. 1993. Rated PG-13. 95 minutes. Starring: Pauly Shore, Carla Gugino, Lane Smith, Cindy Pickett, and Mason Adams.

Drop-in Tech Help - Local History Room - no registration required

Saturdays, November 1, 8, 15, 29 from 10 am - noon

Tuesday, November 4, from 4:30-5:30 pm

Do you have a few quick questions about technology?

Would you like to learn how to use apps like Libby or Kanopy? Drop in and speak with Charlton Library's Digital Skills Instructor and get the dedicated support you need. If you will need more than 15 minutes of tech help, please make a one-on-one appointment in person at the library, online, or by calling 508-248-0452. We cannot assist with setting up a new device; fixing/restoring/repairing a broken or infected device, app, or email account; entering sensitive information for you (e.g. credit card information, social security number, online banking, etc.); keyboarding, typing, or proof-reading documents. We cannot provide medical, legal, and business advice or opinions.

One-on-One Tech Help - Local History Room - registration required

Thursdays, November 6, 13, 4:30, 5:30, 6:30 pm and Tuesday, November 25, 4:30, 5:30, 6:30 pm

Saturdays, November 15 and 29, at 12:30 and 1:30 pm

Do you have a more complicated question than we can cover during Drop-in Tech Help? Would you like to learn some basic email or internet skills? Make a one-on-one appointment with the Charlton Library's Digital Skills Instructor and get up to 60 minutes of dedicated support. Please make a one-on-one appointment in person at the library, online, or by calling 508-248-0452. We cannot assist with setting up a new device; fixing/restoring/repairing a broken or infected device, app, or email account; entering sensitive information for you (e.g. credit card information, social security number, online banking, etc.); keyboarding, typing, or proof-reading documents. We cannot provide medical, legal, and business advice or opinions.

Intro to Kanopy

Saturday, November 1, 1:30-2:30 pm - Local History Room - registration required

Tuesday, November 4, 6:00-7:00 pm - Local History Room - registration required

Discover a world of free movies, documentaries, and educational videos with this introductory course on Kanopy, the library's streaming app. Learn how to access Kanopy with your library card, browse and search for films, create watchlists, and stream content on your preferred devices. Perfect for movie lovers and lifelong learners alike, this course

will help you make the most of your library's digital collection right from the comfort of your home. This series was funded by the Massachusetts Broadband Institute at the MassTech Collaborative under the Municipal Digital Equity Implementation Program. Funding was provided by Massachusetts ARPA State Fiscal Recovery Funds.

Tiny Tots (Ages 0-2.5)

Tuesdays, November 4 and 18, 10:00-10:45 am - Storytime Room

For babies - age 2.5 with a caregiver. Join us for songs, fingerplays, board books, shakers, scarves, dancing, motor skills activities, and free play! Due to the high number of attendees, this is now a ticketed program. A certain number of tickets will be given to each child on a first-come-first-served basis. Once all tickets have been passed out, the program will be full. Late Arrivals: Available tickets will be given out until 5 minutes after the program has started. After that time, the program will be closed until free play time. We thank you for your understanding.

"Stars of the Spectrum 2" Listening Party

Tuesday, November 4, 6:00-7:30 pm - Dexter Hall - registration required

Join us for a special listening and dance party to the new album, Stars of the Spectrum Vol. 2, featuring special guest Flutie Star, Reagan Bush. Our goal is for every guest to be inspired and feel like a VIP! Please register for this event so we know how many to expect. All ages are welcome!

Folded Book Turkeys

Tuesday, November 4, 6:00-7:30 pm - Community Meeting Room - registration required

Wednesday, November 5, 11:00-12:00 - Community Meeting Room - registration required

This month's craft will make something old into something new. Participants will be using discarded books to create a turkey! When your turkey is done you can add it to your fall décor or gift it to the host of your next gathering. For adults and teens ages 13 and up, registration is required.

Private Visit with Olive the Therapy Dog

Tuesday, November 4, 5:30-6:00 pm - Storytime Room - registration required

This is a private session with our Therapy Dog,

Olive. Olive is trained and licensed through Bright Spot Therapy Dogs, Inc. Registration is required. All ages are welcome.

Open Session with Olive the Therapy Dog

Tuesday, November 4, 6:00-6:30 pm - Storytime Room - no registration required

This is an open session to visit with our Therapy Dog, Olive. Olive is trained and licensed through Bright Spot Therapy Dogs, Inc. Registration is not required. All ages are welcome. If you are interested in having a private visit with Olive for a reading session or any other reason, please register for one of our Private Visit sessions.

Baby Storytime (0-12 months)

Wednesdays, November 5, 12, 19, 10:00-10:45 am - Storytime Room - no registration required

For infants - 12 months only. Join us for board books, songs, fingerplays, music, shakers, scarves, bubbles & free play! This is a drop-in program. No registration or ticket required.

Better Read Than Dead Book Club

Wednesday, November 5, 11:00-12:00 - Sibley Reading Area - no registration required

Do you love true crime? So do we! Join us for a monthly meet up to discuss entertaining & fascinating details about true crimes. The book will be available at the adult circulation desk one month prior to the meeting. We will be discussing Hope: A Memoir of Survival in Cleveland by Amanda Berry and Gina DeJesus.

Young Scientists Stem Program

Thursdays, November 6, 13, 20, 10:15-11:00 am - Storytime Room - registration required

Join us for a free in-person "Young Scientists" series facilitated by STEM Beginnings and hosted by the Charlton Public Library. Children, ages 3-6, with a parent/caregiver, will learn STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) concepts through hands-on activities, storytime, and simple experiments. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to help their child and join in the fun. Siblings are welcome and must be supervised. Registration is required. Space is limited to 12 children, ages 3-6. "Young Scientists" is sponsored by the YMCA Family & Community Partnership (YFCP), a Massachusetts Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) Grant program funded by the Department of Early Education & Care and awarded to the YMCA of Central Massachusetts.

Genealogy Resources at Worcester Public Library

Thursday, November 6, 6:00-7:30 pm - Community Meeting Room - registration not required

Join Alex London, the Local History & Genealogy Librarian at the Worcester Public Library. Alex will share an introduction to Worcester's print/digital genealogy and local history resources and services, which can be accessed both at the Library and remotely. All are welcome. The Charlton Library Genealogy Group is a friendly group of people who share an interest in genealogy. They meet monthly on the first Thursday of the month from 6:00-7:30 in the Community Meeting Room. Meetings will alternate between general discussion topics and guest presenters. The meetings are free and open to the public. Additional parking is available across the street at Town Hall.

Threaded Together Fiber Arts Group (formerly Silver Needles Knit & Crochet Group)

Thursdays from 1:00-3:00 pm - Sibley Reading Area - no registration required

Bring your current project and relax with friends. All are welcome regardless of skill level.

Preschool Storytime (Ages 3-5)

Fridays, November 7, 14, 21, 10:00-10:45 am - Storytime Room

For ages 3-5. Join us for stories, songs, fingerplays, scarves, activities, crafts, and free play! This is a TICKETED program. A certain number of tickets will be available for each child on a first-come, first-served basis. Once all tickets have been passed out, the program is full. Late Arrivals: Available tickets will be given out until 5 minutes after the program has started. After that time, the program will be closed until free-play begins. We thank you for your understanding.

Lego Club

Friday, November 7, 3:30-4:30 pm - Storytime Room - no registration required

LEGO Club encourages

children to learn while having fun! Creativity, problem-solving, and teamwork are some of the skills that "playing" with LEGOS can teach children. Join us on the first Friday of each month to complete a LEGO challenge. All LEGO's will be provided. Try out the Lego Challenge, or create your own design! Bring your friends! This is a drop-in program recommended for ages 5 - 10.

Mom & Me Book Club (MOCA)

Saturday, November 8, 10:30-11:30 am - Community Meeting Room

Join our new book club for early readers! Read the monthly book selection at home with your child, and join us for a short discussion, activity, and snack. September Selection: If You Give a Pig a Pancake by Laura Numeroff.

This club is sponsored & presented by the Moms of Charlton Area, and is best suited for children 4-7. Registration is not required. For more information, please send emails to: momsof-charltonarea@gmail.com.

Canva for Small Business

Saturday, November 8, 1:30-2:30 pm - Local History Room - registration required

Tuesday, November 18, 6:30-7:30 pm - Local History Room - registration required

Do you own your own business or are thinking of starting one? This hands-on workshop is perfect for small business owners who want to elevate their brand using Canva. Participants will learn how to create stunning, professional visuals for your business—no design experience needed! We'll cover the basics of the platform, how to design social media posts, flyers, and other marketing materials, and tips for staying on-brand and saving time. Walk away with the skills and confidence to design like a pro! This series was funded by the Massachusetts Broadband Institute at the MassTech Collaborative under the Municipal Digital Equity Implementation Program. Funding was provided by Massachusetts ARPA State Fiscal Recovery Funds.

Open Session with Jack-Jack the Therapy Dog

Monday, November 10, 4:00-4:30 pm - Storytime Room - no registration required

This is an open session to visit with our Therapy Dog, Jack-Jack. Jack-Jack's breed

Turn To **LIBRARY** page **A10**

LEGALS

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. WO25P3715EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate Of:
Kathleen G. Mason
Date of Death:08/02/2025
To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Richard T. Mason of Cazenovia NY** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that:
Richard T. Mason of Cazenovia NY be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**
IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court be-

fore: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 11/25/2025.**
This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.
UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)
A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.
WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: October 28, 2025
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
November 6, 2025
LEGAL NOTICE OF AN IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH MEETING REGARDING

A MARIJUANA ESTABLISHMENT
An additional in person community outreach meeting for Morabeza LLC's product manufacturing license at 393 E Main Street Unit C, Southbridge, MA 01550 will be conducted at Town Hall 41 Elm Street Southbridge, MA 01550 on November 24th at 6:00 PM EST as the previous meeting expired. The plan for operation is unchanged. The public will be allowed to ask questions or email carlos.rosa@morabeza.us
Zoom link is: https://tinyurl.com/11-24-25CCCC
Meeting ID: 262 002 624 009 7
November 6, 2025

(SEAL)
THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT
Docket Number: 25 SM 003319
ORDER OF NOTICE
To:
Troy LaCerte, Personal Representative of the Estate of Cynthia R. Henrickson;
Troy LaCerte; Brian LaCerte; Resa LaCerte
and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq):
Santander Bank N.A. formerly known as Sovereign Bank N.A. formerly

known as Sovereign Bank claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Southbridge, numbered 389 Breakneck Road, given by Raymond J. Henrickson, Cynthia R. Henrickson to Sovereign Bank, dated March 10, 2009, and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 43965, Page 358, 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 December 15, 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 October 29, 2025.
Attest:
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
28564
November 6, 2025

QCC receives \$106,000 TRAIN grant for PCA workforce program

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College was recently awarded a \$106,183 state grant for its Personal Care Assistant (PCA) workforce development program. The funding is part of approximately \$1.5 million in Training Resources and Internships Network (TRAIN) grants awarded by the Healey-Driscoll

Administration. QCC has received over \$1.4 million in TRAIN grants since 2016.

QCC's PCA program will train 30 individuals as PCAs, providing an entry point to a career in healthcare. After successfully completing the PCA program, students will be prepared to work in entry-level positions in private residences, group homes and assisted liv-

ing facilities, supervising and assisting elderly, ill or disabled clients.

"This grant allows us to expand access to meaningful healthcare careers and meet a growing need in our community," said Director of Workforce Development Operations Kathleen O'Connor. "Personal Care Aides play a vital role in supporting older adults and individuals with disabil-

ities, and demand for qualified caregivers continues to rise. Our PCA program not only prepares students for immediate employment but also opens doors to long-term career growth."

The PCA program is designed to equip students with the essential knowledge, skills and competencies required to provide high-quality care in various settings.

The curriculum emphasizes hands-on training, real-world scenarios and foundational healthcare knowledge to ensure students are well prepared for their roles.

All students will receive 80 hours of classroom training, including Basic Life Support (BLS) Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certification training and workforce readiness

training, as well as 16 experiential learning hours through an internship with employer partners. Students also have access to support services such as financial literacy assistance, family support services and transportation.

For more information on QCC's workforce development programs, visit QCC.edu/wfd.



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Charlton votes to prohibit firearms in town buildings

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — While, in many ways, Charlton’s fall town meeting was a standard affair, a pair of items in particular proved to be among the most controversial town meeting articles in recent memory as the town officially voted to prohibit the possession of firearms at town administrative offices and buildings.

The issue was brought to the forefront by both a Select Board article and a citizen’s petition with debate spanning around half of the over three-hour fall special town meeting on Oct. 20. Both articles sought to exempt town administrative buildings and offices from the provisions of Mass General Law that prohibits firearms in government facilities. Essentially, as part of the Acts of 2024, which were

effective as of August of 2024, municipalities have the ability to vote to exempt town administrative buildings as prohibited areas. A “yes” vote would have allowed firearms in these facilities. Both articles were brought to a vote and both failed albeit in very close decisions.

The first vote was one of the closest in recent memory at a Charlton town meeting. The 133 “yes” to 137 “no” decision meant every one of the 274 voters on hand played an important part in the matter, especially considering that four voters abstained which was the exact difference in the vote count. A subsequent vote on the citizen’s petition article also had a close but more decisive margin of 101 “yes” to 126 “no” although numerous voters had left the meeting after the first article’s results.

The debate leading up to the vote was substantial and extensive. Numerous speakers spoke in support of the Second Amendment arguing that such rules only hurt law abiding citizens who could serve as the first line of defense if a shooter were ever to enter these buildings. Others argued against the articles believing that more guns don’t make people safer and sharing concerns about weapons near children, especially in the town’s library which was eventually exempt from the Select Board article as part of an amendment. In addition, while it was made clear that schools are not town administrative buildings and were exempt from the articles a point was made that there could be gray area where schools hosting town meetings could be

considered administrative buildings during that time.

Local Reverend John Lucy was one of the first to speak against the articles, drawing from the common argument that guns are simply tools that bad people use to kill. “If guns are not a problem, I would say having more guns in more places is also not a solution,” said Lucy.

On that same note, Nancy Pecore, a Second Amendment supporter, offered a counterargument later in the debate.

“It’s not the tool, it’s the person. We know that criminals are not going to follow laws. Criminals will not follow signs. Making us law-abiding citizens defenseless by taking away our firearms is what the criminals want,” Pacore said.

Speaking as a private citizen, Select Board member David Singer said firearms possession has long been acceptable until the state’s new law, which he argues asks towns to opt into their constitutional rights rather than opt out of them.

“This is actually a relatively new restriction. You were able to carry on town property for decades. All of a sudden, our illustrious governor decided to make this an issue. You don’t make towns have to choose to opt in to their constitutional rights,” said Singer.

While there were many more speakers arguing in favor of the article during public comment, the silent majority decided to keep town administrative buildings as prohibited areas. Even after the initial vote another small, but still at times heated debate was sparked by the citizen’s petition. That too failed in a vote, although it was questionable whether the second article would have stood if approved as it would have had to go to the State Attorney General who might have considered the results of the earlier vote as well.

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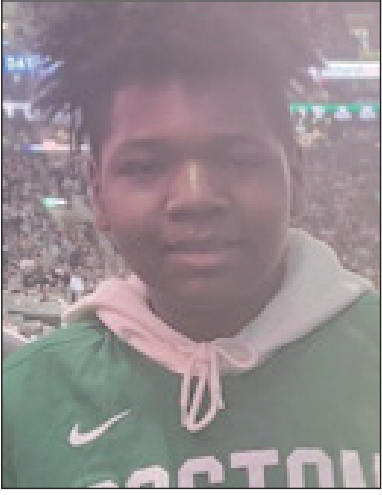
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Friday's Child

Christopher ("Chris") is an energetic, sweet, and lovable young person with a big personality and a heart to match. He's known for his quick wit, sense of humor, and perfectly timed one-liners that always make the people around him laugh. Chris has a playful, sassy side and brings lighthearted energy wherever he goes. Chris loves being active and outdoors—whether it's swimming, shooting hoops, or tossing a football, he's always ready for a game. He enjoys trying new activities and thrives when he's part of a team. When it's time to relax, Chris can often be found playing video games or diving into a good book. He especially enjoys sports-themed stories and graphic novels, which combine his love for adventure and creativity. Those who know Chris describe him as kind, thoughtful, and full of life. He's a caring friend who enjoys connecting with others, sharing laughs, and showing his genuine personality. With his curiosity, humor, and warm spirit, Chris brightens any room he walks into and brings a smile to everyone he meets

Christopher
Age 16
Registration #8213

https://www.mareinc.org/child/21179006879

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.



LIBRARY

continued from page A8

is Coton de Tulear, and he is a licensed therapy dog. Registration is not required. All ages are welcome! (If you are interested in having a private visit with Jack-Jack for a reading session or any other reason, please register for one of our Private Visit sessions.)

Dementia Care and Support: A Community Conversation
Thursday, November 13, 6:00-7:30 pm - Dexter Hall - registration requested but not required
A presentation on caring, supporting, and communicating with someone living with dementia. After the presentation there will be a question and answer panel with experts and community leaders.

CPL Book Discussion - The Berry Pickers by Amanda Peters
Thursday, November 13, 6:00-7:00 pm - Dexter Hall - no registration required
Books are available for checkout at the adult circulation desk one month prior to discussion.

Friends of Charlton Public Library
Monday, November 10, 3:30-4:45 - Community Meeting Room
The monthly meeting of the Friends of Charlton Public Library. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Fandom Club: Minecraft
Thursday, November 13, 5:30-6:15 pm - Storytime Room - no registration required
Drop by the Children's Room and enjoy exploring a new fandom and participating in related activities/crafts! This month's fandom is Minecraft. For ages 8+.

Preschool Storytime (Ages 3-5)
Fridays, November 14 & 21, 10:00-10:45 am - Storytime Room
For ages 3-5. Join us for stories, songs, fingerplays, scarves, activities, crafts, and free play! This is a TICKETED program. A certain number of tickets will be available for each child on a first-come, first-served basis. Once all tickets have been passed out, the program is full. Late Arrivals: Available tickets will be given out until 5 minutes after the program has started. After that time, the program will be closed until free-play begins. We thank you for your understanding.

Escape From Oz: A Wicked Escape Room
Friday, November 14, 2:30-4:30 pm (15 minute sessions) - Study Rooms - registration required
For adults and teens ages 13 and older. Participants will work in groups of 1-3 people to escape our study rooms. Teams have 15 minutes to unlock all the locks and get a prize.

Gentle Flow Yoga
Saturday, November 15, 10:00-11:00 am - Dexter Hall - registration required
Gentle Flow Yoga – All Levels Welcome! Breathe, stretch, and unwind in this relaxing 60-minute yoga class. Perfect for beginners and experienced yogis alike, this class will blend gentle, mindful movement with calming breathwork and end in a deeply restful savasana. Bring a mat, water bottle and any props. (Some blocks and knee pads available). Led by Erin Anderson – RYT-200 yoga instructor and SEL facilitator. Registration is required. This program is for adults and teens ages 13 and up.

Saturday Acoustic Roots Jam-SARJ
Saturday, November 15, 12:00-1:30 - Community Meeting Room
An acoustic only music jam. Open to all 18+. Email Rich at Cule5632@gmail.com for more information.

Fiber Arts Club for Tweens & Teens
Monday, November 17, 3:30-4:30 pm - Storytime Room - no registration required
Are you interested in knitting, crocheting, sewing, embroidery, needle felting, or other fiber art? Join us to hang out, practice your craft, learn from more experienced friends, or share your knowledge with others! Please note that we cannot guarantee the presence of a teacher to instruct specific crafts at every meeting. Don't forget to bring your current projects! This group is best suited for tweens and teens aged 9-18. Registration is not required!

How to Draw Manga Workshop
Tuesday, November 18, 5:30-6:30 pm - Community Meeting Room - registration required
Learn how to draw your own Manga with Jurassic Peanut! The class will begin with a brief discussion about Manga, its differences from traditional Western comics, and the process behind creating it. The rest of the class will be a workshop where participants will follow the same process to create a page of their own manga, starting with thumbnail/concept sketches, then sketching and inking on the final paper. This class is for tweens and teens ages 10-18. Registration is required.

Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Group
Thursday, November 20, 6:00-7:30 pm - Community Meeting Room - no registration required
The Alzheimer's Support Network Caregiver Support Group is led by Alzheimer's Care Professionals and experienced caregivers. We offer information, resources, and strategies specific to caring for someone with Alzheimer's and other Dementias along with support for transitioning

to different care settings. Co-sponsored by Tri-Valley and Charlton Public Library.

Tiny Tots @ Night
Thursday, November 20, 6:00-6:30 pm - Storytime Room - registration required
This is an evening version of our Tiny Tots program! Best for babies - age 3. Includes songs, fingerplays, scarves, shakers, music, books & free play!

Death Cafe Program: Discussing Organ and Tissue Donation
Thursday, November 20, 6:00-7:30 pm - Dexter Hall
Kenny Laferriere from New England Donor Services will be presenting on organ and tissue donation. Registering as an Organ/Tissue Donor provides hope to so many people and it gives donors the ability to leave a lasting legacy for many years after they have left this Earth.

Charlton Ukulele League & Ensemble
Thursday, November 20, 6:00-7:30 pm - Community Meeting Room - no registration required
Experienced musicians and newbies all welcome. Questions? Email Cule5632@gmail.com.

Crafternoon for Kids
Friday, November 21, 3:30-4:30 pm - Storytime Room - registration required
Drop by the Storytime Room and make a fun craft! Best for ages 5-10. Please register so we know we will have enough supplies!

Open Session with Jack-Jack the Therapy Dog
Monday, November 24, 4:00-4:30 pm - Storytime Room - no registration required
This is an open session to visit with our Therapy Dog, Jack-Jack. Jack-Jack's breed is Coton de Tulear, and he is a licensed therapy dog. Registration is not required. All ages are welcome! (If you are interested in having a private visit with Jack-Jack for a reading session or any other reason, please register for one of our Private Visit sessions.)

Writing Workshop for Tweens & Teens
Tuesday, November 25, 5:30-6:30 pm - Storytime Room - registration required
Ages 9–18. Do you love to write stories, poems, or fan fiction? Or maybe you've always wanted to try writing but aren't sure where to start? Join us for a relaxed and creative writing workshop just for tweens and teens! Together we'll explore writing prompts, share ideas, and learn tips for developing characters, building worlds, and finding your unique writing voice. No experience necessary—just bring your imagination and something to write with. We will have lined paper available, but feel free to bring your own notebook, tablet, or laptop to write on.

Portrait of Major General Salem Towne donated to new Lodge

BY BRO. JIMMY FALZONE
MAJOR GENERAL SALEM TOWNE LODGE

SOUTHBRIDGE — Monday, Oct. 20, was the first official meeting of the newly formed Major General Salem Towne Masonic Lodge in Southbridge. The meeting lodge room was filled with new faces of Master Masons we normally do not see. Wow what a site to see the room filled with all these brethren. During the meeting when new business was discussed Brother Jimmy Falzone asked permission to speak. Brethren on behalf of Masonic free-lance artist Brother Travis

Simpkins, who could not be in attendance this evening, asked me to present this generous gift of the portrait to the newly formed Major General Salem Towne Lodge. This portrait was from the time era of 1746-1825 and was gifted to the new lodge, in honor of Janet Simpkins great-grandfather Brother Robert A. Gard who became a member of the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge back on Jan. 5, 1931. This charcoal portrait was created from a photo hanging in one of the rooms at the Salem Towne House at the Old Sturbridge Village. He has



Courtesy
Left to right: Master of the Lodge Brother Paul Davidson, center portrait gifted is Major General Salem Towne and Bro. Jimmy Falzone who presenting this portrait to the Lodge on behalf of the Masonic artist Brother Travis Simpkins. Also Bro. John Shaw in the background.

created historical charcoal portraits in the past from that era, and they were published in our Massachusetts Masonic Trowel Magazine. Brother Travis Simpkins is well known among the Master Masons here in Massachusetts and North America for his extraordinary and beautiful life like Masonic portraits. Brother Simpkins is also a 33rd Degree dual member of the Scottish Rite Northern Masonic Jurisdiction and Southern Jurisdiction. Brother Simpkins artistic work has attracted international attention with his Masonic work being requested in Grand lodge

Jurisdictions throughout North America as well as Europe and Australia. Brother Simpkins is a staff member of the Worcester art Museum and has worked on projects for the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. He also served as an advisor for the art programs at the Massachusetts State House. We members of Major General Salem Towne Lodge are extremely grateful to the Simpkins family for the generous gift. If you would like more information about Freemasonry and to find a lodge nearest you, visit our website at www.massfreemasonry.org

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Featured Listing
DUDLEY - 13 OXFORD AVE

2 -FAMILY offers 2,354 SF of living area! 2 Large Apartments, 5 Spacious Rms, 2 BRs, 1 Bath each. Beautiful grand front entry foyer with the charm of yesteryear! double French doors & other unique features. Plenty of Natural light that flows into these apartments! 2nd flr apt has a private enclosed rear entry with it's own outside covered porch. Updates were done to electric & roof to accommodate Solar Panels. Property was family occupied \$399,900.

Webster Lake - 302 Killdeer Island PANORAMIC VIEWS!

Renovated + move-in ready lakefront home w/1,700+/- sq ft. Open kitchen/dining/living w/ cathedral ceilings + wall of windows. Primary suite w/private bath! 2 add'l bedrooms, 2nd Full bath. Lower level family room w/walkout to water. Wraparound deck, new vinyl railings, terraced yard, sandy beach, professional landscaping. Many updates. \$775,000

Featured New Listing!!!
WEBSTER - 19 FIRST STREET

Bring an open mind to this unique property & let your creative design ideas flow! This one level 1,040 sf, 3 BR home is reminiscent of an English Country Cottage! It evokes a cozy, rustic, lived-in vibe. The overall aesthetic is one of practical comfort, collected charm and a relaxed, slightly whimsical atmosphere. Key characteristics include spacious rooms, hardwood floors, a primary BR with sliders to a very private deck, retractable awnings, replacement windows, etc. Move right in! \$304,900

WEBSTER - 24 COOPER RD
NEW CONSTRUCTION Craftsman Style Home! Tucked away on Cooper Rd, Webster Lake w/Access at Lakeside Beach/Boat Ramp. 3rd of 4 Homes being built at this Site. Offers 2,155 SF+/- of Living Area, 7 Rms, 4 BRs, 2-1/2 Baths, 9' Ceilings. Wood Flooring Throughout w/Ceramic Tile Floors in the Baths. Spacious Main BR Suite w/ Walk-in Closet & Private Full Bath, Double-Sink Vanity! Lower level walkout w/ Slider. Basement-rough plumbed Central AC! Garage \$649,900.

WATERFORD CT - 20 AVERY LN.

Beautifully updated farmhouse - 5 min. to the ocean. Nothing to do just to move in!! 2 bed, 2 bath New Heating System, Central Air! Huge shed & deck! Oversized garage. 3/4+ acre. assisted sale **\$365,000**

On the shores of Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg

WEBSTER LAKE WATERFRONT LISTING! KILLDEER RD

ON DEPOSIT

Ready for your year round enjoyment. 4 bedroom, 2 bath home. Open floor plan. Garage w/ enclosed entry to mudroom. Open living room with spectacular views! 2 bedrooms - 3/4 bath, on main level. Central air. Lower level, additional 2 bedrooms, bath, bonus family room, summer kitchen! Beachhouse! 51' of sandy beachfront! \$799,000.

Webster Lake Waterfront - 31 Bayview!!

ON DEPOSIT

Panoramic View, from this absolutely lovely home. 2600 +/- SF, 3+ Beds, 2 full baths, 2 car detached garage! 63' +/- waterfront. .37 Acres! Sandy Waterfront! \$1,100,000

Webster Lake - 53 Colonial Rd

SORRY, SOLD!

WEBSTER LAKE WATERFRONT! JUST SIMPLY AN INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITY! OVER 31,000 SQ FT OF LAND! Summer Cottage on 9482 SF of land.. assisted sale **\$1,199,900**

Webster Lake Waterfront 8 Long Island

Beautifully Updated Circa 1890s Classic Antique Island Cottage, with Rare Boat House Included! Extremely Unique, Clean & Well Maintained, Modern Conveniences w/the Charm of Yester-Year! 1,240 SF, 6 Rms, 3 BRs, 2-1/2 Baths, Hardwood Floors! Fireplace w/Wood Pellet Stove, Wrap-Around Screened Porch, Lg Outbuilding w/Full Bath/Shower/Laundry & Workshop, Paved Town Vtr/Svr + Private Well for Outdoor &/or Off-Season Water Use! 14,300 SF+/- Level Lot w/105+ of Shoreline. **\$595,000**

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Bay Path students receive InvenTeam grant to create technological solution to real-world problem

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School (BPRVTHS) was recently awarded a Lemelson-MIT InvenTeam® grant in the amount of \$7,500 to create an invention geared towards helping people that are wheelchair-bound. This invention will allow them to visit areas that are otherwise inaccessible. BPRVTHS is one of only eight high schools nationwide to be selected as an InvenTeam this year.

The BPRVTHS InvenTeam is inventing a solution to the inefficiency, compromised safety, and lack of comfort present in wheelchairs used to access sandy beaches. Through our invention, we seek to improve the beach-going experience, promote accessibility and independence for wheelchair-bound people with an efficient, safe, and comfortable wheelchair design. Kristine Wade, science teacher, at BPRVTHS initiated the InvenTeam application process during the summer and worked with the students to prepare the






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final proposal. A respected panel of university professors, inventors, industry professionals, and college students including former InvenTeam members now working in industry selected the grantees.

Over the next eight months, our BPRVTHS InvenTeam will develop a solution to the problem. Our team will build a working prototype that will be showcased at a technical review here locally in February, and then again as a final prototype during EurekaFest®, an invention celebration taking place in June.

“The InvenTeams initiative has been a grand MIT experiment and proven that all youth can invent when given the opportunity,” says Leigh Estabrooks, Lemelson-MIT’s Invention Education Officer. “Our 22 years of working with high school teams in their communities shows the extraordinary power of invention education. Teams will work extremely hard throughout this entire school year becoming experts in their self-selected problems as well as the technological solutions. It’s an honor to work with such empathetic young people who care about making our lives safer, healthier, and more accessible.”

The InvenTeams grants

initiative has enabled 214 students to be awarded U.S. patents for their high school inventions. Hundreds more students have patent pending designations for their inventions. Intellectual property education is combined with our invention education offerings as part of the Lemelson-MIT Program’s deliberate efforts to remedy historic inequities among those who develop inventions, protect their intellectual property, and commercialize their creations.

The ongoing efforts empower students from all backgrounds, equipping them with invaluable problem-solving skills that will serve them well throughout their academic journeys, professional pursuits, and personal lives. The program has worked with over 4,000 students across 312 InvenTeams nationwide and has included:

- Partnering with intellectual property law firms to provide pro bono legal support
- Collaborating with industry-leading companies that provide technical guidance and mentoring
- Providing professional development for teachers on invention and IP education
- Assisting teams with identifying resources within their communities’ innovation ecosystems

to support ongoing invention efforts

• Publishing case studies and research to inform the work of invention educators and policy makers and build support for engaging students in efforts to invent solutions to real-world problems thus fueling the innovation economy in the U.S.

The Lemelson-MIT Program (LMIT) is a national leader in efforts to prepare the next generation of inventors and entrepreneurs. Their work focuses on the expansion of opportunities for people to learn ways inventors find and solve problems that matter to improve lives. Their commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion aims to remedy historic inequities among those who develop inventions, protect their intellectual property and commercialize their creations.

Jerome H. Lemelson, one of U.S. history’s most prolific inventors, and his wife Dorothy founded the Lemelson-MIT Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1994. It is funded by The Lemelson Foundation and administered by the School of Engineering at MIT, an institution with a strong ongoing commitment to creating meaningful opportunities for K-14 STEM education.



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