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Friday, February 9, 2024

# Douglas Cub Scout Pack 316 donates popcorn to local heroes

DOUGLAS — Cub Scout Pack 316 collected Heroes and Helpers donations during their Annual Popcorn Sale, and were able to provide some tasty snacks to the Douglas Police Department and Douglas Fire Department! Thank you to all of our generous supporters who purchased popcorn or made donations. Thank you also to the Heart of New England Council for bringing all the popcorn for us to give to our local first responders.

Our Pack provides lifelong memories and friendship for elementary school aged children in Douglas and the surrounding area. Scouts participate in many fun and exciting activities-- including camping, fish-

## Sutton police offer new ‘commend an officer’ option

BY KIMBERLY PALMUCCI  
TRIBUNE CORRESPONDENT

SUTTON – There is a new option available on the police department’s Web site: “Commend an Officer or Dispatcher.”

“Who doesn’t like to feel appreciated for what they do at work?” the Sutton Police Department released in a recent statement online, adding that the department has added a “Commend an Officer or Dispatcher” section to its website after seeing another regional department, the Southborough Police Department, do the same.

“With the climate in law enforcement since 2020 being so negative, it’s important to let our personnel know when they’ve done a great job assisting someone who needed help,” Sutton police shared. “Pass around some kindness and click on this link if you were helped by one of our people and want to thank them... it means more than you know.”

The web page, which can be accessed by visiting the town’s Web site, [suttonma.org](http://suttonma.org), clicking on “departments,” then “police,” and finally “commend an officer or dispatcher,” offers a way for residents to “acknowledge an Officer or Dispatcher who has demonstrated outstanding dedication and conducted themselves in a manner that you find exceptional and beneficial for both the Officer and the Department,” according to police.

“We strongly encourage you to take a moment to share your feedback with us. Fostering a positive and appreciative environment significantly boosts Officer morale and helps to motivate all Department members to strive for continuous improvement in their performance and the quality of service they deliver to the public.”

The department further added that resident’s input is “invaluable and would be greatly appreciated in this process.”

One commenter on social media added that “it only takes a minute or two to let someone know how much they may have helped with something, but that gesture/praise will stay with that person a lifetime.”

In other department news, Sutton Police released in a separate statement that “unscrupulous folks are snooping in...mailboxes for any outgoing mail that may contain checks for payment.”

“They’re then taking them from the mailboxes, washing them (that means changing the payee names and even some dollar amounts) and cashing them... or attempting to cash them,” police said.

Police recommended that residents drop these check payments off at the Post Office or in an official Post Office mailbox to be mailed out.

“Is that a pain in the neck? Yes,” police said. “Will it help prevent you from becoming a victim of this latest trend? Hopefully.”



ing, hiking, launching rockets, Pinewood Derby races, and more! Our Scouts also serve the community through service projects such as cleaning up trash for Earth Day and honoring fallen service members by replacing American flags on the graves of veterans in our local cemetery.

If you’d like to support our 2024 campaign, you can donate online by visiting <https://trails-end.com/store/scout/P94X0TJZ>, where you’ll find delicious

snacks and Heroes and Helpers donations which help provide a gift of popcorn to our first responders, troops at-home or overseas, veterans, military families, local food banks, and charitable organizations. Your purchases can ship anywhere in the United States. Thank you in advance for supporting Cub Scouts!

For more information or to join Pack 316, please reach out to [douglaspack316@gmail.com](mailto:douglaspack316@gmail.com).

# Blackstone police arrest two on drug, firearm charges

BY KIMBERLY PALMUCCI  
TRIBUNE CORRESPONDENT

BLACKSTONE — The town’s police department has recently arrested two Rhode Island men on drug and firearm charges following a recent traffic stop.

Blackstone Chief of Police Gregory Gilmore released that Ibrahim Sylla, 23, of Woonsocket, R.I., was arrested and charged with: Possession of a Class B Substance (Cocaine); Possession of a Firearm without a License; Unregistered Motor Vehicle; and Equipment Violation. Additionally, Billy Inthaphone, 30, of Woonsocket, was arrested and charged with: Possession of a Class B Substance (Cocaine).

The motor vehicle stop occurred on Jan. 26 at approximately 10:40 p.m., according

to reports, at which point a Blackstone Police sergeant conducted a motor vehicle stop of an unregistered vehicle that was “emitting an abnormally loud exhaust noise.”

“It was determined that the driver, identified as Sylla, and the passenger, identified as Inthaphone, both had active arrest warrants,” the Blackstone Police Department released.

Both men were placed under arrest without incident, police said.

“Prior to towing the vehicle from the scene, officers conducted a search of the vehicle and discovered multiple small bags of white powder that tested positive for cocaine. A .22-caliber Beretta semi-automatic pistol was also located

under the driver’s seat,” police said. “Sylla does not have a license to carry a firearm.”

Sylla and Inthaphone were transported to the Blackstone Police Station for booking.

“This is a great case that highlights the many things Blackstone Police officers encounter on any given day,” Gilmore said. “What started as a routine motor vehicle stop developed into multiple arrests, the seizure of narcotics, and most notably a dangerous firearm taken out of our community. Our officers never know what may happen during these routine stops, and their vigilance is commended.”

Both suspects were arraigned in Uxbridge District Court, according to reports as of press time.

# State Police Museum explores agency’s rich past

BY KIMBERLY PALMUCCI  
TRIBUNE CORRESPONDENT

NORTHBRIDGE — Since 2022, Whitinsville has been home to the Massachusetts State Police Museum & Learning Center, which aims to preserve history and promote learning.

The Massachusetts State Police Museum and Learning Center (MSPMLC) provides “an opportunity for visitors to explore the Massachusetts State Police’s rich historical past through its interactive exhibits and Learning Center activities,” according to reports.

The museum was originally established in 1999 and was located at the former Barracks in Grafton, but as a result of a fire the museum, it relocated to a rental site in South Grafton and was subsequently moved to its present location in Whitinsville in 2022.

“The mission of the MSPMLC is twofold—to preserve the history, artifacts, and tell the story of the MSP,” said Dick Belanger, MSP Retired and a member of the Board of Directors. “Secondly, to promote learning about current law enforcement techniques and public



safety measures and create a positive relationship between the community and the Massachusetts State Police.”

The museum offers guided tours, Belanger said.

“The guide will discuss the history of the Department, which was established in 1856 by an act of the Legislature,” he

said. “Visitors may view several videos, as well as uniforms, firearms, and other related items that are related to the history of the MSP.”

The Learning Center offers programs that are related to law enforcement techniques and crime scene evidence collection and other STEM-related topics. The museum also has a fleet of vintage cruisers and motorcycles, along with a mobile museum that may be available to participate in public events, Belanger said.

“The Museum and its volunteers hope visitors leave with an understanding of the

MSP its beginning, and its present-day contributions to the safety of the Commonwealth,” he added.

The Museum will be attending the upcoming MSP graduation exercises and recently hosted a “Run-Away Day” honoring the illustrator, Norman Rockwell. The “Run-Away Day” is held annually, usually in early December, Belanger said.

“The museum has a significant collection of photos,” Belanger added.

“Many past and present Troopers, local police officers, and dedicated citizens have invested thousands of volunteer hours

towards preserving the unique history of those who have worn the French and Electric Blue, from its humble beginnings as the State Constabulary enforcing prohibition and labor laws in 1865 up through the modern era of cybercrime, homeland security, and the challenges of policing in this era,” the museum released on its website, [mspmc.org](http://mspmc.org).

To stay up-to-date on information, the museum’s staff encouraged visitors to check out the Facebook page. The new MSPMLC is open at 1 Memorial Square, Whitinsville; it is open Tuesday and Saturday from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.







# BVT alumnus finds career path at Centerline Mechanical LLC

**HOPEDALE** — Brendan Hawkins, an 18-year-old graduate from Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School in Upton, has made headlines for his exceptional journey into the workforce.

Departing from traditional academic routes, Hawkins chose a vocational education to pursue hands-on learning and practical skills. Hawkins graduated from BVT in May 2023 after completing the four-year HVAC program offered at the school. Hawkins thrived in BVT's environment, a place where he could work with his hands and expand his learning. While not heavily involved in extracurricular activities, he found his passion through his trade experience.

Centerline Mechanical LLC, a full-service HVAC company that was established in October of 2020, was discovered by Hawkins during a presentation at BVT given by Julian Picard, the company's founder. Intrigued by the prospect of working with the promise of significant growth opportunities, Hawkins joined Centerline Mechanical LLC during his junior year. Julian Picard's words and demonstration of leadership in the industry is what fueled his interest in working for the company. After graduating high school, Hawkins was promoted to HVAC Installer and Service Technician.

Company founder of Centerline

Mechanical LLC and BVT alumni, Julian Picard, appreciates Hawkins' ability to apply skills to hands-on projects.

"Finding help can be hard in the trades. So I reached out to the BVT HVAC program to see what they had for prospects since I knew I had to grow my own help," states Julian Picard.

"I have had Hawkins since his final trimester Junior year. After the interview I knew he would be a good fit, and the rest is history. I want to see him buy his first house soon," Picard adds.

Hawkins acknowledges the transformative impact of working in a small company. He has overcome self-doubt and was able to successfully apply his technical



Courtesy

Brendan Hawkins

skills to the work environment.

"I cannot express enough the gratitude I have for this opportunity to work with Centerline Mechanical," expresses Brendan Hawkins.

"It's nice to be an asset to

a team that is generous and actually care," Hawkins adds.

Brendan Hawkins' journey serves as a testament to the diverse paths available to technical graduates, challenging the conventional norms of education. His accomplishments at BVT and success at Centerline Mechanical LLC highlights the potential for growth and learning in non-traditional career paths.

For more information about Centerline Mechanical LLC, please visit <https://www.valley-centerlinemech.com> or contact Julian Picard at [julianpicard@centerlinemech.com](mailto:julianpicard@centerlinemech.com). To learn more about Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School, please visit <https://www.valley-centerlinemech.com>.

## Local entrepreneurs receive ISO certification for fire investigation business

**SUTTON** — Genesis Forensics, Inc., a small business that got their start during the early stages of the Covid Pandemic, is pleased to announce they have obtained accreditation from the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA) to ISO/IEC 17020:2012 for Forensic Inspection in the area of Fire and Explosion Origin and Cause Investigation, Forensic Engineering and Reporting.

They are the fourth in the nation to receive accreditation for Fire and Explosion Origin and Cause Investigation but the first in the Northeast, and the first in the nation to receive it for Forensic Engineering and Reporting.

"The fire investigation industry has been moving toward the need for consistent and scientifically based

process, and we are pleased to be the first fire investigation company in the Northeast, and among only a few companies in the country, to be proactively working towards this new standard," says Michael Stoddard, co-founder of the firm.

A boutique-style company, Genesis Forensics strives to provide top notch service to every insurance, attorney or manufacturing client that is in need of professional fire investigation or forensic engineering services.

Jeremiah Pratt, the firm's other co-founder continues, "Genesis Forensics strives to anticipate and meet the needs of our clients. One of the ways we have done this is to gain ISO/IEC 17020:2012 accreditation for inspection bodies. This allows us to have uniformity, quality, and consistency

in the work performed for each job and each client."

About Genesis Forensics

Genesis Forensics opened their doors in Sutton in June of 2020 during the height of the pandemic. Co-founded by local entrepreneurs, Michael Stoddard and Jeremiah Pratt, they set out to break the mold in the fire investigation industry by providing extremely thorough fire investigation and forensic engineering services to clients, allowing them to make the most informed decision on each case.

They provide the highest quality output by meeting or exceeding industry standards and using a consistent and transparent process. Genesis Forensics is...Thorough From the Beginning!

For more information, please visit [www.Genesis-Forensics.com](http://www.Genesis-Forensics.com).

## Western New England University students named to Dean's List

**SPRINGFIELD** — Western New England University (WNE) takes immense pride in recognizing the outstanding academic achievements of over 700 students who have been named to the Dean's List for the Fall 2023 semester.

This prestigious honor is a testament to the commitment and dedication these students have demonstrated in their pursuit of academic excellence. The Dean's List acknowledges those who have achieved a semester GPA of 3.30 or higher, showcasing their remarkable scholastic accomplishments.

The diverse group of awardees represents various majors across WNE's Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, and

Engineering. The University commends these students for their intellectual curiosity, leadership, and dedication to their educational journey. They are:

Rose Handlin of Whitinsville, majoring in Criminal Justice.

Sarah Johnston of Uxbridge, majoring in General Business.

Thomas Schreiber of Uxbridge, majoring in Civil Engineering.

Nicholas LaPolt of Douglas, majoring in Mechanical Engineering.

Western New England University (WNE) is a private, nationally ranked, comprehensive institution with a focus on preparing work-ready and world-ready graduates. Founded in 1919 in Springfield,

Massachusetts as a division of Northeastern College, WNE's 215-acre suburban campus serves more than 3,700 students, including over 2,500 full-time undergraduates. More than 47,000 alumni have earned degrees through its more than 90 undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs at Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Engineering, and Pharmacy and Health Sciences, and School of Law. Students come from 39 U.S. states and territories and 23 countries. Of 45,104 living alumni, 30 percent remain within the region, residing in the four Western Massachusetts counties and northern Connecticut.

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**The Town of Brookfield is accepting applications for a full-time Highway Foreman (Operator 1)**

Full job description and application details may be found at [brookfieldma.us](http://brookfieldma.us).

Application review will begin after 2-16-24.

**Deadline: Open until filled**

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[openskycs.org/stonebridge-bv](http://openskycs.org/stonebridge-bv)

**PET of the WEEK**

**Meet Curley: 3 years**

Meet Curly! This handsome boy is looking for a home where he can be the solo pet and soak up all the attention. Curly is a very smart and active boy. He loves treats, training, and playtime. He especially loves chasing balls around the yard! Curly enjoys going for walks and having play dates with other dogs.

He has lived well with kids and would do best in a home with teens. Curly is a perfect gentleman in the home and keeps his space clean. If you are looking for a companion to snuggle with on the couch and enjoy outdoor activities with, start the process to learn more about Curly today!

**Apply for Curley at [baypathhumane.org](http://baypathhumane.org)**

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# News from Beginning Bridges

BeginningBridgesCFCE.  
weebly.com  
Facebook: Beginning  
Bridges CFCE  
Emurray@smoc.org  
508-278-5110

Beginning Bridges CFCE  
's vision is that children,  
youth and families reach  
their full potential now and  
in the future. Our mission  
is to work with families and  
community partners to cre-  
ate the conditions for chil-  
dren, youth and families to  
thrive socially, academically  
and economically. Funding  
for the Coordinated Family  
& Community Engagement  
Grant (CFCE) is provid-  
ed by the Massachusetts  
Dept. of Early Education  
and Care (EEC) and spon-  
sored by South Middlesex  
Opportunity Council (SMOC-  
Childcare/Head Start).  
Beginning Bridges CFCE  
has funding for the towns of  
Mendon, Northbridge, Upton  
& Uxbridge. Currently, our  
FREE comprehensive ser-  
vices include weekly indoor  
and outdoor parent/child  
playgroups. We also offer par-  
ent education programs, the  
Ages & Stages Developmental  
Questionnaire and can con-  
nect families to community  
resources.

Upcoming Events-  
Registration is required for  
all upcoming events. Links  
can be accessed on our web-  
site or contact Emily Murray  
at 508-278-5110 or Emurray@  
smoc.org.

Please check our website  
and Facebook page for our  
Winter 2023/2024 Newsletter.  
Monday 3/4/24 - Music and  
Movement with Deb Hudgins,

9:30 to 10:00am at Upton Town  
Library, 9 Milford Street,  
Upton. Register on the Upton  
Town Library website.

Wednesday, 3/6/24 - Coffee  
and Conversations 9:30  
to 10:30 am at Taft Public  
Library, 29 North Ave in  
Mendon. Join us for an infor-  
mal drop-in playtime where  
families will be able to build  
social connections, learn  
about early childhood devel-  
opment and family friendly  
resources. Please bring your  
own coffee. Muffins from  
Muffin House Cafe will be  
provided. Puppet Storytime  
will follow at 10:30 am.  
Register for both on the Taft  
Public Library website.

Thursday March 7th from  
7:00 – 8:30 PM Taming Potty  
Training with Jill Vetstein.  
To register contact Emily at  
508-278-5110 or Emurray@  
smoc.org

Wednesday 3/13/24 - Music  
and Movement with Deb  
Hudgins, 10:30 to 11:00am  
at Whitinsville Social  
Library, 17 Church Street,  
Whitinsville. Register online  
at the Whitinsville Social  
Library website.

KIDS FAIR Saturday March  
23rd from 10:00am – 12:00pm.  
This is a free event that  
will feature Informational  
Booths, Healthy Snacks,  
Activities, and Giveaways.  
Also, there will be a raffle  
to win a free bike! For more  
information, please contact  
Emily Murray at 508-278-5110

Our Winter Newsletter is  
available now. Please check  
our website.

See website or contact  
Emily at 508-278-5110 for  
more information.

# Greatest Book Club Ever meets March 7

DOUGLAS — On the  
first Thursday night of  
each month at 6:30 p.m.,  
the Greatest Book Club  
Ever meets at the Simon  
Fairfield Public Library to  
discuss popular books that

have been turned into mov-  
ies or television series.  
Their next discussion on  
March 7 will center around  
“Lessons in Chemistry” by  
Bonnie Garmus.

# REAL ESTATE

## BLACKSTONE

\$260,000, 114 Lakeshore Dr, Brodeur, Samantha, and Brodeur,  
Todd M, to Dufresne, Kaethe.  
\$10,000, Saint Paul St, Lefrancois, John M, to Weltin, Bruce K.

## DOUGLAS

\$689,100, 48 Walnut St, Rogiej Inc, to Engdahl, Patrick H, and  
Engdahl, Molly L.  
\$138,500, 18 Briarwood Cir, Holland, Kevin, and Holland,  
Jennifer, to Holland, Kevin.  
\$340,000, 19 Gilboa St, Fairbanks, Corey, to Nunes, Marilia,  
and Nunes, Paulo.

## NORTHBRIDGE

\$799,900, 62 Valerie Run, D & F Afonso Builders Inc, to  
Pendola, Vito M.  
\$375,000, 401 Benson Rd, Stanley, Joanne, and Campbell,  
Tonya L, to Carroll, Brian, and Carroll, Megan.  
\$469,900, 34 Hope St #2, Eb Rt, and Elkinson, David, to Jones,  
Christopher D, and Clark, Melissa D.  
\$410,000, 106 Sheryl Dr, Porter, Clarence A, and Porter, Diane  
M, to Plante Jr, Richard A, and Plante, Dawn-Marie.  
\$260,000, 66-68 East St, 66 East Street Rt, and Sagherian, Alice,  
to 1922 Holdings LLC.

## UXBRIDGE

\$250,000, 55 Freedoms Way, Gray Wolf Dev Corp, to Vincent M  
Cataldo Ft, and Cataldo, Alicia M.

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## CLUES ACROSS

1. One point south of due east

4. Coagulated blood

8. Fortifying ditch

10. Devotee of Hinduism

11. Trunk of a tree

12. Bank note

13. Capital of Guam

15. Study again

16. Covered with hoarfrost

17. Opening

18. Legendary Rolling Stone

21. Stray

22. Computer storing system

23. Signal
24. Pitching statistic

25. Human being

26. Malaysian isthmus

27. The "Blonde Bombshell"

34. A gland

35. Bluish greens

36. Endangered

37. Three-dimensional

38. In a way, precipitated

39. God associated with dissolution

40. Blemished

41. Flow or leak slowly

42. Disco legends The Bee \_\_\_\_\_

43. Midway between south and southeast

## CLUES DOWN

1. A way to board

2. Get down

3. Highly seasoned sausage

4. First day of month

5. Eurasian shrubs

6. The organ that bears the ovules of a flower

7. Small lake

9. Belief

10. Sunrooms

12. Metric weight unit

14. Vasopressin

15. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!

17. One-time family room staple

19. Got back together
20. Anger

23. Sang merrily

24. Sea eagle

25. Military men

26. Kilo yard (abbr.)

27. Found in the sea

28. Protects from weather

29. Type of medicine

30. City along the Rhine

31. Animal disease

32. Martini ingredients

33. Get away

34. Lack of disunity

36. One-time European Commission officer

## PUZZLE SOLUTION

E	S	S							S	E	E	G			
P	E	E	S						D	E	N	A	C	A	
A	V	I	S						D	E	N	A	I	R	
C	I	B	U	C					D	E	L	I	R	E	P
S	L	A	E	T				D	I	T	O	R	A	P	
E	O	R	N	O	M	N	Y	L	I	R	A	M			
					A	R	K		N	A	M				
						A	R	E		E	U	C			
				S	I	G			R	R	E				
		S	D	R	A	H	C	I	R	H	T	I	E	K	
	Y	C	N	A	C	A	V				D	E	M	I	R
N	R	A	E	L	E	R					A	N	A	G	A
R	A	V	L	L	O	D					E	L	O	B	
A	V	I	A	S							T	A	O	M	
T	O	L	C									S	B	E	



# QCC student finds community and more with Veteran Affairs Office

**WORCESTER** — Taking the plunge into higher education after 50 years out of school may not be for the faint of heart, but for Quinsigamond Community College student and veteran Tom Vincent, the support of QCC's Veteran Affairs department has made all the difference in his confidence and academic success.

"Before I was in school, I was depressed. But the staff and students in Veteran Affairs took me out of that depression and got me excited about school," Vincent said. "The atmosphere in the Veterans Affairs Office is fantastic. We've all been through similar experiences, no matter which branch of the military we were in."

After graduating high school in 1972, Vincent enlisted in the army during the Vietnam War. While his unit didn't end up deploying to Vietnam, they spent years training, which Vincent described as life changing. When Vincent finished his service, he said it was an obvious choice



Tom Vincent with the scooter gifted to him by Quinsigamond Community College Veteran Affairs.

to immediately start working because going to college wasn't an expectation for people in his family.

After decades of working in multiple industries, Vincent wanted to go back to school so he could pursue a career as a virtual bookkeeper. Due to limited physical mobility, he thought a remote bookkeeping job could allow him the flexibility he needs to work from home and take breaks as needed.

Vincent tried enrolling in college a few times before the fall of 2023 but often backed out. However, last September, he officially started classes at QCC. He ended up withdrawing

from his courses because he didn't feel ready to navigate some of the online aspects, but signed up again this spring and is determined to complete the classes this semester.

Since starting at QCC, the Veteran Affairs office has become a source of community as Vincent navigates higher education. After telling

QCC's Director of Veteran Affairs, Matthew Casaubon, that he was having issues walking to his classes, Casaubon obtained a scooter for Vincent to make it easier to navigate campus.

"No one has ever done anything like that for me before and I'm not used to accepting help. But the joy it gave me... I

smiled so hard my cheeks hurt," Vincent said when the scooter was delivered to him.

While Vincent said they even helped him find an agency to install new rain gutters on his house, it is the friendly people he talks to on campus that make him feel like part of a community.

According to Casaubon, the

Veteran Affairs office has also provided food, clothing, laptops and other assistance to QCC's veterans.

"We are building a community where veterans can feel they are valued and supported," Casaubon said.

"I would never have come back to school if it wasn't for the Veteran Affairs office," Vincent added.

## Worcester Polytechnic Institute announces Dean's List

**WORCESTER** — A total of 2,299 undergraduate students achieved the criteria required for WPI's fall 2023 Dean's List. The criteria for the WPI Dean's List differs from that of most other universities as WPI does not compute a grade point average (GPA). Instead, WPI defines the Dean's List by the amount of work completed at the A level in courses and projects.

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

The following students were named to the fall 2023 Dean's List:

Christina Aube, from Douglas, class of 2024, majoring in Electrical and Computer Engineering and Robotics Engineering

Codey Battista, from Northbridge, class of 2024, majoring in Biomedical Engineering

Kyla Dominguez De Los Santos, from Whitinsville, class of 2026, majoring in Mechanical Engineering

Kelly Heffernan, from Whitinsville, class of 2024, majoring in Biology and Biotechnology and Professional Writing

Philip Heney, from Douglas, class of 2025, majoring in Computer Science and Robotics Engineering

Jocelyn Hinchcliffe, from Uxbridge, class of 2025, majoring in Biology and Biotechnology

Cullen Jacene, from Northbridge, class of 2026, majoring in Mechanical Engineering

Megan Jacene, from Northbridge, class of 2024, majoring in Mechanical Engineering

Katelyn Lombardo, from Whitinsville, class of 2025, majoring in Biology and Biotechnology

Ryan Martin, from Douglas, class of 2024, majoring in Management Engineering

Michael O'Toole, from Douglas, class of 2027, majoring in Aerospace Engineering

Cristian Oliveira, from Uxbridge, class of 2026, majoring in Robotics Engineering

Julia Philbrook, from Uxbridge, class of 2027, majoring in Biomedical Engineering

Adam Pratt, from Uxbridge, class of 2026, majoring in Mechanical Engineering

Mikayla Prue, from Douglas, class of 2025, majoring in Biomedical Engineering and Psychological Science

Clarice Stumpf, from Uxbridge, class of 2025, majoring in Biochemistry

Molly Vincent, from Douglas, class of 2024, majoring in Mechanical Engineering

Bryan Wheeler, from Douglas, class of 2026, majoring in Electrical and Computer Engineering

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## Douglas resident named to UMass Dean's List

**LOWELL** — The University of Massachusetts congratulates Herica Alvarez of Douglas on being named to the Dean's List for the fall semester of 2023.

## Sci-Fi Book Club meets Feb. 20

**DOUGLAS** — On Feb. 20 at 6:30 p.m., the SciFi Book Club will meet at the Douglas Library to discuss "Siege and Storm" by Leigh Bardugo, second book in the Shadow and Bone Trilogy. Contact [douglas@cwmaris.org](mailto:douglas@cwmaris.org) for more information.



# Community Connection



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**FRANK G. CHILINSKI**  
PRESIDENT & PUBLISHER

**BRENDAN BERUBE**  
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Leading with purpose: Prioritizing local issues over the culture war

At a time when communities far and wide face pressing challenges like homelessness, substance misuse, and the need for unity, it is essential that our local leaders redirect their focus towards the issues that truly matter. Rather than engaging in divisive cultural battles, true leadership demands a dedication to improving the daily lives of residents by addressing local concerns.

One of the most pressing issues in many communities today is homelessness. Our woods and streets are home to many individuals who are struggling to find shelter and support. This issue should take precedence over divisive cultural debates, as it directly impacts the well-being and safety of our very own community members.

Similarly, the challenge of substance misuse is a significant concern that requires our leaders' full attention. Addiction affects not only the individuals grappling with it but also their families and communities. Local leaders should work collaboratively to establish effective rehabilitation and support programs that address this issue head-on, instead of allowing it to be overshadowed by polarizing cultural discussions.

A true leader understands the importance of bridging gaps rather than creating divisions. In an era marked by increasing polarization, it is incumbent upon our local leaders to strive for unity. Their role should be to bring residents together, encouraging dialogue and understanding among diverse groups. Creating a sense of community and solidarity should be a top priority, as it helps build a stronger, more resilient society.

It is crucial to recognize that small, symbolic issues like the presence of a two-inch pride sticker on a public building's door should not distract us from the substantial problems at hand. A leader's duty is to prioritize actions that will improve the daily lives of everyone in the community. While diverse perspectives are important, focusing on such symbolic issues detracts from the time and resources that could be better allocated to address actual challenges.

Furthermore, thriving businesses are an integral part of a flourishing community. Local leaders should work tirelessly to create an environment where businesses can thrive. A prosperous economy enables residents to access better opportunities and services, thus improving their quality of life.

Effective local leadership necessitates a clear focus on the issues that directly impact our community's well-being, such as homelessness, substance misuse, and unity. Divisive cultural debates, while important in their own right, should not overshadow these pressing concerns. A true leader, one with courage, prioritizes the needs of their constituents, brings people together, and strives to build a stronger, more resilient community. By doing so, they ensure that businesses thrive, basic needs are met, and everyone can enjoy a higher quality of life.

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

Opinion and commentary from the Blackstone Valley and beyond

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

How do you pray for an enemy?

To the Editor:

Do you pray for your enemies? Wait, what?! Pray for those who want to destroy our nation and its very freedoms, and make us slaves to Marxism? It is a tall mountain to climb.

No less a genius than Benjamin Franklin wrote a list of guidelines for self-improvement. "Imitate Jesus," he wrote. What does Jesus say?

In The Bible, Jesus says: "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." — Matthew 5:43-44, The Bible (New King James version).

Long ago and far away, I worked for a very difficult boss who persecuted half the office and conspired with the other half. She once made a grown man cry. I used to pray: "God, just get me through this day." My human nature did not want to pray for her, but I knew - as a Christian - I could not wish evil on her; no matter how much I wanted to. So, I prayed "please God promote her; give her a better job." I prayed it often. One day, she was no longer my boss. And a short time later, I actually got a better job - offered to me by my boss's arch enemy. Perhaps it was because I did the "enemy" a good turn when my boss warned me not to.

Perhaps it happened because of the "Ben Franklin Effect" - this happens when you ask a favor of someone. This apparently has the astonishing psychological effect of turning the enemy into a friend. Here is Franklin's story:

A man criticized Franklin publicly for making a long speech. Franklin was incensed and desired revenge, but he realized that the man might become influential. So, instead, Franklin wrote, asking if the man could lend him a "scarce and curious" book. The critic was flattered because Franklin had an extensive library. The critic enthusiastically sent Franklin the book. Franklin wrote that the next time he met the former enemy "he ever after manifested a readiness to serve me on all occasions." Once an enemy, now a friend.

To the Editor:

To think that I have to continue to debunk the lies and misinformation appearing every week in the BVT would mean that I disrespect the good people of the Blackstone Valley as much as the demagogues who appear regularly in these pages, disrespect them. While I have obviously failed to staunch the flow of fear and hatred-based grievances, hopefully, I have provided enough facts, historical details and references - expressed as 'opinions' - to open the hearts and minds of those not too deeply enmeshed in the Trump/GOP cult. As Balzac said, "Hatred is the vice of narrow souls; they feed it with all their littleness, and make it the pretext of base tyrannies." Added Connolly, "Hate is the consequence of fear. We fear something before we hate." The GOP has milked this weakness in human nature, for its treasonous pursuits. They have managed to instill the fear of 'others' into everyone who has a grievance - real or imagined - and a belief that someone else is to blame for whatever failures they have experienced.

Every day, I meet people who recognize what is afoot. They are intelligent enough to distinguish between fact and fiction. They are hostages to neither fear nor hatred. They don't require my 'opinions' to know truth from lies. They will ensure that democracy survives in America, and will banish the proponents of tyranny, religious bigotry, social distortion, and regressive conservatism from the corridors of power.

But since I'm here, one last poke at the bear! This should surprise no one - the Oracle of Uxbridge, a.k.a. Chicken Little, of 'the sky is falling' mantra - quoted the president of Heritage Action for America, lecturing on the benefits of the next Trump administration. His organization, a right-wing think tank and dark money group, spent more than \$5m on lobbying in 2021 as it worked to block federal voting rights legislation in battleground states, and advance an ambitious plan to spread its far-right agenda. But he wants the world to know that Trump, a guy who is known for stifling people who worked for him, is a union-buster and bigot, and implemented tariffs that cost thousands of jobs during his administration, is for 'We the people'? Who, in their right mind would use that guy as a reference? Oh yeah... Then, there's this - "Do you believe the government should run everything and make every decision for you?" So Bev - for the 10th time - which party wants the government to ban books in libraries? Which party wants the government to force you to have unwanted babies? Which party wants the government to legislate who can marry who, and what sex you can be? Which party wants to turn our government

In these times, it is also worth remembering Franklin's words on freedom of speech. Masquerading as Silence Dogood (a widowed woman), Franklin wrote a letter on July 9, 1722, which was published in The New England Courant.

"Silence Dogood" wrote: "Without Freedom of Thought, there can be no such Thing as Wisdom. And no such Thing as publick Liberty, without Freedom of Speech, which is the Right of every Man..."

"In those wretched Countries where a Man cannot call his Tongue his own, he can scarce call any Thing else his own. Whoever would overthrow the Liberty of a Nation, must begin by subduing the Freeness of Speech, a Thing terrible to Publick Traitors." As we all know, the Freeness of Speech of Americans has been subdued.

We have heard the nonsense that "words are violence," that your speech must be "politically correct," and that to express your conservative views means you are a racist, an oppressor; a misogynist, a hater; a climate denier; or worse, a dimwit.

How do we combine freedom of speech with prayer for enemies? While we despise the actions of those who suppress our speech, we are to pray for them despite their actions. No one said it would be easy. Nevertheless, we who believe must obey. The Genius Benjamin Franklin agreed:

"Here is my Creed. I believe in one God, Creator of the Universe. That he governs the World by his Providence. That he ought to be worshiped. That the most acceptable Service we can render him, is doing good to his other Children. That the Soul of Man is immortal, and will be treated with Justice in another life, respecting its Conduct in this life." In other words, God will take care of it. No worries.

That said, let's pray that Mr. Magoo gets a better job. I said it would be hard. Lifeguard? He does spend a third of each year in office at the Delaware beach. I've got it! President of the World Economic Forum! He could mumble, fall asleep, and do no harm to anyone in the free world. But the best choice of all is to let God decide. Please God, give him a better job?

Signed, prayerfully,

Bev Gudanowski  
Uxbridge

Parting words

into a theocracy? I'm really going to miss the hypocrisy.

Trump's history of fraud, lying, and treachery is just 'ridiculous stuff', that we needn't learn from, according to Mike. The only history Mikey wants us to learn is that science always seems to predict risk events well in advance of when they might occur. He considers this an inherent failure of said science. The ozone layer should have dissipated the day after scientists warned us it was happening! We should have been able to look out the window, right then, and notice the missing layer of blue sky. Instead, with their heads-up, we banned PCB's and other atmosphere debilitating pollutants, and certainly saved ourselves from the sun's most harmful rays. This shameful attention to science should not be a model for how we respond to climate change warnings. Just ignore them! When it happens, a day's notice will be sufficient. It's great that his grandparent's house on the Cape is still standing. I guess he didn't watch Chronicle on Jan. 31, when we were shown the houses on the Cape ready to fall into the ocean, due to the erosion from rising sea levels and more frequent violent storms. Homeowners are now spending millions to bring in sand to rebuild the receding shoreline. That should give Mikey something to do in between history lessons.

The man who gave us 'woke' rotaries, blues in the bible, exposed the Darwin conspiracy, and invented the zero '0' chord in music, has now managed, through his alchemy, to transform a Mickey Mouse conspiracy into a Minny Mouse one. Uh-oh... did Mickey have illegal surgery? In his latest brain fluffer-doodle, he has Minny -mized the Jan. 6 insurrection attempt. He made a Goofy attempt to deflect from what happened - to a semantic argument over the number of fatalities that occurred. The actual insurrection attempt by Trump, Republican House members, and white supremacists Huey, Dewey and Louie, he considers just a figment of that 'coward AOC's imagination'. (Fact: it was Republican Rep Josh Hawley who was captured on film, sprinting away from the 'peaceful tourists' like a scared rabbit). This genius wants to treat the entire Jan. 6 episode as a reality-show game of Clue - it was the Proud Boy, in the oval office, with the flag pole. I win!! You can't make this stuff up.

"A lie told once, remains a lie, but a lie told a thousand times, becomes the truth." Joseph Goebbels

I'm done. Thank you all for watching.

On second thought, why would I give up this much fun?  
Rick Bevilacqua  
Whitinsville

Solution nowhere in sight

To the Editor:

If you haven't already noticed, illegal immigrants are overwhelming the state of Massachusetts. As more illegal immigrants rush in, the state is running out of room to shelter them. Places are overflowing and around 900 families in 2023 were put in hotels in order to keep them off the streets. According to a report from WBZ, dozens of illegal immigrants were seen sleeping on the floor in the Logan Airport. Meanwhile, the Boston Medical Center is also being used as a place for shelter.

As the state struggles to find housing, some Massachusetts lawmakers have suggested that private

families that have an empty bedroom, or an in-law apartment should be willing to invite immigrants into their homes. Instead of that suggestion, our lawmakers should address these issues by attempting to stop the flow of immigrants coming into the state. The longer our state lets this crisis go on, our state tax money continues being endlessly thrown at this situation, with no endgame in sight. When this happens, taxpayers in the commonwealth are the ones really getting the short end of the stick.

Camdyn Forget  
Douglas

Helping to save our pets

To the Editor:

The procedure of declawing cats has been around since the 1950s, and continues to be controversial today. Recently, the Massachusetts Senate unanimously passed legislation to prohibit operations such as declawing and tendonectomies unless for medical necessity, like an untreatable infection or cancer. Prohibiting inhumane practices like these will help save the pets of Massachusetts from needless suffering.

Veterinarians and pet owners who approve of declawing procedures will argue surgery is imperative when a cat expresses excessive scratching habits that remain destructive after numerous attempts of behavioral modification. However, new evidence suggests that this amputation harms the bond cats share with their owners, inflicts lifelong discomfort, and causes negative psychological changes. Cats that have undergone declawing are more likely to experience paw and back pain, infec-

tion, and leg immobility since this surgical process comprises of extracting the foremost toe bones and cutting the tendons that retract claws.

Instead of forcing these animals into a perpetual state of misery for the rest of their lives simply for their owner's gratification, people should only resort to other harmless alternatives: providing appropriate scratching surfaces, nail trimming or claw caps, and behavioral reinforcement training with treats or spray bottles. Cats should be allowed to scratch their claws appropriately in their home as another way to uphold their health.

Since Massachusetts is now the third state to pass this legislation, people against animal cruelty should speak up, contact their state representatives, and call for support for protecting these precious animals.

Maria Fletcher  
Whitinsville



# A night to remember

Last week, the Whitinsville Fish & Game Club held their annual Founders Day banquet. The event included a sold out prime rib dinner put on by President Matt Burbank and his committee. It was fantastic. After the meal, this writer was surprised with a plaque dedicating the club's trout pond in my name. I was totally surprised by the award, and was extremely appreciative of the award. This writer joined the club when I was only 10 years old, and was elected secretary of the club when I was 16. In later years, I continued as Secretary, and was on the board of directors for many years. I also served as president for a couple of years. After the club was incorporated, I remained an active member serving in numerous positions at the club including fish chairman.

The clubhouse was located at Prentice Corner in a small patch of woods a couple hundred yards from the shore of the Meadow Pond. The activities at the club back then were BINGO parties and numerous suppers. Raccoon and ham suppers were a big hit back then, with tickets to the supper selling for \$2. They were quickly sold out for every supper. The club's cook was George Bramen back then, and he was famous for his turtle soup. Every year, snap-



Courtesy

This week's first picture shows the plaque I received at the pond dedication.

per turtles were caught in the scenes of bait fishermen trying to catch shiners for local bait shops. The turtles were donated to the club almost on a weekly basis. Linwood Pond was the hot spot to seign for shiners back in the day.

The Clubhouse was later moved to a piece of property on White Court in Douglas that was purchased for land taxes. The approximately 100 acres has been the home of the WFGC for many years, and has a state of the art clubhouse built by many members of the club over the years. The Blackstone Valley Beagle Club used the club for a number of years prior to moving to their own club in



Courtesy

The writer with his family on the big night.

Douglas. The Whitinsville Fish & Game Club used Rileys Pond on Castle Hill Road in Whitinsville for many years. The former Whitins Machine Works owned Rileys pond and allowed the Whitinsville club to stock it with trout. I have a lot of great memories fishing at Rileys Pond, and my son Ralph JR. caught his first big brown trout there.

Now, the Whitinsville Fish & Game Club has their own trout pond at their new location on White Court.

Having my Granddaughter Andrea & her husband Chris, along with my two great grandchildren Eva and Logan and son Ralph, Jr. made four generations that were at the ceremonies making it that much more special.

The Eastern States Expo at the Big E in Springfield will

open their doors on Feb. 23-25! Attending the show every year is always a blast as we see old friends and acquaintances. The latest in fishing and hunting gear is always great to see, along with hunting and fishing guides from around the world signing up sportsmen and women for that special outdoor adventure. Hope to see you there.

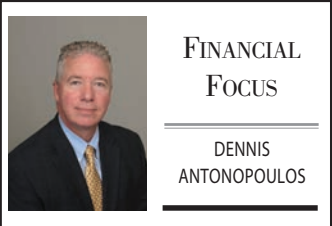
Captain Mel True will be holding his annual fishing show again this year in Wareham! One day only! Towneplace Marriott, Wareham, MA, Buzzards Bay! April 13, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. New & used fishing tackle. A few tables available! Contact Mel at 1-508-951-9991.

200 Sportsmen's club ice fishing derby cancelled for this weekend due to unsafe ice.

The Uxbridge Rod & Gun Club will hold their annual ice derby this Saturday for members only, ice permitting. The kitchen will be open for breakfast starting at 6 a.m., even if the derby needs to be canceled because of poor ice! Chef Bedard is planning a great breakfast for all in attendance. Come on down!

Take A Kid Fishing & Keep Them Rods Bending!

## Benefits of fixed-income investments



When many people think about investing, the first thing that comes to mind is the stock market. And that's not surprising, as the rise and fall of stock prices is constantly in the news. But if you're going to achieve your financial goals, you may well need to look beyond stocks and include fixed-income investments in your portfolio.

Fixed-income investments offer three important benefits:

Income – When you invest in fixed-income vehicles, such as bonds, Treasury securities and certificates of deposit (CDs), you receive regular income in the form of interest payments. And you continue to receive this income until your investment matures or you sell it, no matter what's happening in the financial markets. Of course, the income you can receive from fixed-income investments will always depend on the interest rates at which these investments were issued. But if you own a mix of long-term and short-term fixed-income investments, you can gain some protection against fluctuating rates. When market rates are low, you can get greater income from your longer-term bonds, which typically — although not always — pay higher rates. And when market rates rise, you can benefit by reinvesting the proceeds from your short-term bonds.

Diversification – If you were only to own stocks, or stock-based mutual funds, your portfolio would be susceptible to higher risks, especially with market downturns. But you may be able to reduce the impact of market volatility by adding fixed-income investments to your holdings. Bond prices often move in a different direction from stocks, so if stock prices are falling, you might find that the value of your bonds is rising. You can also diversify within the fixed-income portion of your portfolio by owning a mix of corporate and Treasury bonds, as well as CDs, just to name a few.

Stability – As mentioned, you will always receive interest payments from your bonds if you hold them until maturity. But if you wanted to sell your bonds before they mature, you could get more, or less, than what you originally paid for them. When market interest rates rise, the price of your current bonds will likely fall, as no one will pay you the full price for them when they get newer ones that pay more — this is what's known as interest-rate risk. Conversely, when market rates fall, the prices of your current bonds will probably rise. But here's the key point to remember: Bond prices generally don't fluctuate as much as stock prices. In other words, bonds are typically less volatile than stocks. Consequently, owning bonds can add diversification to your portfolio. And to maximize the stabilizing effects of bonds, you may want to stick with high-quality bonds rated as "investment grade" by independent bond-rating agencies.

How much of your portfolio should consist of fixed-income investments? There's no one right answer for everyone. And over time, your interest in these types of investments may well change — for example, as you near retirement, you may want to consider shifting some of your growth-oriented investments into income-producing ones, though you'll still need some growth potential to keep up with inflation. In any case, the combination of income, diversification and stability provided by bonds and similar securities should be compelling enough for you to find a place for them in your investment mix.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Dennis Antonopoulos, your local Edward Jones Advisor at 5 Albert St., Auburn, MA 01501 Tel: 508-832-5385 or dennis.antonopoulos@edwardjones.com.

# A Nostalgic Peek at Garden Folklore

The garden has long been a mystical place, where the wonder of nature's handiwork is apparent each harvest season. Given a garden's unpredictability it should come as no surprise that gardeners through the ages have tried to tempt fate through rituals and rhymes. As we anticipate the spring season (and the ground hog predicted an early spring!), it is fitting this column be dedicated to a sampling of garden folklore of tradition and tales.

“Weather” or Not: The weather plays a major role in planting success, and our forefathers had numerous anecdotes and rhymes to aid them in recalling nature's predic-

tions. Here is an entertaining collection of phrases for you to ponder.

Clear moon, frost soon. Cloudy mornings turn to clear afternoons. Halo around the moon, rain soon. Halo around the sun or moon, rain or snow soon. If you see the underside of the leaves in the gentle breeze, it will rain before your sneeze. Mare's tails and mackerel scales make tall ships take in their sails. No weather is ill when the wind is still.



TAKE THE HINT

KAREN TRAINOR

Pale moon doth rain, Red moon doth blow, White moon doth neither rain nor snow. Red skies at night, sailor's delight. Red skies at morning, sailors take warning. Smoke curling downward, poor weather. When the stars begin to huddle, the earth will soon become a puddle. When your joints all start to ache, rainy weather is at stake. When a cow endeavors to scratch his ear, it means a rain shower is very near. When he thumps his ribs with

an angry tail, Look out for thunder; lightning and hail. A year of snow, a year of plenty. Evening red and morning gray help the traveler on his way. Evening gray and morning red bring down rain upon his head.

Mantra of the Months: Certain months of the year bring curious clues as to Mother Nature's mood. Some of these vintage verses are oft repeated today.

If February brings no rain, 'tis neither good for grass nor grain. If the grass do grow in Janiveer, it grows the worse for it all the year. In February, if thou hearest

Turn To **TRAINOR** page **A19**

## Aircraft memorabilia



ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES & ESTATES  
WAYNE TUISKULA

Fascination with flight dates back centuries. English cleric Roger Bacon wrote about mechanical flight around 1250 A.D., according to the Library of Congress. Leonardo da Vinci

designed flying machines and a parachute from 1485 to 1500. The first aerial voyage took place in 1783 when Jean François Pilâtre de Rozier and Marquis d'Arlandes took flight in a Montgolfier hot-air balloon. Two years later in 1785, Jean-Pierre Blanchard and John Jeffries crossed the English Channel by balloon. Da Vinci's parachute design was put to use in 1797, when André Jacques Garnerin made the first human parachute descent from a balloon. Both powered flight and winged



flight were being considered in 1843 when aeronautical engineering

pioneer George Cayley published a biplane design. Henri Giffard used

a steam engine to propel a cigar shaped aircraft in 1852. In 1891, Otto Lilienthal began successful gliding experiments and in 1895 he began flying his biplanes. Hu used split willow framed wings covered with cotton, resembling bird wings. His biplane was considered the most influential winged aircraft prior to the Wright Brothers. On Dec. 17, 1903, two brothers who owned a bicycle shop in Dayton, Ohio made the first airplane flight. Wilbur and Orville Wright flew a 12-horsepower gasoline engine pow-

ered aircraft for 12 seconds above the sand dunes of Kitty Hawk, N.C.

Later in the 1900s, record-breaking pilots were considered heroes. Charles A. Lindbergh completed the first solo, nonstop trans-Atlantic flight in 1927. In 1932, Amelia Earhart became the first woman to fly a solo non-stop trans-Atlantic flight. Later in 1947, Charles E. Yeager's Bell X-1 became the first aircraft to exceed the speed of sound in level flight.

As you might

Turn To **ANTIQUES** page **A19**

## Every loss holds a lesson

Loss is a part of everyone's life, as common as the air we breathe. It's one of those things we all face – the deep sadness of saying goodbye.

It could be the final goodbye to a family member, a close friend, or someone else we hold dear. We know these moments are coming, but that doesn't make them any easier. They're like uninvited guests

who show up, reminding us how precious our time is with the people we care about.

As a poet once said, “Sometimes, only one person is missing, and the whole world seems depopulated.”

Then there's the kind of loss that sneaks up on us, the kind we don't talk about much. It's

POSITIVELY SPEAKING

TOBY MOORE

not about the unavoidable end of life but the relationships that drift apart because of what we do or don't do.

In these moments, we might lose someone and part of ourselves. This is particularly true when we invest so much in our relationships that our identity diminishes. We can

lose sight of who we are outside of these connections, and the loss of self can be as profound as the loss of the other.

Take, for instance, the time I lost a business partner. We clashed over a business decision that seemed unfairly balanced and not mutually beneficial to me. I tried to find a middle ground. I sought a

Turn To **MOORE** page **A19**

## Retirees: Time to use a barbell? (No, not the weights)

Predicting where interest rates will be in the future is an extremely difficult task. Where will rates be 12 months from now? Higher? Lower? The same? Even professional economists with their proverbial crystal balls guess wrong. Nevertheless, it is important for retirees to consider the current interest rate environment when looking for ways to maximize their sources of retirement income.

During 2023 we watched the Federal Reserve dramatically raise rates in an effort to slow the economy and curb infla-

FINANCIAL FOCUS

BY CHRISTOPHER MALLON

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT,  
PROGRAM MANAGER

LPL REGISTERED PRINCIPAL, THE  
CAPSTONE PLANNING GROUP

tion. The chart below illustrates that dramatic increase.

Today, there is a general consensus amongst economists that we are at the end of this tightening cycle, and we will likely see rates come down in the second half of 2024. Most notably, during their Dec. 12-13 Fed meeting, policymakers signaled the central bank would cut rates three times in 2024, confirming a pivot from prior rate hikes.

Against this backdrop, retirees are now left wondering how to position excess cash, CD's, bonds, and fixed income portfolios. It is no surprise one of the most

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Early school start times pose health risks to students

To the Editor:

Students across the state of Massachusetts face the threat of drowsiness every morning as they head to school. Massachusetts has the second-earliest average high school start time in the United States, at 7:38 a.m. Because of this, students attend their morning classes with hardship as they are barely able to focus or complete the task at hand to the best of their abilities. There is one solution to this exhausting problem: high schools should delay their start times.

According to the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics, teenagers aged 13 - 18 should be sleeping at least 8 - 10 hours per night. This

isn't achievable with the current hours set by schools and the workload teachers provide their students. On average, teenagers are only getting six and a half to seven and a half hours of sleep each night, which is well beneath the recommended amount. But a little drowsiness in the mornings isn't the only issue that accompanies early school start times. The CDC states that becoming overweight, mental illnesses such as depression, engaging in unhealthy behaviors like turning to alcohol and drugs, and finally, performing poorly in school are all symptoms that accompany lack of sleep in teenagers. While transportation, scheduling, and childcare conflicts may arise for families due to the

potential alteration of school hours, such issues are tremendously minor in comparison to the risk 70 percent of students face every day because of their chronic sleep deprivation.

To prevent these health risks faced by the majority of students, I urge schools to reevaluate their set hours. Even the minor readjustment recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics of starting school after 8:30 a.m. can significantly improve a typical student's sleep schedule and decrease the likelihood of acquiring other issues related to sleep deprivation. It is a simple and necessary solution.

*Jaquelyn McNamara  
Uxbridge*

### Save the deer!

harvested each year in the state.

We must protect these distinguished creatures with all of the tenacity that we do with our other natural resources. It is important that rules and regulations are greater for the animal than the sport. Regulations dictate and govern so many other sports around the state, so it is perfectly reasonable to ask our

government to evaluate these.

The dates of hunting season, allowed weapons and proximity to houses are nowhere near restrictive enough and must be changed to put the importance of nature above hobby. Enough is enough, help save the deer!

*Margaret Johnson  
Uxbridge*

### The importance of outdoor education

To the Editor:

As schools become increasingly reliant on technology, teachers and the school administration may need to step back and reconsider how students learn best. It's important to still prioritize educational skills that can be acquired through outdoor learning. Although this initiative may bring up concerns for teachers who might not feel comfortable teaching in outdoor environments due to the safety and health concerns, I would argue that the positive outcomes outweigh the negative. I strongly believe that outdoor education is beneficial to develop social skills, cooperative learning skills, improved mental health, and can create memorable lessons for students of all

ages.

Rather than sitting children in front of a computer screen and forcing them to learn from the same fluorescent light that engulfs their attention for much of their day, teachers should embrace the opportunity of discovery and the valuable benefits that come from outdoor education. This style of teaching can vary from a full class of outdoor play and creativity to simply a core class that is taught in an outdoor setting. Studies have proven that when students are taught outside, cognitive ability, long-term retention, and mental health levels are increased. Many of my most memorable learning experiences have been made outside, whether that's listening to history lectures in an

outdoor tent during covid, building stone walls in my seventh grade world cultures class, or designing solar powered water fountains in fifth grade. Being outside has a way of livening the soul and encouraging teamwork, and can create long-lasting memories.

Education requires much more than just the ability to retain facts and information that will be forgotten shortly after a test. True learning is being able to interact with and understand how the world around you works in order to better understand reality. Teachers should consider these truths, and integrate outdoor learning into their curriculum.

*Molly Burkhardt  
Uxbridge*

### Why is the capacity issue in our hospitals not being addressed?

To the Editor:

On Jan. 19, Mass General hospital, located in Boston, Tweeted that the Emergency Department (ED) is "reaching critical capacity level." This announcement is alarming enough at the height of COVID-19 and flu season. However, reporter Morgan Rousseau claims that this crisis is ongoing. On Jan. 21, she wrote on Boston.com that the hospital's ED has been "operating in a state of 'Code Help' or 'Capacity Disaster'" almost every day for the past 16 months. While MGH posted this problem on social media on a single day, Morgan's article suggests that this has been the norm at MGH for over a year—which leads one to ask the question: why is the issue not being addressed?

An analyst from the Health Policy Commission argues that the cause of this "Capacity Disaster" is due to the over-advertisement of the hospital itself. Dr. David Auerbach, senior director of research at the Massachusetts Health Policy Commission, indicates that more beds aren't the solution but instead, hospitals are not making wise decisions regard-

ing patients' health situation. Yet, reality proves that their statements are not true. This phenomenon also appears to be an issue for UMass Memorial Hospital and Russells Hall Hospital. For example, my host grandmother went to UMass Memorial on Jan. 24; however, she had to stay in the ED for five days until a room was available. Since the MGH is not the only hospital to have such a problem, it showcases that this is a universal issue for medical institutions in the state of Massachusetts. Thus, the MGH is neither encouraging people too much, nor wrongly distributing their bed, but the demand exceeds supplies—highlighting that more rooms and beds are, indeed, necessary.

To solve this "emergency," the MGH offers a few solutions; the simplest one is to just build more rooms for beds. Even though the costs of construction might be high, the value of human health and life should be considered as priority. Other than directly adding more beds, the MGH also suggests establishing a "discharge lounge." This would let workers discharge certain impatiens early, which opens up empty spaces for new

patients. Similarly, the MGH proposes the idea of a "Home Hospital Service System," allowing the American populations to be well taken care of at their house instead of occupying beds in the hospital. The public should support the plan of the hospital because most people might be directly or indirectly affected by such matters. Since accidents can happen suddenly to either one or one's family, calling for actions when an individual has already fallen into a dilemma is not valuable and effective considering changes often require time. Furthermore, individuals or those that have family members who have to stay in the ED during their time at the hospital should advocate for MGH's suggestion, since they have or are experiencing such situations and understand the inconvenience brought by such a problem.

Everyone in the community shares the responsibility to make an effort towards the improvement of the hospital in order to ensure the safety, health, and life of the people around and oneself.

*Sining Guo  
Whitinsville*

### Save the Blackstone River

To the Editor:

The Blackstone River is still being impacted from pollution that took place decades ago and today from people using it as a dumping ground. New water protections and efforts to restore the river are needed if the river is ever going to be clean enough for fishing and swimming. While the damage from the pollution seems harmless to people, it is the sentiments at the bottom of the river that contaminate the water making it harmful to wildlife and humans.

While some people may not see the restoration of the Blackstone River a priority, advocates want this to be done

and it would start with removing the sediment. Unfortunately, this process is expensive, takes time, and this would mean finding a new location to dispose of the sediment. I would address this concern by explaining the harmful impact the pollution has had on the wildlife and, it's hard not to ignore the nasty color and odor from the river.

As an avid fisherman, I have had to look elsewhere to fish because there are no more fish in the Blackstone River. According to Sam Turken of GBH News, "stormwater picks up motor oils as well as nutrients from fertilizers and animal waste that can fuel the growth of toxic

algae in water bodies...When the algae die and decompose, bacteria break them down, sucking up oxygen from the water and effectively suffocating nearby fish." This has left the river hazardous for swimming and has negatively impacted the fish. I have witnessed lots of trash on the banks of the river and the stench permeating from the river. In order to improve the condition of the Blackstone River, residents of the Blackstone River Valley need to demand that their towns help fund restoration projects.

Respectfully,

*Matt Godin  
Northbridge*

### Make school sports free to all!

of sports so that it does not create unfairness in their family.

However, it is important to consider the other side of the issue, which is the argument that paying makes public school programs better overall and that the district will not be able to budget for this change in price for youth sports. Although funds obviously contribute to improving equipment, uniforms, and coaching staff, it should be an option for parents to contribute in this way, so that those that feel their money is making a positive impact on athletics can continue to support their teams, but those that cannot afford it can still participate. In response to the argument about the town funds not being enough to cover the cost that will be lacking without a registration fee, the town of Uxbridge is reassuring individuals that districts will be able to easily fund athletics with their respective budgets, and that the school will receive funding from the state to go directly towards athletics and make up for the money that would be lost and create opportunities for all students.

*Grace Walton  
Whitinsville*

### Resuscitate Wallum Lake

To the Editor:

Wallum Lake is located in the Douglas State Forest, and is known for its public swimming area, hiking trails, and surrounding nature. It is a familiar name for residents in Douglas; I have grown up in Douglas my whole life, and somehow can count on one hand the amount of times I have actually been. This applies to many people—specifically the younger generations—in Douglas because of the busyness of the park in season, and perhaps the lack of interest out of season. It is important to remember that this attraction is convenient and intriguing, and there are certainly changes that could be made to take advantage of this natural environment. Resuscitating Wallum Lake would add to efforts in making Douglas a more attractive area to live in. Small endeavors towards Wallum Lake would have a great impact: upgrading some of its features, organizing more events, and cleaning up trash (especially in season) would be a great place to start.

An issue that may still arise for locals would be the difficulty accessing Wallum Lake in the summer months. The parking lots often fill quickly with out-of-state day-trippers which causes the entrance to be closed or limited for the rest of the day. There may not be any great solutions to this problem because the state park is owned by Massachusetts, and is not expensive for out-of-state residents. Surrounding states charge these visitors more to enter state parks than Massachusetts does, which is what makes Wallum Lake so appealing. However, it is often forgotten that the park is open and available in the spring and fall. Cleaning up the hiking trails and replacing some of the unstable wooden walkways could be done so that the trails are pristine for hikers in the off-season. A more extensive project would be re-paving the boat or kayak launch, which would require state logistics.

In order to call attention to the natural capabilities of Wallum Lake, more group events could be organized. The Adult Social Center in Douglas already has hosted events like fishing tournaments in the past, which are great ways to connect with both the community and the outdoors. Advertising such activities towards younger generations may remind them of this attraction in the area. The winter is the perfect time for ice fishing on the lake. In the spring, group hiking trips or picnics would be entertaining. The foliage in the fall would make the perfect scenery for bird-watching. Enhancing the natural beauty is an easy way to organize town events.

Although many of these solutions may require a lot of coordination and may be difficult to organize given that the park is owned by the state, cleaning up trash is the most important and doesn't need much planning. In the past decade especially, litter in or around the beach area has been an issue. The status has definitely improved over the recent years, but at the very least, keeping the park clean for the wildlife surrounding it should be a priority. With the help of volunteers, tidying up the park often would help resuscitate the natural environment, even in the busiest times of the summer.

Taking these actions into consideration could improve the reputation and accessibility of Wallum Lake and remind local residents of everything that this state park offers: it's a place of adventure, peacefulness, and fellowship.

*Avery Glidden  
Douglas*

### Issues with middle school sports

To the Editor:

While separating middle and high school sports for private schools may benefit surrounding public schools and create a false sense of fairness at these levels, it limits competition, decreases participation, and disheartens those involved in sports.

The MIAA holds a tight grip throughout the state on Middle and High School sports, especially throughout Central Massachusetts. The restriction of private Middle School students competing at a high school level stifles their room for growth, particularly in schools and sports that do not offer other opportunities for these student-athletes. For example, my sister, Isabella Menard, an avid skier, member of the Nipmuc Co-Op Alpine Ski Team, and seventh-grade student at Whitinsville Christian began training for this coming season of racing, expecting to be racing among her peers - other middle school students from Nipmuc and BVT - but was told she would not be able to ski race this season due to Rule 53, supposedly created to increase participation, and would be in charge of managing scores and forerunning (a form of equipment testing pre-race where times are recorded but do not impact results). While extremely discouraged, Izzy began forerunning and after collecting results, she would be ranked 2nd on the team but is not eligible to support her team or teammates as they finish and collect team points.

The exclusion of private schools -even ones with rules against recruitment and athletic-based scholarships- unfairly penalizes schools and struggling Co-Op programs already floundering to scavenge enough students to build a team.

*Liam Menard  
Whitinsville*



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## The woof woofing cat in the Lincoln hat

To the Editor:

That woof, woofing Whitinsville cat in the Abraham Lincoln stovepipe hat is such a kiddie. Did you catch the joke in the critical thinking cat's Cato Institute tribute to the Green Hornet comic book series? Does the fact that the Cato Institute uses an aquarium stocked with wicked smart guppies as its think tank help you catch on to the highbrow humor?

That opening one-liner about never asking "for all this notoriety" was an absolute hoot. Since we all should know that the opinion section in every publication in America is based on the principle of letter writers seeking notoriety in a variety of ways for a variety of purposes.

I think it's great the woofing Whitinsville cat reminded us of the fundamentals in such an obtuse, yet humorous way.

It reminded me about the joke I relate to folks whenever the Gore/Bush conspiracy theorists request a response from me on that Florida voting disaster. Here's how it goes in five, count them, almost six sentences.

In 2006 in the State of Florida, the anti-republican Omar Mateen registered himself as a Democrat. A decade later, Omar Mateen entered the Pulse night club and began aborting innocent lives at will. Doing so in strict concordance with the same left-wing abortion doctrine that currently exists here in Massachusetts. Therefore, in the true spirit of inclusive language, we should refer to all acts of mass murder as acts that abort innocent lives. While also referring to the murderers themselves as the quintessential abortionists.

Now, what's not funny about a joke like that?

Meanwhile, on a far more serious note, the 2020 abortion related changes to the State budget continue to loom. Doing so in ways that three of our Commonwealth's top Democrats are trying like the devil to hide from. That tap dancing trio being our African-American extremist State Attorney General. Our lesbian-American extremist Governor. Along with that

reparations genius that's running the show as Boston's Mayor.

The latter of that dynamic trio of left-wing brain trusts directing federal Covid-19 money to partially fund reparations research. To the tune of half a million bucks in total. Despite the fact that black slavery and the black slaves themselves were a ginormous net loss to America's pocketbook. Which was one of Great Britain's primary motivators for ditching its own African Slavery model after the Revolutionary War.

The costs of feeding, housing and medically caring for black slaves far outweighed the meager financial benefits that could be gained from what little work those African slaves actually did. And yet the great myth that black slaves built America lives on here in the Bay State.

Making it no surprise that our three liberal con artists remain closed-mouth on the voting rights consequences of our far more recent emancipation proclamation. The fact that 16 year old persons in this liberal utopia were unconditionally granted the right to vote when they were freed as a class of citizens. Being totally and completely emancipated from parental control under the 2020 abortion related amendments to the State budget has its legally inescapable consequences.

Of course, things are much better than that. Because, under the very same amendments to our legal system's unique source code, the ownership rights to the human remains of a legal abortion are up for grabs for virtually anyone to lay claim to.

Recall the idea of "pregnant persons" that predated those 2020 abortion amendments? We are an equal rights State by constitutional amendment, aren't we? Well guess what?

The equal rights of any biological father or prospective male guardian to the human remains of any legally aborted fetus or child became a prevailing legal interest upon the passage of such legal changes by supermajority. That prevailing interest kicking in at the moment any aborted fetus or child is considered

deceased. Making it a matter for the Massachusetts Probate Court to resolve.

Why so?

Because the fair market value of even a small part of those human remains, for scientific study or whatever purpose, is far in excess of one thousand dollars. Putting the State on the hook for the costs of flash freezing those remains like they were a seagoing fish stick.

Now imagine there were some religiously minded oracle living in the Blackstone valley. And that person alone or working in concert with other Christians were to somehow discover such a set of legal principles.

Wouldn't it make sense for such persons to petition the Probate Court for some ownership rights in those human remains for a proper and respectful Christian burial of those lost souls? And wouldn't that then require the State to photograph and document those human remains prior to their undergoing the fish stick freezing process? Then wouldn't it become incumbent upon the State to publicly post such images, in some restricted way, so that any interested party or possible relative could view those images?

Do you see how abortion related issues in Massachusetts may be a bit more involved than most experts realize?

Anyway, getting back to less serious local matters. It's obvious we are all suffering from the same disappointment. Since it appears the premiere critical thinker of Whitinsville had to shelve the idea of writing the definitive book on critical thinking for us dullards. However, it's not all bad.

Because now as the woof, woofing Whitinsville cat in the stovepipe hat, we can all learn from the recently published example of self-deprecating, highbrow humor: Taking to heart the endearing notion that we all need to take ourselves, and each other, far less seriously.

It works for me. How about you?

*Stephen Gambone  
Northbridge*

## Overlooked hazards on winter roads

To the Editor:

Massachusetts residents face treacherous driving conditions during the freezing winter season, which is heightened by the state's lack of laws governing snow accumulation on vehicles. A vast number of scenarios act as repercussions of drivers who are perhaps unaware of the potential dangers or simply negligent, failing to clear snow and ice from their cars, creating hazards for pedestrians and fellow motorists.

A notable consequence of this negligence occurred on Feb. 1 along Route 146 in Uxbridge, when a Millbury resident's windshield was struck by a large sheet of ice, causing significant injuries to his wife and extensive damage to their vehicle.

Such catastrophes serve as somber reminders of the importance of prioritizing the safety of others by taking the time to thoroughly remove snow and ice from vehicles. Given the already hazardous nature of icy roads during winter, it's imperative to avoid adding unnecessary risks wherever possible. Taking just a mere fifteen minutes to ensure vehicles are clear of all ice and snow can reduce the likelihood of catastrophic accidents, minimizing property damage and protecting lives. It is crucial for all drivers to recognize their responsibility and take necessary measures to contribute to safer road conditions for everyone.

Sincerely,

*Victoria McNamara  
Uxbridge*

## Looking through a dark prism

To the Editor:

It is refreshing to read Northbridge neighbors' thoughtful pushbacks on letters by a frequent Whitinsville writer who seems to fancy himself a savant. In his Jan. 26 letter, the Washington Post was quoted: "Calls to 'secure the border' have never been anything but political theater." Since super-majority now considers 'national security' tied to out-of-control 'migration' as their #1 issue, Washington seems quite unprepared with an adequate script for any imminent opening night.

'Illegal invaders' is factual, albeit not PC, for those trafficked across our borders, and Congress should acknowledge it truthfully. HR 32 is an on-the-books federal border protection law erased by executive order of this administration. Now, millions of unidentified (!) aliens are entering 'legally' in spite of serious risks posed. For the Savant to pervert "asylum seekers under existing laws are entitled to remain here waiting a hearing" is simply ludicrous when viewing overwhelming video evidence of the 'migration crisis' to the contrary.

'Got away' are unaccounted for, and among those untold numbers receiving a hearing date (years later!) on an 'asylum claim', how are courts to locate millions of immigrants and/or what percentage will appear voluntarily? Current catch-and-release policy compounds 'immigration reform' because there is still no answer for millions of "dreamers," a.k.a. undocumented illegals, already here!

Economic overload on taxpayer wallets (housing, schooling, medical expenses, terrorist threat) is already beyond measure. As further thanks for America's generous hospitality upticks in immigrants' crime is recorded in many 'sanctuary' locals. Recently, after assaulting New York City police officers, guilty parties escaped with no cash bail and a double-bird flip (!) before departing for California! Our justice system is in shambles with little or no accountability imposed in many places.

Not unsympathetic to those hoping for a better life in America; however, it is American lives with whom "politics is being played," not immigrants as headlined by the Whitinsville Savant. The unseen immigration bill, concocted by bipartisan puppets, (if political gossip is accurate) lacks common sense, realistic terms, and is probably DOA. Everyone should dare look through this dark prism with clear heads and eyes and demand smarter thinking from Washington leaders.

*Jane F. Keegan  
Uxbridge*

## Massachusetts data needs improvement

To the Editor:

Although Massachusetts has one of the highest rates of broadband access, the state still has a ton of dead spots and areas of slow data which needs to be fixed in this day and age.

It is important to note that, according to the Federal Communications Commission's national broadband map, the state of Massachusetts has 99 percent broadband coverage; however, this is due to the collection of general data. Most Massachusetts residents do have access to broadband, but some cannot actually connect to these networks. The most common issue with broadband is its cost. Although broadband is very important in 21st century culture, the network is quite expensive; thus, many cannot afford it. These challenges are unacceptable because of the need for high speed internet. Since schools and many jobs are increasingly online, it is required to have fast enough WiFi to keep up with one's occupation. Furthermore, since broadband is a spectrum, those who can afford it may still have trouble with internet speeds. Only 44 percent of the rural population of Massachusetts are reaching 7 Mbps in mobile download

speeds. Most residents may have broadband home WiFi, but fewer people have fast broadband mobile data.

Even with almost total coverage throughout Massachusetts, there are still data dead spots all over. There are around 400 areas that receive no data on just Verizon alone. One such dead spot is right in the center of Uxbridge. This causes problems in situations such as when I needed to reach my mother while she was working there. There was a time where I was stuck at Six Flags, but my mom was at work. When I tried contacting her, she was not able to respond until 40 minutes after the original text. Luckily, my father was free to pick me up, but if he was not capable of responding, I would have been in the dark for at least half an hour. Since I live an hour away from the theme park, Six Flags could have closed before I could get a ride home had my father not received the text.

Not only are there many dead spots, but the data itself is slow all around the state. For example, one of my friends could not find who she was planning on skiing with the other day. The data at Wachusett Mountain is horrible, and she could not get in contact with anyone. She

wandered around the resort many times in search of her friends, and attempted to text them, but her internet connection was too slow. This caused at least a 30-minute delay in her finding who she was meant to ski with. If the data had been better, my friend would have been able to contact anyone in her group the second she didn't know where they were.

The internet problem in Massachusetts needs to be addressed, and can be through petitions to both local governments and internet service providers. In cases similar to Uxbridge, it is important to write to town governments due to the importance of data in downtown. The state of Massachusetts has applied for the BEAD (Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment) program, so it may have the money to extend broadband soon. The push on local governments could help get faster speed in that area sooner. In a world where phones are increasingly important for life, the availability of data should match that of cellular devices. Mobile Internet providers must make their product more affordable and provide faster service to their clients.

*Will Johnson  
Uxbridge*

## Local towns should prioritize repairing flood damaged roads

To the Editor:

Though it has been a consistent problem the past few years, I think that the idea of fixing commonly flooded roads should be taken into consideration by local and state governments. This past year in particular, I have seen more flooded roads than ever before, and they have left significant damage on the roads themselves and in some cases damaged vehicles.

On July 16 last year, two drivers were stuck underneath a flooded underpass and firefighters were luckily able to rescue them. After this incident, the state has granted \$5.5 million to create a new closed drainage system to funnel water

out of the road faster but there has been more flooding issues around Worcester. Many neighborhoods in Worcester experienced flooding this past year, so now there are several crews doing manhole work to help update Worcester's 100 year old infrastructure system. This attention needs to be shown to smaller towns surrounding the city.

As I drove around towns such as Uxbridge, Douglas, and Northbridge last year, I had seen multiple roads blocked off due to flooding and even more damaged roads with numerous potholes. Drivers can easily damage their vehicles if they approach significant hazards such as these because they usually need to

make a quick decision to either stop their car to avoid the hazard or try to navigate through the obstacle. When pressured to make a decision in a matter of seconds, most drivers' judgment probably isn't as great as it would be without time constraints leading to potentially risky choices and damaged cars. Nonetheless, I can't force local or state governments to immediately fix these damaged roads even though it probably won't cost as much as the Route 20 solution, but I request that they recognize the problem and at least consider investing money into repairing these towns' roads.

*Caleb Deters  
Uxbridge*

## A pesky pothole problem

To the Editor:

Potholes have always been a problem on the roads during the winter months, but it is imperative that awareness is continuously raised on the issue in order to fix damaged roads before they grow exponentially, causing further destruction to cars and creating unsafe driving habits.

Potholes' contribution to car maintenance is obvious, as the damage from hitting one ranging between a \$200 rim fix to upwards of \$1,200 on tire and rim damages, with an average damage cost being \$306 according to Triple-A. Not only do potholes cause damage to vehicles, but they also cause drivers to act irrationally in order to avoid them, such as swerving into another lane or promptly breaking in heavily trafficked areas. This, in turn, causes traffic, delays, detours, and a heightened anxiety surrounding driving in communities due to the risk drivers are putting on others to ensure their car's safety while not taking into account the other cars on the road. With the harsh New England weather, potholes are inevitable, though according to Stackler, an

analysis company, Massachusetts has the fourth highest rate of pothole complaints, which, judging by the state of the roads, is accurate.

Though potholes are pressing issues, it is understandable to sympathize with the government and recognize that the mass pothole problem can't be fixed overnight. The cost of filling a single pothole is typically around \$35-\$50, with the costs of the repair crew being around \$150 according to Seal Master, a pavement company. Even though Massachusetts has received community infrastructure grants that allow for road repairs, in the midst of the cold, wet season, it is a struggle to keep up with the repairs. Yet, when comparing the costs of damages caused by said pothole to any number of vehicles that may hit it, road safety is worth the cost of repairs.

The prime solution to the pothole problem is making reports. Without reporting potholes, the government or road repair companies can't fix the damage, as their primary job isn't to search them out, but to repair them. In essence, if you see

something, say something.

*Ella Brochu  
Douglas*

## Drivers beware!

To the Editor:

Massachusetts experiences extreme weather all year: high temperatures (ninety degrees or above), low temperatures (twenty degrees or below), heavy rain and snow. Due to the weather the state experiences, the ground- specifically the roads- has been becoming dry to the point of collapsing. It's critical to address this (sooner rather than later) because spring is approaching, which will arrive with higher temperatures that will dry out the roads- that have endured the winter's cold climate for over a month. This is a serious matter because it can destroy one's vehicle and cause accidents.

If an accident were to occur, there are some places — like the city of Boston — that allow people to file a claim and possibly reimburse them, although it can only happen if the damages in the roads- pot-

holes- were reported before the accident took place. On the other hand, the state wouldn't cover any damages to any vehicles, only if there was harm to the individual(s) involved. It's probably because so many cars and trucks are damaged daily from the roads being unmanaged, which would cause the state to lose a lot of money; however, this can be easily avoided if the ground is taken care of- especially since this is a reoccurring problem.


Action needs to be taken to secure the streets because the roads will only decrease in quality when hotter temperatures begin to arrive. Until any change is seen, drivers need to be careful when on the roads and must stay as vigilant as possible.

*Erin Wyndham  
Northbridge*

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# QCC welcomes first community resource dog

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College Campus Police started the new year off with the college's first-ever community resource dog. Sigg, a four-month-old English Cream Golden Retriever, is already making his presence known on campus. He will be sworn in as an official campus police dog once he completes rigorous training, making him the first of his kind at a Worcester college or university.

"The college community is overjoyed to have this type of emotional support service for its students, faculty and staff. Studies have shown that interacting with dogs can improve

mood and decrease stress," said QCC President Dr. Luis G. Pedraja. "In this new post-pandemic world many people are still struggling with added stress and stressors. We are delighted to have Sigg as a member of our QCC community to offer a bit of cheer and positivity."

Community resource dogs have become a common practice for both educational institutions and police departments across the country. At QCC, Community Resource Officer Nicholas Yacuzzi is supervising Sigg, and the dog resides with Officer Yacuzzi and his family when he is not on duty.

Yacuzzi brought up the idea of



having the college retain a dog after witnessing resource officers utilize canines as a de-escalation technique.

"There is a huge need for this across the state and the country. These types of dogs have become a common practice to bridge the gap between the public and the police," Yacuzzi said.

While QCC has had therapy dogs

on campus during events and busy periods such as final examinations, the new community resource dog will be on campus consistently with office hours available for people to spend time with him.

Sigg is currently being trained by Golden Opportunities for Independence, a program in Walpole, MA that specializes in training dogs to work in a variety of settings, such as schools, healthcare facilities or as personal service dogs.

The community resource dogs are taught to be calm and confident in crowded environments through activities such as visits to Gillette Stadium on a busy day.

According to Yacuzzi, Sigg already knows several basic commands and has begun meeting the college community. Upon completion of his training, students, faculty and staff will be able to submit requests to spend time with Sigg during specific hours.

## Bay Path Nursing students volunteer at Show Choir Festival

DUDLEY — The Central Massachusetts Show Choir Festival was held at the Shepherd Hill Regional High School, Saturday, Feb. 3. Faculty and Practical Nursing Student Volunteers from Bay Path RVTHS Practical Nursing Academy provided on site medical emergency care alongside Dudley Police and Fire Department.

The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy team included Faculty lead Dr. Adelina Healy of Dudley and Practical Nursing student volunteers John Martin Wanjiru, Ashley Urbain, Michael Wairimu, Kaitlin Miliauskas, Evelyn Kiplangat, Catherine Ibrahim and Christiana Sochiletey.

The Practical Nursing student volunteers are all HCP/BLS CPR certified and trained in first aid. Photo shows from left, Michael Wairimu, Christiana Sochiletey, Evelyn Kiplangat, Kaitlin Miliauskas, and Catherine Ibrahim, all from Worcester.

Terry Salonis, Vice President of



the Shepherd Hill Music Parents along with Maria "Chet" Perea-Beaulieu coordinated the Bay Path student nurses' participation with Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSNEd, RN, CRRN Academy Director. According to Salonis, "this enormous event involves more than 24 schools from around the country and over 500 student performers." Bay Path PN volunteers were there to ensure the safety of students and their families with onsite medical care as a complement to Dudley PD and Fire. Volunteer shifts started at noon through 10 p.m.

"This was the second year for PN Volunteers to

participate in this capacity, we're glad to assist again and are looking forward to 2025," concluded Bolandrina.

About Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy offers a 40-week (10-month), full-time, Monday through Friday, evening program. The program begins mid-August and is completed in late June. Graduates receive a Practical Nursing Certificate and are eligible to take the NCLEX-PN licensure exam. The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy is fully approved by the: Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Human

Services of Public Health Board of Registration in Nursing 239 Causeway Street Boston, MA 02114 617-973-0800 www.mass.gov/dph/boards/rn The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy is accredited by the: Council on Occupational Education 840 Roswell Road Building 300, Suite 325 Atlanta, GA 30350 Telephone: 800-917-2081 www.council.org Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School is fully accredited by the: New England Association of Schools and Colleges 209 Burlington Rd., Suite 201 Bedford, MA, 01730-1433 781-271-0022 www.neasc.org



Courtesy

The Grass Roots Coffeehouse presents the band "Grass Routes Bluegrass" on Saturday, March 9. This marks the third performance by Grass Routes Bluegrass here in Northbridge. Grass Routes is a Connecticut five-piece bluegrass band. It is a well established group that has been delighting audiences for many years with a repertoire ranging from traditional bluegrass standards to folk and original and contemporary songs all performed in their own unique bluegrass style. Skillful instrumental work and strong vocals give Grass Routes their own characteristic sound. Showcasing especially tight harmonies, vocals include duets to four-part harmonies. The Grass Roots Coffeehouse is located at the Rockdale Congregational Church, 42 Fowler Rd., Northbridge. Admission to the concert is \$15. Hot foods, beverages and desserts are available prior to the concert and during intermission. Doors open at 6:45 p.m., concert begins at 7:30 p.m., and usually wraps up by 9:30 p.m. For more information, visit <http://www.rockdalechurchonline.org> or call Bob at 617-429-0347.



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# OBITUARIES

## Florence M. LaPan, 92

Douglas- Florence M. (Ballou) LaPan, 92, passed away on Monday, January 29, 2024 after a period of declining health. She is survived by her husband William E. LaPan with whom she recently celebrated 75 years of marriage.

She is also survived by a son, William K. LaPan and his wife, Lou Ann of Douglas; a granddaughter, Melissa Faherty and her husband Kenneth of Charlton; her great-grandson, Ryan Ward; 2 step grandchildren, Julie Bangma and her companion Dan Willsey of Amity, ME, and Jennifer Bangma and her companion Tim Cote of Grafton; 4 siblings, Betty Yacino and her husband Felix, Kenneth Ballou and his wife Linda, and Dicki Ballou all of Douglas, as well as Clayton "Butch" Ballou of Northbridge. She was predeceased by 3 siblings Dotty Jones, Ginger Jussauime, and Bud Ballou.

Born in Douglas, on May 1, 1931 she was the daughter of Henry and Helen (Hindon) Ballou, and was a lifelong resident of Douglas. Primarily a homemaker, Florence worked several years for Douglas Memorial High



School in their cafeteria.

Florence loved the outdoors and enjoyed hanging out by the pool, tending to her yard and planting flowers. Each year she looked forward to spending 4th of July with her whole family, having giant clam bakes with clam chowder, and steamers. She was an avid dog lover, and enjoyed her many dogs over the years.

A talented organist, Florence loved music and was a member of the United Methodist Church in Douglas where she sang in their choir.

A very sassy and "slightly spoiled" woman, she was very funny and had many great stories to share. She was an amazing wife, mother, grandmother, and sister, and will be deeply missed.

Her graveside funeral service was held on Thursday, February 8th at 11 am in Evergreen Cemetery. There are no calling hours. In lieu of flowers, donations in Florence's memory may be made to: Dog Orphans Inc., PO Box 767, Douglas, MA 01516. To leave a condolence message for her family please visit <http://www.Jackmanfuneralhomes.com>

## Kathleen E. "Kathy" Jackman, 56

Milford- Kathleen E. "Kathy" Jackman, 56, formerly of Douglas passed away peacefully on Saturday January 6, 2024 at Milford Regional Medical Center after an illness. Her family was by her side.

She is survived by her mother Janet M. (Fitzgerald) Jackman and her companion Rick of Whitinsville; her siblings Christine M. Jackman and her husband Brian Salatiello of Whitinsville, Gerald E. Jackman Jr. of Douglas, and Mary E. Rogers of Farmington, ME; nieces Lily, Phoebe, Isabelle, Grace, and Hannah; nephews Dan, Sam, and Niko; aunts, cousins and friends. Born in Worcester, MA on March 25, 1967 she was daughter of the late Gerald E. Jackman Sr. and lived in Milford the past 15 years. She was raised in Douglas and was a graduate of Douglas Memorial High School, Class of 1985. She also was a graduate of NE School of Photography and attended Chamberlayne Junior College and FINE Mortuary College.

Kathy worked as an Attendant for



several area funeral homes including Edwards Memorial Funeral Home in Milford and previously Jackman Funeral Home. She enjoyed her Jack Russell Terrier dogs Riley and Greta over the years, gardening, and walking the rail trail. Free spirited and always on the go, she enjoyed shopping and dining out with her mom, family gatherings, the beach, sailing, and spending time with

her nieces and nephews.

Outgoing and friendly, Kathy had a contagious laugh and loved her friends and coworkers. She was grateful to them during her illness. Special thanks to the staff at Milford Hospital for the excellent care she received there.

Following cremation, her Memorial Funeral Mass will be private. Burial will be in St. Patrick's Cemetery. There are no calling hours. Memorial donations may be made to a charity of one's choice. To leave a condolence message for her family please visit Jackman Funeral Home | Whitinsville MA funeral home and cremation

## James Edward Gouin

Webster/Uxbridge- James Edward Gouin, a decorated Navy veteran, passed away peacefully at home surrounded by his devoted wife and daughter on Saturday, January 27, 2024.

James is survived by his loving wife of thirty-five years, Lorene (Bacon) Gouin and three daughters: Jenna E. Gouin of Webster, who was his caregiver and advocate; Christine Ozolins of Dudley; and Jaime Teodoro of Worcester. He is also survived by his brother and best friend, Kenneth "Moose" Gouin of North Uxbridge and his sister, Patricia Daley of Broomfield, CO. He leaves behind three grandchildren: Camryn, J.J. and Leah, as well as several nieces, nephews, cousins, and extended family. He is survived by several childhood, close friends whom he considered his brothers: Robert "Rex" Matte, Joe Sabatino, Bob "Coon" Dalbec, Mark "Hanky" Pasiczniak, Ron "Louchy" Castonguay and Dennis "Dino" Bombara. In addition, he leaves his beloved family felines: Jagger and Faithful, who lovingly comforted him on some of his most difficult days. He was predeceased by his son, Jonathan Gouin, and brother-in-law, Timothy Daley.

Born in Whitinsville, MA on July 17, 1948, he was the son of Edward J. "Sonny" and Lena M. (Furno) Gouin. He graduated from Uxbridge High School in 1966, where he was an outstanding gymnast and baseball player, and immediately enlisted in the United States Navy. He then served aboard the U.S.S. Everett F. Larson from 1967-1970 during the Vietnam War and traveled through the South Pacific.

James spent many years working in the textile industry at various mills including Stanley Woolen, Stevens Linen, and Anglo Fabrics. He was a mail handler at the United States Postal Service Processing and Distribution Center in Shrewsbury; he retired after twenty-six years of service in 2014. Shortly after retirement, he worked part time for Tri-Valley Inc. and delivered Meals on Wheels. This job brought him tremendous joy and, in true James fashion, he made many friends along his route.

Jim's love language was food. If you were lucky to know him, chances are you were fortunate enough to receive one of his many tasty creations. During the warmer months, you could find him outdoors in front of his smoker while he made his world-famous batches of beef jerky or smoked roast beef. There was nothing he enjoyed more than cooking and bringing his family and friends together for meals. When he wasn't hard at work in front of his smoker, you could often find him tending to his hot pepper plants on the patio.

James had several passions in his life, but none as deep-rooted as his undying love for his New England sports teams. On weekends, you would find him with his brother and closest friends watching whatever games were on, enjoying some great food and cocktails. Another highlight of his days was his afternoon stops at Empire Wok for a Mai Tai; there, he would often bring snacks in to share and visit with his friends. Wherever he went, he brought an energy that was infectious and a smile that could warm your heart. For everyone who knew and loved Jim, our lives will be forever changed; he will be missed more than words can ever convey.

Jim was extraordinarily privileged to be cared for by Dr. Jeff Barnes and Dr. Jorg Dietrich, along with the entire Lymphoma and Neuro-Oncology Service and Lunder 9 nursing staff, of Massachusetts General Hospital. The Gouin family is forever indebted to the world-class care they provided Jim.

Calling hours at Tancrell-Jackman Funeral Home, 35 Snowling Rd., Uxbridge were Wednesday, February 7th from 10 to 11:30 am. His graveside funeral service followed in St. Mary's Cemetery in Uxbridge. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that memorial donations be made to Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Lymphoma Research Fund (208335) specifically for CAR-T/Cellular Therapy efforts in Lymphoma. Donations can be made by visiting: <https://giving.mass-general.org/donate/james-gouin/>

To leave a condolence message for his family please visit <http://www.jackmanfuneralhomes.com>





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# 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. WO24P0277EA**  
**CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**  
**Estate of:**  
Winifred A. Krajewski  
**Date of Death: 10/18/2023**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Karen J. Nutter of Uxbridge MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: **Karen J. Nutter of Uxbridge MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/27/2024.**  
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: February 01, 2024  
Stephanie K. Fattman,  
Register of Probate  
February 9, 2024

**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. WO23C0631CA**  
**CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME**

In the matter of:  
**Catherine Dean Harlow**  
**A Petition to Change Name of Minor**  
A Petition has been filed by **Catherine Dean Harlow of Uxbridge MA** requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to: **Catherine Dean Dudley**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Worcester Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/27/24. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding. **WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A Keamy, First Justice of this Court.**  
Date: January 25, 2024  
Stephanie Fattman,  
Register of Probate  
February 9, 2024

**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. WO20C0165CA**  
**CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME**

In the matter of:  
**Louis Rodas**  
**A Petition to Change Name of Adult**  
has been filed by **Louis Rodas of Uxbridge MA** requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to: **Luis Carlos Rodas**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Worcester Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/27/24. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding. **WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A Keamy, First Justice of this Court.**  
Date: January 23, 2024  
Stephanie Fattman,  
Register of Probate  
February 9, 2024

**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. WO24P0277EA**  
**CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**  
**Estate of:**  
Allison M Bertuzzi  
**Date of Death: 01/05/2024**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will**

**with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Richard C Bertuzzi of Uxbridge MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: **Richard C Bertuzzi of Uxbridge MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/27/2024.**  
This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

**UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)**  
A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration. **WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.**  
Date: January 30, 2024  
Stephanie K. Fattman,  
Register of Probate  
February 9, 2024



# Seniors named to Bay Path honor roll

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School congratulates the following grade 12 students on being named to the honor roll for the second quarter of the 2023-2024 school year:

**High Honors**  
Kaidra Anderson, Sophia Balestraci, Vincent Brink, Rachel Carpenter, Meredith Clark, Kirsten Congdon, Mariselle Cosme, Emma Davidson, Dylan DeJesus, Emma DeJong, Kacey Flanagan, Jenna Gajewski, Makayla Graham, Tristan Hanson, James Heywood, Carly Impey, Anna Lehtola, Kristina Liberty, Catherine Magnusson, Shaun McLaughlin, Maggie Mullaly, Kayla Nguyen, Peter Nhan, Madison Nolin, Avelyn O'Brien, Nason Omasta, Noalani Perez, Wendy Ramirez, Paige Seymour, Catherine Sirard, Jacob Sirard, Victoria Tinsley, Hailey Williamson, Gabrielle Zopatti

**Honors**  
Alexander Adkins, Kasey Babkauskas, Colton Beauchamp, Alyesia Bellamy, Alex Beshiri, Luke Boliver, Caroline Borgeson, Andrew Bousquet, Emma Bransky, Ryan Bray, Gabriella Cabrera, Olivia Carrier, Madyson Chicoine, Charles Chivallatti, Natalie Cierpich, Jomar Cintron Perez, Petru Cojocaru, Yanieris Colon Vega, Shane Conti, Richard Corriveau, Zachary Cournoyer, Peter Courville, Kyleigh Czechowski, LeeAnn Dagnese, Daniel Daige, Wyatt Daoust, Jeffrey Denham, Dylan Dietlin, Marissa Dumas, Jayden-James Dunston, Jibril Erraihani, James Ferreira, Robert Fleck IV, Jonathan Forget, Nicholas Gagne, Ethan Gallant, Giovanni Garcia, Devin Gavaletz, Jacob Goodspeed, Rachel Gormley, Simon Greening, Lucas

Hafner, Bridget Hast, Riley Heenan, Alba Henriquez Baez, Isabelle Herholz, Valerie Hernandez, Tessa Howard, Caitlin Hubbell, Ian James, Stanislaw Janusz, Eva Jerez, Jady Katz, Abigail Kibaru, Jordan Kippax, Madisyn Kozlowski, Matthew Lach, Braeden LaPointe, Benjamin LaTour, Emma Levasseur, Damon Lopez, Radiel Lopez, Albert Luciano, Patrick Luperchio, Hannah Luukko, Sarah Martin, Jenna McLeish, Vincent Messier, Macaylah Miller, Cole Mitchell, Leah Monti, Adrianna Navarro, Christian Nguyen, Alix Norman, Megan O'Shea, Noah Okolita, Brayden Parente, Esteban Pimentel, Colon Plante, Laci Pollone, Jared Powell, Logan Powers, Evan Provost, Emily Quental, Jacob Reed, Gabriela Rivera Burgos, Victoria Roberts, Margaret Russell, Samantha Russell, Luchia Sargent, Caterina Schiappa, Amanda Seidler, Sydney Seymour, Ryan Sinkewicz, Jason Sinkis, Gerald Splaine, Adriana Stanley, Ashton Stockenberg, Brady Suprenant, Kyle Sylwanovicz, Isabella Taiste, Jack Ugrinow, Landon Walker, Natalie Walker, Ryleigh Warchal, Timothy Welch, Thomas Wilk, Ryley Williams, Sebastian Winer, Charlotte Worster, Stone Zink

**Principal's List**  
Juliana Alcivar, Jacob Anderson, Hailey Benoit, Samuel Brill, Kayla Brown, Caitlyn Burke, Rayanie Castillo, Karoline Corpes Diaz, Pedro Augusto Dasilva, Deanna Davis, Nyasia Delgado, Noah Dupont, William Dwyer, Janelle Ethier, Jared Evora, Arianna Flores, Chase Forehand, Joseph Fritze, Jesse Gillet, Sabien Gonzalez, Renee Hallaman, Nathan Josey, Alyssa Kutzko, Abigayle Linde, Jadier Maldonado, Ava Marotta,

Marissa Masciarelli, Matteo Mastrototaro, Gianna Pantalone, Sylas Perreault, Nicholas Pollone, Ismael Porrata, Daniel Russell, Cody Savary, Cody Sexton, Madison Sibert, Brady Staniunas, Alysha

Szafarowicz, Christopher Verdolino  
Editor's note: Due to space limitations, the honor rolls for the junior, sophomore, and freshman classes will appear in future editions.

## OBITUARIES

### Marguerite C. "Peggy" Denis, 89

Uxbridge- Marguerite C. "Peggy" (Flynn) Denis, 89, passed away peacefully on Friday, Feb. 2, 2024 at Lydia Taft House after a period of declining health with her daughter at her side. She was predeceased by her husband Rene A. Denis in 1979.

She is survived by her daughter Marie Barron and her husband Alfred Barron Jr., of Whitinsville; 2 grandchildren, Brad Barron and Sarah Barron both of Whitinsville, and many nieces, nephews, and cousins. She was also preceded in death by her brother Richard Flynn, Jr., and many family and friends.

Born in Woonsocket, RI on May 4, 1934 she was the daughter of Richard Flynn and Cecile (Martel) Flynn and grew up in Woonsocket. Peggy was a hardworking woman and worked for many years for New England Telephone (Verizon) as a repair clerk. She also worked as a crossing guard for Uxbridge Elementary for several years.

Peggy liked taking trips to the casino and was an avid bingo player. She



often had good luck and once even won a car at Foxwoods. She enjoyed reading especially mystery and romance novels, and most of all spending time with her family and friends.

Her family would like to extend a special thank you to the entire staff of Lydia Taft for their outstanding care and love shown to Peggy over the past 10 years she had been a resident there, many staff

there over the years were more like family to her.

Peggy's funeral Mass will be held on Sat., Feb. 10th at 11 am in St. Mary's Church, 77 Mendon St., Uxbridge. Burial will follow in St. John the Baptist Cemetery in Bellingham. Calling hours in Tancrrell-Jackman Funeral Home, 35 Snowling Rd., Uxbridge will be held prior to mass from 8:30-10:30 AM. In lieu of flowers, donations in Peggy's memory may be made to the Lydia Taft House for their Activities Fund, 60 Quaker Hwy, Uxbridge MA 01569. To leave a condolence message for her family please visit: [www.Jackmanfuneralhomes.com](http://www.Jackmanfuneralhomes.com)



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# Current, former state troopers charged with taking bribes for falsifying CDL test scores

BY KEVIN FLANDERS  
STAFF WRITER

REGION — Two current and two former State Police troopers are facing charges in connection with an alleged conspiracy to falsify records and give passing scores to certain Commercial Driver's License (CDL) applicants in exchange for bribes.

The following six individuals have been indicted on three counts of conspiracy to falsify records; three counts of conspiracy to commit extortion; three counts of extortion; six counts of honest services mail fraud; and one count of perjury: Gary Cederquist, 58, of Stoughton; Calvin Butner, 63, of Halifax; Perry Mendes, 63, of Wareham; Joel Rogers, 54, of Bridgewater; Scott Camara, 42, of Rehoboth; and Eric Mathison, 47, of Boston.

According to the charging document, MSP Sgt. Cederquist was in charge of the State Police's CDL Unit. Trooper Rogers

and retired Troopers Butner and Mendes were members of the unit.

"Members of MSP's CDL Unit were responsible for administering CDL skills tests. Test requirements for CDLs are established by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, which is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation," read a statement released by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

The CDL skills test is a demanding, in-person test that consists of three segments: vehicle inspection, basic control skills, and the road test.

Class A CDLs are required to drive tractor-trailer units. Class B CDLs are required to drive heavy single vehicles (box trucks, school buses).

According to the charging document, between May 2019 and January 2023, Cederquist, Butner, Mendes, Rogers, and others conspired to give preferential treatment to at least 17 CDL applicants. The troopers agreed to give passing

scores on these applicants' skills tests, regardless of whether they passed the test, investigators allege.

The six suspects used the code word "golden" to identify applicants who would receive special treatment, according to investigators. The indictment alleges that several incriminating text messages were sent between the suspects describing applicants and their test results.

Additionally, it is alleged that Cederquist gave preferential treatment to four Class A CDL applicants who were MSP troopers by falsely reporting that each trooper took and passed a Class A skills test.

Moreover, Cederquist allegedly conspired with his friend, Camara, who worked for a truck-driving school in Brockton.

It is further alleged that Cederquist conspired with his friend, Mathison, who worked for a spring water company that employed drivers who needed CDLs. Cederquist allegedly gave passing scores to certain applicants affiliated with the water company.

"The indictment alleges that Cederquist gave passing scores to three such applicants who actually failed, in exchange for bribes of free inventory from the water company, such as cases of bottled Fiji, VOSS and Essentia water; cases of bottled Arizona Iced Tea, and coffee and tea products—all of which Mathison delivered to an office trailer at the CDL test site in Stoughton," the U.S. Attorney's Office statement read.

The indictment alleges that Butner assisted with the conspiracy by giving

Mathison a key to the Stoughton yard, enabling Mathison to drop off water company inventory even when the test site was closed. The indictment also alleges that Mendes took part in the conspiracy by accepting cases of water from Mathison immediately after administering an incomplete skills test to a new driver for the water company.

According to the charging document, Cederquist accepted additional bribes in exchange for using his position as the sergeant in charge of MSP's CDL Unit to give preferential treatment to certain CDL applicants. Alleged bribes include a \$750 granite post and mailbox; a new driveway valued at over \$10,000; and a snowblower valued at nearly \$2,000.

"The indictment alleges that Cederquist described one such applicant as 'horrible' and 'brain dead', but gave him a passing score anyway in exchange for the snow blower," the U.S. Attorney's Office statement read.

All CDL recipients who were later identified by investigators as not having been properly certified were reported to the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles.

The investigation remains ongoing.

The following individuals and agencies are thanked for their roles in the investigation: Acting United States Attorney Joshua Levy; Michael Krol, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in New England; and Christopher Scharf, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of Transportation Office.

## New Field Coordinator hired for water quality monitoring program

UXBRIDGE — The Blackstone River Watershed Association and the Blackstone River Coalition are pleased to announce the hiring of Emily Dart as the new water quality monitoring field coordinator for the middle reach of the Blackstone River watershed. She will manage one of the three water monitoring teams that cover the entire Blackstone River watershed; roughly 80 monitors sample at 75 sites throughout the watershed on a monthly basis from April through November.

The work is performed under a Quality Assurance Project Plan approved by Mass DEP, RI DEM, and the US EPA to ensure accuracy and consistency. Testing occurs on the second Saturday of the month, from April through November; 9 a.m. – noon. The Midreach Team portion has twenty-eight field sites and lab testing takes place at the Tri-River Medical Center in Uxbridge. Emily's position is funded by the Blackstone River Watershed Association, and she reports to Heather Parry who coordinates the program for the Blackstone River Coalition.

Emily Dart is an environmental microbiologist who has worked with aquatic systems for over 11 years, studying envi-

ronments as diverse as the Great Salt Lake in Utah to groundwater springs in Canada. More recently, she came to Massachusetts to complete a PhD studying blue-green algae and the conditions that influence their growth in small lakes and ponds. Today when she's not wading into ponds, you can find her working in the lab at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. As a scientist, she is deeply invested in the preservation and restoration of natural resources and ensuring that these treasures are safe and healthy for all to use and enjoy. Likewise, with over five years of experience teaching at universities and working with volunteers, she is an educator who wants to ensure that everyone in the community has the resources and knowledge to work towards preserving the environments most important to them.

The Blackstone River Coalition is hosting its annual Water Quality Summit on April 6th at the Cumberland Public Library in Cumberland, R.I. from 9 a.m. to noon. Anyone interested in the Blackstone River Water Quality monitoring program is welcome to attend. Please RSVP to Heather Parry at heatherparry.wqm@gmail.com.

## Irish nusic, fish & chips and calendar raffle at St. Patrick's Church

WHITINSVILLE — Please join us for a Celebration of Irish Music at St. Patrick's Church, 7 East St., Whitinsville, at 7 p.m. on March 15m performed by Chris Bilodeau and friends. This free event is sponsored by the Northbridge Cultural Council.

Back by popular demand, Jim from Peg's Diner will be cooking delicious Fish and Chips Dinners again this year. Dinner options are baked fish/baked potato & coleslaw or fried fish/fries & coleslaw dinners for \$14. Jimmy's Famous Clam Chowder is available for \$4/cup or \$6/bowl. Mac & cheese/fries for \$5. Dinners will be available for in-house dining or pick up on Ash Wednesday & Fridays

during Lent (Feb 14th - March 22nd) from 4:30 to 6:45 p.m. Place orders to go by calling 508-234-3511 after 4 p.m. Payment by Venmo or Cash. Thank you for supporting the Youth in Action Summer Service Trip to Nashville.

Also, the Parish is currently selling Spring Calendar Raffles for drawings each day during the month of March. Grand prize \$1000 drawn on March 31st. Calendars can be picked up after weekend masses; at Fish & Chips events; online at [www.mystpatrick's.com](http://www.mystpatrick's.com); or call the rectory at 508-234-5656. Three for \$50 or one for \$25. More than \$2,000 in prizes will be awarded and you can win more than once!

## Local residents named to Dean's List at Saint Michael's College

COLCHESTER, Vt. — The following local students were named to the Dean's List at Saint Michael's College for the Fall 2023 semester. Students who complete at least 12 credits of classes and achieve a grade point average of at least 3.5 in a particular semester are cited on the Dean's List for that semester.

James J. Murphy of Millbury  
Maxwell R. Kolifirath of Millbury  
About Saint Michael's College  
Saint Michael's College, founded on principles of social justice and leading lives of purpose and consequence, is a selective, Catholic college just out-

side Burlington, Vermont, one of the country's best college towns. Located between the Green Mountains and Lake Champlain, our closely connected community guarantees housing all four years and delivers internationally respected liberal arts together with an innovative Purposeful Learning Program, preparing students for fulfilling careers and meaningful lives. Young adults here grow intellectually, socially, and morally, learning to be responsible for themselves, each other, and their world.

## Help clean up Douglas April 20

DOUGLAS — The Douglas Beautification Committee and Conservation Commission welcomes the residents of Douglas to 'Shake the Frost' Saturday, April 20 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Take part in a Town Wide cleanup of our roadways, woods, neighborhoods... wherever trash has found its way, that it

doesn't belong!

While this is an invitation for an on-going initiative through the month of April, we will specifically be hosting a trash pickup and drop off event Saturday, April 20. Keep an eye out for special events happening at local businesses and organizations across town as well!

## Dean College announces Dean's List

FRANKLIN — Dean College is pleased to announce the students that have earned a place on the Dean's List for the Fall 2023 semester. These students have demonstrated a serious commitment to their studies while at Dean College.

Alexis Alvarado of Whitinsville  
Ava Turner of Uxbridge  
Lia Zajas of Uxbridge  
Julia Johnson of Douglas

Ryann Leaming of Uxbridge  
Vincent Leonardo of Douglas  
Founded in 1865, Dean College is a private, residential college located in Franklin, 45 minutes from Boston, and Providence, R.I. Dean College offers baccalaureate degrees, associate degree programs, as well as a robust schedule of part-time continuing and professional education credit and certificate programs throughout the calendar year.

## Western New England University students named to President's List

SPRINGFIELD — Western New England University (WNE) takes immense pride in recognizing the outstanding academic achievements of over 500 students who have been named to the President's List for the Fall 2023 semester.

This prestigious honor is a testament to the commitment and dedication these students have demonstrated in their pursuit of academic excellence. The President's List acknowledges those who have achieved a semester GPA of 3.80 or higher, showcasing their remarkable scholastic accomplishments.

The diverse group of awardees represents various majors across WNE's Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, and Engineering. The University commends these students for their intellectual curiosity, leadership, and dedication to their educational journey. They are:

Ryan Paxton of Uxbridge, majoring in Civil Engineering/Environmental Engineering Concentration.  
Jessica Brown of Douglas, majoring in Health Studies/OTD.  
Thomas Andolina of Uxbridge, majoring in Psychology.  
Western New England University

(WNE) is a private, nationally ranked, comprehensive institution with a focus on preparing work-ready and world-ready graduates. Founded in 1919 in Springfield, Massachusetts as a division of Northeastern College, WNE's 215-acre suburban campus serves more than 3,700 students, including more than 2,500 full-time undergraduates. More than 47,000 alumni have earned degrees through its more than 90 undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs at Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Engineering, and Pharmacy and Health Sciences, and School of Law. Students come from 39 U.S. states and territories and 23 countries. Of 45,104 living alumni, 30 percent remain within the region, residing in the four Western Massachusetts counties and northern Connecticut.

WNE is classified among nationally ranked universities in US News and World Report, and among the Top 100 Undergraduate Engineering programs, and in the Doctoral/Professional Universities category in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

## Rabies clinic to be held in Douglas

DOUGLAS — There will be a rabies clinic on Saturday, Feb. 24 (weather permitting) at the Douglas Highway Garage located at 56 Main St. Vaccinations are being provided by the Douglas Animal Hospital.

Only rabies shots will be given. Please bring any rabies certificates with you to the clinic. Cat vaccinations will be between 9 and 10 a.m., and dogs will be between 10 a.m. and noon. Please

be courteous and bring your pet to the appropriate session. All cats MUST be in carriers and all dogs must be leashed. The cost is \$30 per animal (vaccinations are cash only). Dog licenses will be on sale from 10 a.m. – noon. \$15 spayed/neutered; \$20 intact (cash or check payable to the Town of Douglas) If you have any questions and/or concerns, please contact the Town Clerk's office at 508-476-4000, ext. 255.

## AICS's Jackson Haker earns NCBWA preseason All-Region Honors

SPRINGFIELD — The National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association announced its 2024 Preseason All-Region selections on Tuesday, Jan. 23, including Jackson Haker of the American International College (AIC) baseball team.

The junior from Uxbridge, who is among AIC's four captains for the upcoming season, filled his trophy case last spring. He earned postseason All-Region honors from the NCBWA and the Division II Conference Commissioners

Association for his play, in addition to First-Team All-Conference honors from the Northeast-10 Conference.

Founded in 1885, American International College (AIC) is a private, co-educational, doctoral-granting institution in Springfield, Massachusetts, comprising the School of Business, Arts and Sciences, the School of Education, and the School of Health Sciences. AIC supports and advances education, diversity, and opportunity for its students and the community.

## Uxbridge resident named to President's List at Dean College

FRANKLIN — Evenfall Bair of Uxbridge has earned a place on the President's List for the Fall 2023 semester. Students named to the President's List have demonstrated a serious commitment to their studies while at Dean College.

Founded in 1865, Dean College is a

private, residential college located in Franklin, 45 minutes from Boston, and Providence, R.I. Dean College offers baccalaureate degrees, associate degree programs, as well as a robust schedule of part-time continuing and professional education credit and certificate programs throughout the calendar year.

## Karlee Battista of Northbridge named to Springfield College Dean's List

SPRINGFIELD — Springfield College has named Karlee Battista from Northbridge to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2023 fall semester.

Battista has a primary major of Sport Management.

The criteria for selection to the Dean's List are as follows: The student must have

completed a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded coursework for the term, exclusive of "P" grades. The student must not have any incompletes or missing grades in the designated term. The student must have a minimum semester grade average of 3.500 for the term.



# Douglas Adult Social Center

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

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

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

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

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

Thursday: Walking club 9 am, Chair Yoga 9:30 am, Pitch 9:30 am, Hand and Foot card game

12:30 pm  
Friday: Balance & Strength 10 am

The center will be closed on Monday February 19, 2024.

A winter reminder; if the Douglas School System cancels school ALL activities at the senior center is cancelled. Staff will be available to take your calls.

FEBRUARY EVENTS:

• WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 14 @ 12:00: Join us for our Mardi Gras Masquerade ball Valentine's celebration. New Orleans style cuisine will be served for \$5.00. Festive masks will be provided for you, as we dance to the Musical Stylings of The Gerry Beaudoin Jazz Trio! Entertainment for this event is being sponsored by the Douglas Cultural Council. Please sign up before 2/5/24.

• THURSDAY FEBRUARY 22 @ 11:30: Lunch & Movie "The Ultimate Legacy" A baked chicken lunch will be served for \$4.00. Please sign up before 2/16/24.

• THURSDAY FEBRUARY 29 @ 11:30: Free St. Patrick's Day craft, refreshments will be served. Please sign up by 2/10/2024.

• Wellness Clinic: Monday February 12th & Tuesday February 27th from 10 am to 12 pm. Nurse Ann will be here to check blood pressure, blood sugar, or just

discuss any of concerns you may have.

MARCH EVENTS:

• Friday 1st @ 11:30: The Sunshine Club invites you to come in and learn about gardening, how to make sure your soil is ready and when to start seedlings. Refreshments will be served. Please RSVP before 2/28/24.

• Thursday 7th @ 11:30: Free craft day, join us in growing a tree from a pine cone. Refreshments will be served. Please RSVP before 3/1/24.

## Worcester Polytechnic Institute announces Dean's List

WORCESTER — A total of 2,299 undergraduate students achieved the criteria required for WPI's fall 2023 Dean's List. The criteria for the WPI Dean's List differs from that of most other universities as WPI does not compute a grade point average (GPA). Instead, WPI defines the Dean's List by the amount of work completed at the A level in courses and projects.

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

The following students were named to the fall 2023 Dean's List:

Christina Aube, from Douglas, class of 2024, majoring in Electrical and Computer Engineering and Robotics Engineering

Codey Battista, from Northbridge, class of 2024, majoring in Biomedical Engineering

Kyla Dominguez De Los Santos, from Whitinsville, class of 2026, majoring in Mechanical Engineering

• Thursday 14th @ 12:00: St. Patrick's Day Celebration, a corn beef lunch will be served for \$8.00 per person. We will also enjoy the music of Fiddle Hill an Irish Duo. This event is being sponsored by the Douglas Cultural Council. Please RSVP before 3/7/24.

• Thursday 21st @ 12:00: Lunch and a movie, The Magic of Belle Aisle. Lunch will be stuffed peppers, carrots, & apple pie. Lunch is \$4.00 per person. Please RSVP before 3/15/24.

Kelly Heffernan, from Whitinsville, class of 2024, majoring in Biology and Biotechnology and Professional Writing  
Philip Heney, from Douglas, class of 2025, majoring in Computer Science and Robotics Engineering

Jocelyn Hinchcliffe, from Uxbridge, class of 2025, majoring in Biology and Biotechnology

Cullen Jacene, from Northbridge, class of 2026, majoring in Mechanical Engineering

Megan Jacene, from Northbridge, class of 2024, majoring in Mechanical Engineering

Katelyn Lombardo, from Whitinsville, class of 2025, majoring in Biology and Biotechnology

Ryan Martin, from Douglas, class of 2024, majoring in Management Engineering

Michael O'Toole, from Douglas, class of 2027, majoring in Aerospace Engineering

Cristian Oliveira, from Uxbridge, class of 2026, majoring in Robotics Engineering

Julia Philbrook, from Uxbridge, class of 2027, majoring in Biomedical Engineering

Adam Pratt, from Uxbridge, class of 2026, majoring in Mechanical Engineering

Mikayla Prue, from Douglas, class of 2025, majoring in Biomedical Engineering and Psychological Science

Clarice Stumpf, from Uxbridge, class of 2025, majoring in Biochemistry

• Thursday 28th @ 11:00: We will be going on tour at the Douglas Fire Department, followed by the Douglas Police Department and will return to the center for sandwiches & Pasta salad for \$4.00 per person. You may meet at the center or go directly to the FD for 11 am. Please RSVP before 3/21/24.

Check our website for events that may not be listed here

<https://www.douglas-ma.gov/202/Adult-Social-Center-Senior-Center>

Molly Vincent, from Douglas, class of 2024, majoring in Mechanical Engineering

Bryan Wheeler, from Douglas, class of 2026, majoring in Electrical and Computer Engineering

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

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Kickstarting the renewal of youth karate tournaments

To the Editor:

Ever since the pandemic, local youth martial arts competitions have been scarce. The opportunities for many aspiring martial artists and the possible representation for various karate schools has all but vanished from the area of Uxbridge. This is a concern that must be addressed by the owners of aforementioned dojos and studios, parents of children enrolled in such establishments, and even the young learners themselves due to the fact that the reemergence of All Kenpo Open competitions or similar tournaments would provide for valuable memories and scenarios in which to demonstrate the techniques a young individual has refined in a competitive environment.

In 2017, Uxbridge High School hosted an All Kenpo Open tournament for a wide variety of ages and ranks, which I attended with a green belt after being informed of the competition by my instructor at American Family Kenpo, a karate studio in Uxbridge. At this event, I competed in multiple different categories including weapon forms, open handed forms, and point sparring, testing my mettle against other youth of my age and rank. The challenge was invigorating, and I earned several awards that served as tokens of my effort, trophies that I took pride in as a child, but more importantly I possessed valuable memories of the tournament, with such a profound impact on my life that my common application essay for college was focused around my time at the competition and the benefits I reaped. However, after the nation was forced into lockdown and subsequent precautions involving facemasks and social distancing were put in place, the smaller competitions that had provided such perseverance and joy faded away due to complications, with my instructor not being able to recommend us students to participate

in any local tournaments. Now that the effects and regulations of the epidemic have largely faded away, the resurgence of All Kenpo Opens and opportunities for young competitors would provide the same memories and pride in their accomplishments that I experienced in 2017 to another generation of martial artists.

Some concerns may be raised regarding the safety and expenses of these events, but neither should pose an issue to supporters or critics. The return of many youth sports was slow and incredibly limited in the years following the pandemic, but in the Aspen Institute's 2022 State of Play report, it was found that in many other children's sports, participation levels had returned to (and at some points surpassed) pre-covid standards as of September 2022. The reemergence of these activities should be ample evidence that continuing to host local martial arts tournaments should pose no threat to the spread of any epidemic when compared to other sports. Other anxieties arise from the monetary costs of hosting events such as these for places such as Uxbridge High School. These concerns are invalidated by the fact that tournaments charge an admission fee for contenders, and with the bountiful number of dojos and martial arts studios in the Blackstone Valley area, funding should not be a point of contention.

Sympathizers who wish to assist in rekindling the competitions could help by expressing interest in participating in a tournament to the operator of a dojo that they or a loved one train at, organizing efforts on social media to bring a local tournament to their community, or simply by raising awareness for the lack of local opportunities for aspiring martial artists to prove themselves.

Hayden Plourde  
Uxbridge

### Phone restrictions in schools

To the Editor:

Since the pandemic, people of all ages, locations, and personalities have had a sprouted addiction to technology. Students went from classrooms to Zooms from their laptops which only deepened this addiction amidst the days locked inside of their homes with little to do. However, now that schools are back to "normal," their beloved phones are restricted in "phone caddies"—a policy enlisted by higher ups within school systems.

Having been in high school for the four years following Covid's first introduction to the U.S, I have dealt with both remote learning, cohort learning, and the in-person experience. Now that the pandemic has simmered down, mask mandates have been lifted, and students are fully back in school, administrations in schools have begun to limit usage of cell phones not only during class periods, but in lunch and study blocks. While limiting screen time during classes increases focus and the intention of improving

social skills are all positive outcomes of these regulations, forcing students meant to be prepared for the "real-world" to lock their phones up for the day fails to teach them basic skills of self discipline. XQ Institute—an organization designed to rethink high school—polled 300 individuals from students, parents, and teachers and only 37 percent of this population believes that high schools are preparing their students for the real world. While students are expected to adhere to guidance from teachers and other administrators, instilling guidelines based on what they do with their own personal property should not be a main concern but rather second to academics.

Creating strict guidelines for phone use in class is to be understood, however, when going so far as to block access to them entirely is excessive. Generation Z is expected to provide a successful future for this deteriorating world, yet we are not even trusted with our phones.

Grace Conners  
Sutton

### The need for indoor tracks

To the Editor:

Although people may believe that there are more worthwhile things that funding could go into, indoor tracks are an important facility that schools should look into obtaining.

Foundationally, an indoor track would provide the opportunity to practice running for many people in the area. At the moment, there aren't many public areas where runners can practice during the winter without having to bear the cold. It may also snow during the winter which would make it difficult for runners if sidewalks outside haven't been plowed. Throwers may also not be able to practice their events if it has snowed outside. These harsh conditions show the limitations of having exclusively an outdoor track because sometimes the outdoors may not always be available. Consequently, if runners and throwers don't have a usable track to practice on, they may have to skip out on practice for a day which could be detrimental because the weather could be poor multiple times during winter. Therefore, an indoor track is necessary for schools to have available due to the fact that an outdoor track isn't entirely reliable.

Not only is it difficult during

practice, but meets for indoor track are inconvenient due to the lack of indoor tracks in the area. For example, smaller DVC meets are held in Northbridge's indoor track, which is the only indoor track in the DVC. It ends up being packed at meets because of the amount of people competing. For bigger meets, such as Districts, some schools have to drive around an hour long just to arrive at the indoor track. These unreasonable restraints support the cause for installing new indoor tracks because it may be difficult for individuals to participate in meets. Consequently, since it is difficult to partake in meets, that may provide a poor experience for students in indoor track. Therefore, students may be influenced to quit indoor track since most people dislike participating in bad environments.

Students have been struggling with indoor track for far too long. In a world where funding should be used to improve student's experiences, schools aren't fulfilling their obligation toward the students. Schools should start fundraisers or set aside funding for indoor tracks in order to better students' high school life.

Asher Bell  
Whitinsville

### How the Concord prison will affect the local economy

To the Editor:

By June of this year (2024), the MCI-Concord prison is planned to completely shut down, relocating all of its inmates and employees. The decision to close the facility came about in late January, shocking not only the town but also the surrounding area. The prison in question is the oldest in the state, opening its doors in 1878, and currently employs a few hundred people. While this decision will overall save the state money, it will have detrimental effects on the local economy as several of the town's commuters and residents will most likely transfer along with the prisoners. Many of the small and local businesses in the surrounding area are sure to notice a loss in revenue in these already trying economic times, and there is no way most of these businesses will survive the blow.

With a sudden decrease in the number of commuters coming to Concord, small businesses, especially those within the food industry, are sure to notice a decline in sales as most of the prison employees will no longer be around to dine at their facilities on one of their brief lunch breaks. A large part of the town's population is made up of friends and family members of the incarcerated individuals to maintain close proximity. With the relocation of the prisoners, there is nothing to keep

these residents in Concord resulting in a possible loss of revenue for many of the local businesses, further damaging the local economy, as these citizens relocate with the inmates.

With no certain plans to replace the prison, there is no pull factor to draw people into the town even if just for the day, also taking away from any possible sales. While there is deliberation on what to do with the building after it has been emptied, that decision ultimately does not lie with the state as it is federal property. It could be likely that the prison remains vacant for an extended period of time - which is not a rare occurrence when closing down government buildings.

With this great push factor and absent pull factor, many small businesses will not be able to take a hit to their sales and be forced to close up shop on which their livelihoods may depend; however, this can be prevented with a simple petition by local communities supporting the continuation of the prison's operation to local representatives. There is a grave possibility that small business and their owners may suffer from one thoughtless decision, and the residents in Concord and the surrounding area must now take their fate into their own hands.

Kelly Keeler  
Uxbridge



# SPORTS

## Spartans rally late in fourth quarter to upend Rams



Nick Ethier  
Northbridge's Adam Flauto elevates for a shot while finding a pocket in Uxbridge's defense.

Nick Ethier  
(Right) Colin Spencer of Uxbridge drives the ball into the lane and closer to the basket.

Nick Ethier  
(Left) Uxbridge's Thatcher Sweeney tightly defends against Ryan Flaherty of Northbridge's inbound pass.

BY NICK ETHIER  
SPORTS EDITOR

NORTHBIDGE — Trailing by 10 points (42-32) with six minutes to play, it was now or never for the Uxbridge boys' varsity basketball team when playing at Northbridge's Veterans Memorial Field House on Monday, Feb. 5.

"This is our rival and it's an intense game, and I think this is one of the toughest gyms to play in," said Ryan Hippert, head coach of the Spartans.

Over those final six minutes, Uxbridge outscored the Rams by a 17-5 count to rally for a 49-47 victory.

"I give all the credit to the kids just battling in that fourth quarter. We have some kids with really high character

that just refuse to lose games like that," explained Hippert. "In this type of game, I didn't care how it looked. I just wanted to win the game. It means something for the kids and the town to beat your rival."

Northbridge head coach Aaron Katz said that his team got away from what was successful while building up the 10-point cushion.

"Our defense wasn't the issue until the fourth quarter. We just lost our focus and lost vision of what we had been doing," Katz noted. "Did we start out focused? No. Did we end focused? No."

Katz mentioned the start because Uxbridge held the Rams scoreless during the initial eight-minute quarter,



Nick Ethier  
Tyrese Holder-Hinds of Northbridge focuses before attempting a free throw.



Nick Ethier  
With Marcus MacLeod (10) and Nick D'Alfonso (21) of Northbridge providing the defense, Uxbridge's Kellen LaChapelle lofts a pass down the court.

as the Spartans led, 9-0.

"I was extremely happy with our defense in the first quarter and then I thought our offense would get going, but we were a little cold not making shots that I think we normally do," said Hippert, as Northbridge began its comeback in the second.

There, the Rams put up 20 points to the Spartans' 7 as Northbridge grabbed a 20-16 halftime lead. Then, in the third, the Rams won that period 14-12 to lead by six, 34-28, as play moved to the fourth.

A sequence that included 3-pointers by Northbridge's Anthony Becerril and Marcus MacLeod sandwiched between a layup by Uxbridge's James Sanford provided the Rams with their aforementioned 10-point lead. But the Spartans began chipping away at the deficit and, with four minutes to go, Ethan McCusker's 3-pointer made it a one-point game at 42-41.

Then, with 2:20 to play, another McCusker 3-pointer gave Uxbridge a 46-45 advantage, a lead that they would not relinquish.

McCusker finished with double-double totals of 20 points and 11 rebounds, both game-high figures.

"Ethan got a little hot. He's been playing good," Hippert said of McCusker, who has scored 24, 20 and 20 points in his last three games. "We're starting to try to get the offense designed around

him for shots."

Northbridge had a chance to win the game at the buzzer, but Adam Flauto's 3-pointer could not hit the mark.

"Michael Stark does just a heck of a job on defense. He's the type of kid that doesn't show up in box scores, but we put him on the best player every night," Hippert said of Stark playing against Flauto, the Rams' top scorer: "He does a hell of a job with it."

On the other side, Katz was pleased with the play of others while Flauto was held to 1 point.

"They were keyed on Flauto. Other guys had to step up, and they did," Katz said while singling out Nick D'Alfonso, who came off the bench and scored 9 points.

The Spartans improved to 10-5 and have automatically qualified for the Division 4 State Tournament. They will also receive an invite into the Clark Tournament Small Schools bracket.

Northbridge — which was paced by MacLeod's 13 points and Becerril's 11 points — dropped to 7-8 as they hope to qualify for the same Division 4 State Tournament as Uxbridge.

"The message is put together complete games and we'll be good because we've done that. We had won four in a row, we had a good win against Prouty earlier, it's just putting it together for a complete game," Katz concluded.

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# SPORTS

## After strong Class of 2023 induction, Uxbridge High School Athletic Hall of Fame prepares for 2024 ceremony



**From left, the group of Uxbridge High School's Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2023 inductees included Alison Cahill, Emily Cahill, Kristen Lane Martin, Meghan Gaskell Creighton, Steve Saulen, Chris Shaw, Kelly Rosborough, Jeff Parcels, Dan Clarke and Coach Mark Donahue.**

Back on Nov. 11, 2023, the Uxbridge High School Athletic Hall of Fame held its seventh induction ceremony. The induction, which came after a 16-year hiatus, included nine athletes, one coach and one team.

The Hall of Fame Committee is wasting no time for its eighth induction, as nominations are now being accepted. Nominations can be submitted on an ongoing basis, and the review of nominations for this class will be taking place in April and May of 2024. The

eighth induction is being planned for November of 2024. Nominations can be submitted online using a form available on the Uxbridge High School website or by following this link: <https://bit.ly/UHSHOF23>.

**(Right) Past Uxbridge High School Athletic Hall of Fame inductees that attended the Class of 2023 celebration included, from left, Nate Moore, Norman Silbor, Greg Clark, Bob Frabotta, Sean Mahoney, Faye Pilla, Mike Delmonico and Keith Kearnan.**



**The first team inducted into the Uxbridge High School Athletic Hall of Fame — the 1981-82 boys' basketball team — included, from left, Coach Tourangeau, Rich Menard, Dave Silbor, Greg Clark, Kevin Kearnan, Keith Kearnan, Keith Menchin, Bryan Preston, Bob Frabotta, Mark Stanovich, Ray Chapman and Coach Donahue.**

## Auburn co-op hockey battles hard in close loss to Longmeadow



**BY NICK ETHIER**  
SPORTS EDITOR

**AUBURN** — The Auburn girls' varsity co-op ice hockey team opened and closed the month of January with contests against Longmeadow. First, the Rockets lost a 4-2 decision to the Lancers on Jan. 1 at Smead Arena. Then, on Wednesday, Jan. 31, Auburn again did battle with Longmeadow, this time at Horgan Arena. The Rockets fell just short in this one as well, 5-3.

"They're a powerhouse," Auburn head coach Peter LaPrad said of the Lancers. "They're a very good program, and for us to compete at that level in both games, we're thrilled. They're a very veteran team, a lot of upperclasswomen, and we're a very young team. It's a great compete for us."

The Auburn co-op, which also includes student-athletes from Tantasqua, Grafton, Shepherd Hill, Northbridge, Sutton and select Worcester schools, dropped to 6-9-1, while Longmeadow improved to 9-2.

"I want to play tough teams, I want to play strong teams, because we need to learn how to win against strong teams," said LaPrad of his team that consists of two seniors, five juniors, five sophomores and 10 freshmen.

The Lancers were ranked No. 5 in the Division 2 Power Rankings as of Friday, Feb. 2, proving how strong of a team they are. But it was the Rockets



**Rachel Bowman of Auburn follows through upon the release of her shot on net.**



**Auburn's Izzy Spencer dumps the puck into Longmeadow's zone.**



**Maddi Leonard of Auburn looks ahead before firing off a pass down the ice.**



**Auburn goalie Alex Corey smothering the puck for one of her 34 saves versus Longmeadow.**

who struck first, as Leah Medeiros won a faceoff and Alice Peck collected the puck. Peck's casual backhandler got past Longmeadow goalie Nicole Pollard (11 saves), as Auburn took a 1-0 lead less than two minutes into the contest.

"Any shot on net is a good shot,"

said LaPrad. "The other thing that I'm thrilled about is I feel like we have the most talent we've ever had in our history. What we're doing is more advanced stuff, we have systems that we put in place where we're doing things in certain circumstances, and that was one of them."

After Longmeadow tied the game at 1-1 later in the period on a goal by Ava Saunders, the game moved to the second period. There, the Lancers grabbed a 2-1 lead early when Milana Shuman's snap shot slipped past Auburn goalie Alex Corey.

with Rudge sliding a centering pass to Spencer, whose shot beat Pollard.

Unfortunately for Auburn, the Lancers' Amelia Hanke, Margo Watkins and Molly Henshon all scored later in the second period as they moved to the third leading, 5-2.

The Rockets did score early in the third to trim the deficit down to 5-3. It was another two-on-one opportunity, this time featuring Maddi Leonard and Olivia Viens, for the goal. Leonard started the play with a right-to-left pass to Viens, who then

quickly passed back to Leonard; Leonard's shot then beat Pollard.

"With all the talent, the next step is the chemistry. The chemistry exists off the ice and on the ice. And those two goals were very good examples of chemistry on the ice," LaPrad said of the two-on-one goals.

LaPrad was proud of the way Corey played in net, as she finished with 34 saves. Corey, a freshman, has been getting spot starts to give normal starter Tori Horne, a senior, a break.

"She's the future

for us for sure. Alex, I've been throwing her in in tough pressure situations, and she does great," explained LaPrad.

Despite the sub-.500 record, the Rockets are still in playoff consideration for the Division 2 State Tournament. The top 32 teams automatically qualify, and in the Feb. 2 rankings Auburn was No. 31.

"We definitely want to get in, for sure. Who you play is critical, and this will help us. That's the goal," LaPrad said of making the State Tournament.

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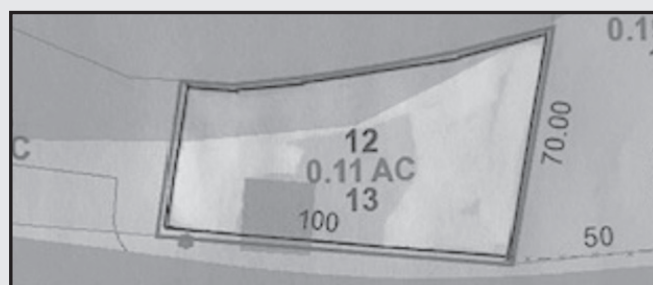
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Meditation Class at Plummer Place, every Thursday at 9:30am. Call Michelle to get more information and to sign up.

Do you enjoy playing Scrabble? Do you need to just get out of the house on these cold, dreary days? Then join us on February 12th at 10:00am to play this fun game and enjoy a little friendly competi-

tion. Scrabble meets twice a month, call Jean for more information.

Our VA Rep, Carl Bradshaw will be here for his monthly office hour on Tuesday, February 13th from 10:30- 11:30.

Salmon VNA will be here on Tuesday, February 13th for their monthly Blood Pressure Clinic from 11-12:00pm.

Next Writing Class will be held on Tuesday, February 13th at 2:30pm. All are welcome, call Michelle for more information.

Correction: Our Valentine's Day Party will be held on Wednesday, February 14th. There was a misprint on our tickets that said it was Thursday, but that is incorrect.

Please note we will be closed on Monday, February 19th for the Presidents Day holiday.

“Music Through the Decades”, Wednesday, February 28th from 1-2:00pm. Enjoy a musical concert with local musician Doug Urquhart, singer/guitarist, as he journeys through the decades of the 1940's to 1970's. You will be entertained with a variety of music from Frank Sinatra, Elvis, The Beatles and more! Thank you to the Northbridge Cultural

Council for providing the grant to bring Doug Urquhart to Plummer Place. Sign up in the main office. Light refreshments will be served.

Did you know...Being a part of Plummer Place is free! There is no membership, you do not have to join. Just come on in and enjoy our many activities, resources, and social engagements! Some classes do require a minimal fee, see one of our staff for more information.

We need volunteer out of town medical drivers! This is a very important service we provide at Plummer Place for seniors who cannot drive to their medical appointments. If you can spare some time, even if it is one day a week, it would be much appreciated. Drivers are reimbursed for their mileage. Call Michelle or Amy if you would like more information or to volunteer.

### FINANCIAL

continued from page A7

common questions our clients ask us is, “How can we maximize our retirement income?”

One effective strategy for consideration is a “barbell approach”. To use this approach an investor will pair a short-term fixed income instrument with a longer-term fixed income instrument.

Here's a hypothetical example of a barbell in action:

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If interest rates rise over the next 12 month: her CD will mature and she can reinvest that money at a potentially new (higher) rate

In summary, this approach can help retirees hedge against interest rate move-

### ANTIQUES

continued from page A7

expect, there are collectors who appreciate the history of flight or have fond memories of airlines and collect airplane related memorabilia.

Locally, the “Worcester” Airport opened in Northrafton in 1927. Over 30,000 people witnessed stunt flyers, parachuters, and military pilots when the airport opened. We sold a program, ticket, and first day cover from the event for \$150 in our December 2022 auction. Some other early aviation medals sold well in our last auction this past January. A sterling silver 1919 New York Aeronautical Expedition commemorative medal sold for \$140 and a bronze medal commemorating Admiral Byrd's Flights over the Arctic and Antarctica sold for \$550.

As for more recent history, Pan American World Airways (Pan Am) was founded in 1927. It was considered to be the leading international carrier after World War II. In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt needed a plane to fly to a conference in Morocco and chose a Pan AM Boeing 314 Clipper. Other presidents including Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, and Richard Nixon also flew on Pan Am flights staffed by some of their finest employees. We auctioned memorabilia from the estate of a stewardess who flew with Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Nixon on their chartered flights. A signed Richard Nixon photo and other memorabilia sold for \$275. A 1950s or 1960s stewardess cap with pin brought \$350. A Pan Am clock shaped like an instrument panel landed at \$500 and three silver appreciation tokens from President Eisenhower soared to \$2,400.

We are accepting comic books, sports cards & memorabilia, and collectibles consignments for the next week. We are also accepting consignments for our multi-estate auction with gold jewelry, sterling silver, coins, art, antiques and collectibles. My “Evaluating your Antiques” class will be on March 5th at the Bay Path Evening School in Charlton. I'll also be at the Learning in Retirement event in Danielson, Connecticut on May 6. Please note the date correction from my last column. Please visit our Web site, <https://centralmassauctions.com>, for links to other upcoming events.

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

ments in either direction. And if rates are indeed near their peak, this strategy may help “lock in” a potentially attractive rate for longer.

If you would like to learn more about how The Capstone Planning Group assist clients with retirement income planning, or discuss our current rates, please contact our office at 508-764-0046 to speak with a professional.

About The Capstone Planning Group  
The Capstone Planning Group is an experienced wealth management team conveniently located at Cornerstone Bank. The team offers comprehensive financial planning, asset management, and insurance. To learn more about the team and schedule a courtesy consultation please visit [www.thecapstone.group](http://www.thecapstone.group) or call 508-764-0046

\*Interest rates quoted in this article are for educational purposes only. Interest rates change daily. This article is not a solicitation or recommendation to purchase any specific product. Guarantees offered on Fixed Annuities are subject to the claims-paying ability of the issuing insurance company.

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### TRAINOR

continued from page A7

thunder; thou shalt see a summer wonder:  
A summer fog for fair; a winter fog for rain.  
A wet January, a wet spring.  
An April flood carries away both the frog and his brood.  
April showers bring May flowers.  
April weather: rain and sunshine both together.  
Be it weal or be it woe, bean blow before May doth go.  
A cold May and a windy, a full barn will find ye.  
If it thunders on All Fool's Day, it brings good crops of corn and hay.  
A peck of March dust is worth a king's ransom.  
March'll search ye, April try ye; May'll tell, whether live or die ye.  
A wet May makes a big load of hay.  
A cold May is kindly and fills the barn finely.  
When April blows his horn, 'Tis good for both hay and corn.  
A cold and wet June spoils the rest of the year.  
A dripping June keeps all things in tune.  
A dry May and a leaking June, make the farmer whistle a merry tune.  
If the 24th of August be fair and clear; then hope for a prosperous autumn that year.  
In July, shear your rye.  
June damp and warm does the farmer no harm.  
Mist in May and heat in June will bring all things into tune.  
A swarm of bees in May is worth a load of hay.  
A swarm of bees in July is not worth a fly.  
\*\*

The Legend of Gazing Balls: Gazing

balls, which are large shiny, reflective orbs that typically sit on a stand in the garden, have long been said to have protective powers. In the Victorian era, gazing balls were common sights in gardens. Legend has it evil spirits attempting to enter the garden were scared off by their own reflections in the gazing ball. Also called Witch Balls because witches were often the spirits to repel, the brilliant globes were also said to ward off misfortune and illness. Today, gazing balls have become an attractive addition to both formal and casual gardens. Set on a cement or metal stand, the orb allows a view of the entire garden with a single glance.  
\*\*

Hummingbird Lore: The tiny hummingbird has a rich heritage steeped in Native American folklore. In Mayan lore, the hummingbird is the sun in disguise. A Mojave legend has a hummingbird flying up from the darkness of the inner earth to discover the world we now live in. The Taino tribe worship the hummingbird, believing it is a “sacred pollinator.” And the Chaymas of Trinidad also hold hummingbirds sacred, as it is thought the hummingbirds are their dead ancestors. Hummingbirds are a delightful addition to the modern garden, as they are not only wonderful to watch, they are valuable pollinators and insect predators. Growing flowers that produce nectar will attract the tiny birds, and hummingbird feeders ensure a plentiful flock of the tiny visitors. Hummingbirds are attracted to the following shrubs and flowers: Azalea; Bee Balm; Butterfly Bush; Canna; Coral Honeysuckle; Flowering Quince; Four O'Clocks; Foxglove; Fuchsia ;

it. The erosion of trust is a subtle yet profound form of loss, and it isn't confined to romantic relationships alone. It creeps in when we neglect our partners' and friends' needs, feelings, or expectations. Once trust is damaged, whether in a marriage or a friendship, rebuilding it can be a long and challenging road.

And what about your customers? When we lose a customer, it's the loss of an opportunity to serve and to make a meaningful impact. Are you paying attention to their needs and expectations to contribute positively to their day or solve a problem they're facing?

Winning back a customer after they've left can be significantly more challenging than maintaining that relationship.

So, what can we do in the face of potential loss? We can strive to be kind, communicate openly, and cherish our time with those around us. We can work on being understanding and patient. And when someone steps back into our lives, we can welcome them with open arms, knowing that relationships are sometimes mysterious and require understanding.

Loss, in its many forms, is an inevitable part of life. But each loss carries a lesson.

It's been said that you learn more from loss than you do from gain.

Ultimately, it's not just about preventing loss; it's about embracing the learning and growing that comes from it. And that's a positive take on one of life's most challenging experiences.

Hosta; Impatiens; Morning Glory; Petunia; Trumpet Creeper; Yucca. If you use a hummingbird feeder, a homemade solution of nectar is an economic way to attract the birds. The general recipe is one part sugar to four parts water. Mixture should be boiled for about a minute to retard mold. The solution should be replaced at least once a week and it is imperative you keep the feeder clean. It is not necessary to add red food coloring to the water; as any red trim on the feeder will attract the birds.  
\*\*

Win Dinner for Two at the Publick House

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

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

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LG TOP FREEZER 18 CU. FT. <b>\$699<sup>99</sup></b> WAS \$899.99	AMANA GAS RANGE #AGR1533CRAS • Stainless Steel <b>\$599<sup>99</sup></b> WAS \$699.99	GE FRONT LOAD WASHER #GFWSO5SNWW <b>\$799<sup>99</sup></b> WAS \$999.99	20 CU. FT. CHEST FREEZER <b>\$899<sup>99</sup></b> WAS \$1099.99	LG SMOOTH TOP ELECTRIC STOVE <b>\$729<sup>99</sup></b> WAS \$999.99	G.E. OVER-THE-RANGE MICROWAVE <b>\$229<sup>99</sup></b> WAS \$279.99

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## Country Bank supports EcoTarium with \$25,000 pledge



WORCESTER — Country Bank, a full-service financial institution serving Central and Western Massachusetts recently announced a \$25,000 pledge to the EcoTarium. This pledge aims to support the development of a cutting-edge gallery for traveling exhibits and contribute to the establishment of the new Early Childhood Science Learning Center, showcasing the Bank's commitment to education and community enrichment.

"The EcoTarium is deeply grateful for Country Bank's generous gift to our Third Century Campaign which will build a new state-of-the-art gallery for traveling exhibits and develop an Early Childhood Science Learning Center for children up to age six," stated EcoTarium President and CEO Noreen Johnson Smith. "These vital projects will ensure the Museum continues to offer transformative experiences that promote science literacy and learning about science and nature as we prepare the next generation of leaders in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math."

To learn more about the EcoTarium, visit <https://ecotarium.org>.



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An advertisement for Rests Superstore. It features a large, stylized 'R' logo in the background. The text 'RESTAURANT SUPERSTORE' is prominently displayed in a serif font. Below this, it says 'Open Monday - Saturday 8am - 5pm'. To the right, a yellow circle contains the text 'Mention this ad 5% OFF ORDER!'. At the bottom, it lists the locations: 'Worcester: 172 Stafford Street • (508) 752-2200' and 'Providence: 1229 Westminister Street • (401) 454-7283'. The website 'restsuperstore.com' is at the very bottom.

**NAI** Glickman Kovach & Jacobs

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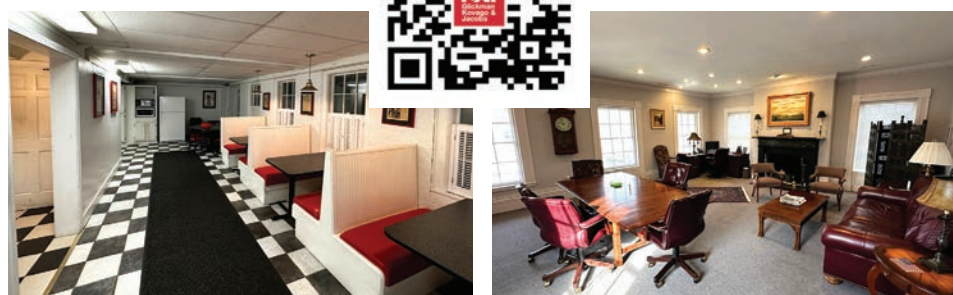
25 ELM STREET | SOUTHBRIDGE, MA



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Principal

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JONAH D. GLICKMAN  
Vice President

508-868-3765

jdglickman@glickmankovago.com

# It Pays To Switch!

The figure consists of two side-by-side cards. The left card is titled 'EZ Interest Checking' and features a large '4.00%' with 'APY\*' below it. Below the rate, it states 'For balances up to \$9,999.99'. A bulleted list includes: 'Free Online & Mobile banking', 'Free eStatements & billpay', and 'Up to \$20 in monthly ATM surcharges refunded'. The right card is titled 'EZ Choice Savings' and features a large '3.25%' with 'APY\*\*' below it. Below the rate, it states 'For balances of \$25,000 and greater'. A bulleted list includes: '1.25% APY for balances up to \$24,999.99' and 'Available with EZ Interest Checking'.

Account Type	Interest Rate (APY)	Balance Range	Additional Features
EZ Interest Checking	4.00% <sup>*</sup>	Up to \$9,999.99	Free Online & Mobile banking, Free eStatements & billpay, Up to \$20 in monthly ATM surcharges refunded
EZ Choice Savings	3.25% <sup>**</sup>	\$25,000 and greater	1.25% APY for balances up to \$24,999.99, Available with EZ Interest Checking

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Annual Percentage Yield (APY) is current as of 1/11/2024. Fees could reduce earnings. Additional terms and conditions may apply. One per household. Minimum balance to open both account types and earn APY is \$0.01. Although Milford Federal offers free unlimited ATM transactions, other institutions may impose a surcharge for using their ATMs. \*EZ Interest Checking is a variable tiered rate checking product and subject to change at any time. An APY of 4.00% will be paid on the balance up to the first \$9,999.99, and 0.10% on balances greater than \$9,999.99. \$1,500 minimum balance to waive \$15 monthly fee. \*\*EZ Choice Savings is a variable tiered rate savings product, and subject to change at any time. Must have EZ Interest Checking. An APY of 1.25% will be paid on the balance up to the first \$24,999.99, and 3.25% on balances greater than \$24,999.99. \$2,500 minimum balance to waive \$10 monthly fee.



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