

Charlton Villager

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Thursday-Friday, February 20-21, 2025

Charlton FD adds sensors to increase emergency warnings for commuters

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — The Charlton Fire Department has added a new technology to several vehicles that will help improve awareness for drivers utilizing certain kinds of navigation apps in the hopes of increasing safety for firefighters

on call.

Charlton Fire Chief Rob Barton revealed to selectmen on Feb. 11 that his department has installed HAAS Alert devices on five vehicles (three ambulances and two fire vehicles) that are often sent to emergencies on busy and dangerous roadways like the Mass Pike,

Route 169 and Route 20. The devices will automatically alert commuters of an emergency to hopefully increase awareness and, in effect, the safety of emergency personnel on scene.

“Firefighter safety is an utmost importance of mine and there’s this technology that’s out

there where when our emergency lights are activated it sends out an emergency signal and motorists that are using the Waze app or some other navigation app will get a notification automatically into their cars that there is an emergency vehicle operating up ahead. So it gives them a

little more heads up. It allows them to start to slow down sooner,” said the Chief.

Charlton responds to hundreds of emergency events on the Mass Pike alone each year receiving compensation for its assistance which has helped pay for the new sensors. Chief Barton

said he considered adding the devices to all of the department’s vehicles which would have cost \$600 a vehicles and around \$16,000 a year. Rather than incur the large cost, the department focused on equipping vehicles most likely to respond to emergen-

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Courtesy

MINI-GOLF AT JOSHUA HYDE LIBRARY MARCH 1 AND 2

Feeling stir crazy? Looking for a fun way to get the kids off the couch? Come to the Joshua Hyde Public Library in Sturbridge March 1 or 2 for a round of Mini-Golf! That weekend, the library will be transformed into a multi-hole mini-golf course that winds its way through the entire library. Holes will take you through mystery, travel, science fiction...up, down and all around. Don't miss this chance to have a "hole" lot of fun and support your library at the same time! The course will be open Saturday, March 1 from 10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and Sunday, March 2 from 12:30 - 4 p.m. The price is \$5 per person with a \$20 maximum per family. Sponsored by the Friends of the Joshua Hyde Public Library, 306 Main St., Sturbridge.

Dudley, Charlton show mixed performance on 2024 MCAS tests

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY/CHARLTON — The Dudley Charlton Regional School District’s MCAS scores garnered mixed results in terms of student performance in 2024. A report presented by Assistant Superintendent Kelly True revealed that while scores increased in some categories, notable decreases mean the district still has work to do in terms of helping students keep up with the rest of the state.

While a vote in the 2024 President Election eliminated the MCAS test as a graduation requirement in Massachusetts, the state test is still an important component of compiling data regarding comprehension in schools.

Assistant Superintendent True revealed the results of Dudley and Charlton’s scores at the School Committee’s Jan. 29 meeting where Grades 3-8 saw decreases in language arts and math but increases in science scores while high school students saw decreases in math scores and increases in language arts and science. Student growth percentages were also mixed with some district schools excelling in certain subjects while other schools and grades fell behind. The data showed

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Southbridge Cultural Council announces grant awards

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Cultural Council, a local agency, is part of the overall grant program of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, which provides allocations to each of the 351 cities and towns of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in support of grants for cultural activities. The Massachusetts Cultural Council receives its funding from the Massachusetts Legislature and from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Of the 351 communities receiving funds, the Southbridge Cultural Council ranked as 45th highest in the 2024 grant cycle funding. Of the 25 communities in South Central Worcester County, Southbridge funding was the second highest after the city of Worcester. The 2025 rank listing for Southbridge is not presently available. Qualifying grant applications for 2025 were initially approved online by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Receiving final approval for grants for 2025 were 33 applications from the Southbridge Cultural Council.

The 33 grant recipients receiving support in 2025 are: Garine Aarakelian, “D.E.A.R. Duckies Excited About Reading,” Jacob Edwards Library; Gateway Players Theatre, “Plaza Suite” at the Elm Street Congregational Church; Shawna E. Shea Memorial Foundation, Inc., free movie screening at the Starlite Lounge; Elizabeth Silvia, “Catnip Junkies Live”

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Old Sturbridge Village Maple Days underway

STURBRIDGE — Old Sturbridge Village is open during the winter months, with many seasonal programs and special events happening each week. Extended hours began on Wednesday, Feb. 19, along with the start of a visitor favorite event, Maple Days!

Included with standard daytime admission on select dates in February and March, guests can see the entire sugar-making process, from tapping the trees

to “sugaring off,” and learn why maple sugar was more commonly used than maple syrup in early New England. Costumed historians will also cook period foods made with maple products and the tinner and cooper will make maple-related items. Maple Days are Feb. 19 through March 9th from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. In addition, guests can stop by the Miner Grant Store and the Ox & Yoke Mercantile to purchase a variety of maple-themed items. Find

maple syrup, maple candy, maple-themed books, maple-scented soaps and lotions, and more!

Additional winter season events include walking through historic buildings, engaging with our costumed historians, and seeing heritage-breed animals. Guests are encouraged to reserve tickets in advance for their date of arrival. Tickets and more information can be found online: <https://www.osv.org/event/maple-days/>.

Renowned appraiser to visit area

NEW BRAINTREE — Area residents are invited to dust off their treasures and prepare for a fascinating appraisal event.

Set for March 22 from 1-3 p.m., the program will take place at the New Braintree Historical Society museum (10 Utley Rd., New Braintree).

Renowned appraiser and auctioneer Kenneth Van Blarcom, of South Natick, will conduct an individual appraisal and history of your item. Guests in at-

tendance will be able to learn about the item and its historical significance.

"The Society is thrilled to have Mr. Van Blarcom's expertise here in New Braintree. His impressive credentials include antique appraisal positions with Shreve, Crump and Low, Co. and a Boston Directorship at the fine art and antique company of Skinner Auctions," read a statement released to promote the event.

Over his 40-year career, Van Blarcom has conducted more than 850 auctions.

For the March 22 program, each guest will have a limit of two items for appraisal (no jewelry). The cost per appraisal is \$5.

Refreshments will be served at the event. For more information, visit <https://newbraintreehistoricalsociety.org/> or call 508-867-3324.

SOUTHBRIDGE POLICE LOG

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of Feb. 10-17.

Chyna Aquino, age 31, of Sturbridge was arrested on Feb. 10 for operating a motor vehicle after suspension of license and Possession of a Class C Drug.

A 39-year-old male from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on Feb. 11 for Speeding and operating a motor vehicle after suspension of license.

Jonathan T. Romano, age 29, of Southbridge was arrested on Feb. 11 for Domestic Assault & Battery, Assault & Battery on a Person over the age of 60 with Serious Injury, and Malicious Damage to a Motor Vehicle.

A 72-year-old male from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on Feb. 12 for Leaving the Scene of

Property Damage.

Melaney Joy Mathieu, age 24, of Southbridge was arrested on Feb. 12 for Reckless Endangerment of a Child and in connection with warrants for Assault & Battery in the process of Resisting Arrest and Use of a Motor Vehicle Without Authority.

A 35-year-old male from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on Feb. 13 for operating an Unregistered Motor Vehicle and operating a motor vehicle after suspension of license.

A 27-year-old female and 25-year-old male from Southbridge each received a summons in lieu of arrest on Feb. 13 for Domestic Assault and Battery.

Henry L. Alicea, age 23, of Southbridge was arrested on Feb. 14 in connection with a warrant for Operating Under the Influence (Liquor).

Kevin Cardoza, age 39, of Southbridge was arrested on Feb. 14 in connection with a warrant.

Darnell Green-Williams, age 25, of Southbridge was arrested on Feb. 15 for operating a motor vehicle after suspension of license (subsequent offense) and Possession of a Class B Drug (subsequent offense).

A 39-year-old female from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on Feb. 16 for operating an Unregistered and Uninsured Motor Vehicle.

REAL ESTATE

CHARLTON

\$680,000, 94 Lelandville Rd, Wierbik, Adam, and Wierbik, Urszula, to Peters Ft, and Peters, Ronald M.

\$624,900, 23 Prindle Hill Rd, Burlingame, Nelson, to Proctor, Phillip, and Proctor, Ashley

\$435,000, 48 Stephens Park Rd #5A, Amadio, Mark, and Amadio, Linda, to Moshkivskiy, Dmytrii.

\$435,000, 48 Stephens Park Rd #7, Amadio, Mark, and Amadio, Linda, to Moshkivskiy, Dmytrii.

\$357,500, 13 Brookfield Rd, Jansen, Karen, to French, Kim M, and Barrows, Justin R.

HOLLAND

\$384,000, 28 Forest Dr, Suarez, Vanessa, to Leveillee, Tyler J, and Potvin, Crystal A.

\$335,000, 14 Blodgett Rd, Fitts Jr, Emery L, and Fitts, M J, to Jolin Jr, Camille P.

\$60,000, 59-A Wales Rd, Lucier, Richard A, and Lucier, Nancy E, to Hawkes, Justin D.

\$24,000, Harper St, Counihan, James F, to Putz, Jonas S, and Crowe-Putz, Jacqueline J.

SOUTHBRIDGE

\$450,000, 18 Armory Ln, Benoit Ft, and Benoit, Gregory P, to Lafontant, Michael.

\$306,000, 162 Elm St, Jolin Jr, Camille P, and Jolin, Michelle, to Cruz, Jose M, and Lopez, Karla M.

\$275,000, 1 Hartwell St, Federal Natl Mtg Assn, to Suarez, Vanessa.

\$150,000, 266 Marcy St, Dunlop, Kristin, and Mathieu, Vanessa, to Dion, Timothy.

\$82,500, Hill Top Dr #C, Lebanon Hill Acres Rt, and Singer, Alan E, to Sullivan, Samantha J, and Redmond, Kyle J.

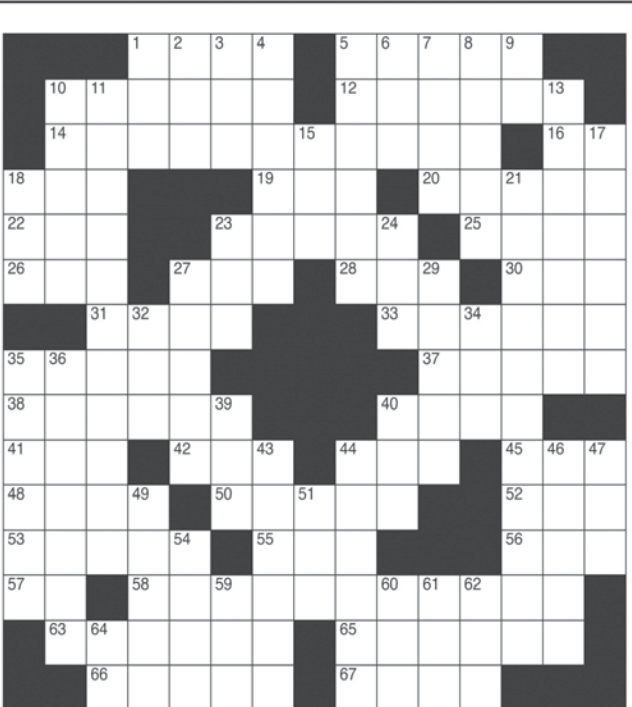
\$82,500, Whispering Ln #B, Lebanon Hill Acres Rt, and Singer, Alan E, to Sullivan, Samantha J, and Redmond, Kyle J.

STURBRIDGE

\$792,000, 530 Leadmine Rd, Sturbridge Home Rt, and Bacon, Sandra J, to Copes, Trevor J, and Parrella, Christina L.

\$528,000, 40 Breakneck Rd, Wronski, Stanley P, to Lopez, Tomas, and Sinatra, Adrienne.

\$292,000, 105 Shore Rd, Jth Irt, and Hackett, Katharine E, to Nothe, John R, and Nothe, Julie A.

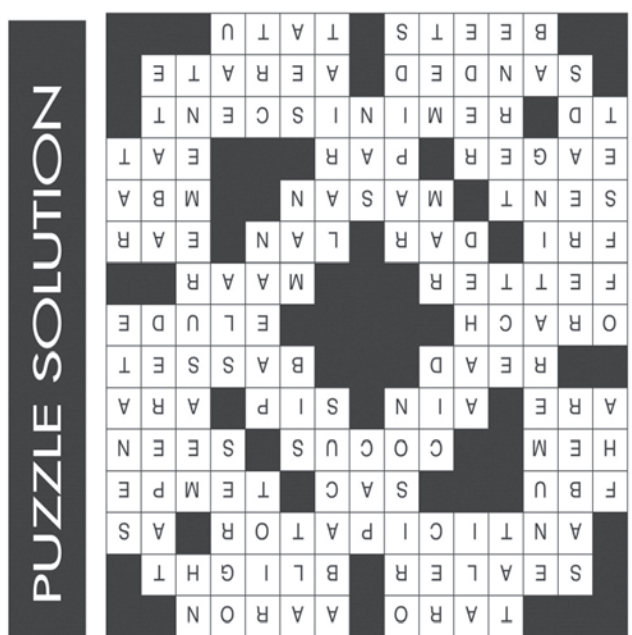


CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Tropical Asian plant
- 5. Yankees' slugger Judge
- 10. Helps to preserve food
- 12. Plant disease
- 14. One who predicts
- 16. Equally
- 18. Burundian franc
- 19. Pouch
- 20. Arizona city
- 22. Surround
- 23. Hard, heavy timber
- 25. Witnessed
- 26. They ___
- 27. French river
- 28. A way to drink
- 30. Small constellation
- 31. Peruse a written work
- 33. Type of hound
- 35. Plant of the goosefoot family
- 37. Evade or escape
- 38. A way to confine
- 40. Volcanic crater
- 41. Weekday
- 42. Women's service organization (abbr.)
- 44. Local area network
- 45. Sensory receptor
- 48. Posted
- 50. Tibetan pastry
- 52. Licensed for Wall Street
- 53. Very willing
- 55. Golf score
- 56. Consume
- 57. Touchdown
- 58. Tends to remind
- 63. In a way, smoothed
- 65. Poke holes in the ground
- 66. Herbaceous plants
- 67. Taiwanese river

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Body art
- 2. Boxing's GOAT
- 3. Film for posterity (abbr.)
- 4. Prayer
- 5. Calculating machine
- 6. Keyboard key
- 7. Outburst
- 8. Man-eating giants
- 9. New Hampshire
- 10. Type of sword
- 11. Counting
- 13. Pants style
- 15. Political action committee
- 17. U.S. government legislative branch
- 18. Civil Rights Act component
- 21. Contractors take one
- 23. Spanish soldier
- 24. A person's brother or sister
- 27. Expressed pleasurer
- 29. Song of praise
- 32. Shock treatment
- 34. Patti Hearst's captors
- 35. Counteract
- 36. Goes over again
- 39. Popular Dodge truck
- 40. Male adult
- 43. A part of a river where the current is very fast
- 44. Rope used to lasso
- 46. Become less intense
- 47. Subway rodent
- 49. Lead alloy
- 51. Japanese honorific title
- 54. Advise someone
- 59. Famous NYC museum
- 60. Ocean
- 61. Cathode-ray tube
- 62. Cologne
- 64. It starts with these two



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visit www.townofcharlton.net or more information.

Individual offices may vary

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Sat. 9:00 - 12:00

CHURCH LISTINGS

• **Central Baptist Church** 256 Main St., Southbridge, MA 01550 Tel 508/764-6365; Worship 10:00 A.M.

• **Charlton Federated Church**, 64 Main St., 508- 248-5550, Sunday worship 10:30 a.m. Summer worship is 9:30 a.m. www.charltonfedchurch.org

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

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

Sunday worship and Children's church 10am

• **St. Anne St. Patrick Church**, 16 Church St., Fiskdale (508) 347-7338

www.stannestpatparish.com

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

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

• **Wayside Church**, 6 Haggerty Road, 248-5144

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

• **Living Word Church of Charlton**, 10 Main Street - Grange building 1st Floor, Charlton, MA 01507, Pastor Craig Bellisario, (508) 233-8349

Sunday Service 10:00am. www.livingwordcharlton.com

info@livingwordcharlton.com

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

• **Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale** - 8 Maple St. Sturbridge, 774-304-1021 www.sturfed.org

Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.

• **Bethlehem Lutheran Church**- 345 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566

Phone 508-347-7297

Web: www.bethlehemsturbridge.org

Services - Sunday 9:00 am

Pastor Dan Purtell

• **Holland Congregation Church** "Where the Bible is preached."

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Hollandchurch.org

Sunday Service at 10:00 am

Pastor Dan Makettsky

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church

446 Hamilton St., Southbridge, MA 01550

Phone: 508-765-9559

Web: www.holytrinitysouthbridge.org

Sunday Service 11:00 am

Pastor Dan Purtell

Charlton Cultural Council announces grant recipients

CHARLTON — The Charlton Cultural Council is proud to announce our 2025 grant recipients. The following people and organizations have been allocated funding to promote cultural programming in our community. We are pleased to be able to support such talented local artists and creatives and these new and exciting programs. Please watch for these events as they become available.

Dennis Wise.....	The Theft of Dignity: Charlton Public Presentation
Edward Wirt.....	Oakland Stroke Band
Roger L. Tricknell.....	From Ireland to America
The Story School Inc.	eduLARP: Teaching Through Stories
Julie Stepanek.....	Ukulele Day at the Library
Shepherd Hill Regional High School.....	The Wizard of Oz
Jennifer Powell.....	Outdoor Sculpture "You are Here"
Jay Mankita.....	Chain Reactions & Creative Contraptions
David Maloof.....	Music + Education Event (6 program options)
Jonathan A. Keezing.....	Classic Songs
Steven M. Hurlbut.....	Jumpin' Juba Senior Concert
Carrie Ferguson.....	Carrie Ferguson Family Music Concert
Charlton Public Library.....	Art History Series (3 Presentations)
Laura Cenendela.....	Introduction to Acrylic Painting - Local Historical Site
David R. Bates III.....	This Land is Your Land: A Song & Story Celebration



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Pasture Prime Players announce auditions for "Darling Mr. London"

CHARLTON — Pasture Prime Players, Inc. is pleased to announce open auditions for "Darling Mr. London" by Anthony Marriott and Bob Grant. The production will be directed by Victoria Konopacki. Auditions will be held Tuesday, March 4 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, March 8 at 10 a.m. at the Charlton Arts & Activities Center, 4 Dresser Hill Rd., Charlton, MA. Performances will be held May 30 & 31 and June 1, 6, 7 & 8. This play is produced by special arrangement with Concorde Theatricals, Inc., New York, N.Y.

his supervisor. Edward often "chats up" women operators in various exchanges. These affairs by proxy suddenly explode in his face when four glamorous females travel to London to compete in the Miss Europhone Contest and arrive at this home anxious to meet the flirtatious Mr. London in the flesh. Hilarious complications ensue as Edward strives to conceal his telephonic peccadilloes from his wife, his appalling mother-in-law and his lodger, an ardent curate.

Despite his hobby of fighting battles with toy soldiers, Edward is a mild person, and he is about to experience an evening he will never forget. He works at the Continental Telephone Exchange where his pompous brother-in-law is

There are roles for six women 20's - 50's and 3 men 20's-50's. Auditions will be cold readings from the script. We are also looking for people to fill non-performing roles. For more information, contact us at pasture.prime.players@gmail.com.

Sebastian Suprenant named to dean's list at Tufts University

MEDFORD — Sebastian Suprenant, Class of 2028, from Fiskdale, was named to the dean's list at Tufts University for the fall 2024 semester. Dean's list honors at Tufts University require a semester grade point average of 3.4 or greater.

Tufts University, located on campuses in Boston, Medford/Somerville and Grafton, Massachusetts, and in Talloires, France, is recognized among the premier research universities in the United States. Tufts enjoys a global reputation for academic excellence and for the preparation of students as leaders in a wide range of professions. A growing number of innovative teaching and research initiatives span all Tufts campuses, and collaboration among the faculty and students in the undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs across the university's schools is widely encouraged.

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Team Mass Boys & Girls Aau Basketball Tryouts


Cost: \$30 Covers both tryouts (players get t-shirt)
 Aau card \$25 (purchase on our website, well pull them)

Tryout # 1: February 22, 2025
 Location: **Tantasqua Jr High School**(320 Brookfield Rd Fiskdale Ma)
 • **Boys Grades 4th-6th** 8:30am-9:40am
 • **Boys Grades 7th & 8th** 9:45am-10:55 am
 • **Boys Grades 9th-12th** 11 am-12:10 pm
 • **Girls Grades 4th-6th** 12:15 pm- 1:25 pm
 • **Girls Grades 7th-8th** 1:30 pm-2:40 pm
 • **Girls Grades 9th-12th** 2:45 pm- 4 pm

Tryout # 2: March 1, 2025
 Location: **Oxford High School**(100 Carbuncle Dr Oxford Ma)
 • **Boys Grades & Girls Grades 4th-6th** (9am-10:25 am)
 • **Boys & Girls Grades 7th & 8th** (10:30 am-11:55 am)
 • **Boys and Girls Grades 9th-12th** (12 pm-1:30 pm)

Pre Register/pay on website: teammassbasketball.com
 Questions Email: teammassbasketball@gmail.com or call 413-539-1548
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Friday's Child



Hi! My name is Jaxen and I have a fabulous smile and laugh!

Jaxen is very active and happy! He enjoys playing catch, riding in golf carts, and rocking in outdoor gliders. When Jaxen wants to relax, he is very cuddly. Jaxen loves Disney music, especially the soundtracks from Trolls and The Greatest Showman.

Jaxen
Age 9
Registration # 8388

<https://adopt.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/child/8388>

Can I Adopt?

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

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

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

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Audio Journal's Random Acts of Music set for May date

WORCESTER — “Random Acts of Music,” drawing on the great and varied musical talents of Worcester, will present an evening of dining and entertainment at the Hogan Ballroom at the College of the Holy Cross on Saturday, May 31. Audio Journal, the radio reading service for the blind and print disabled, returns to Hogan Hall in Worcester for its annual fundraising event. A ticket purchase, sponsorship or donation in support of this event, will help Audio Journal continue broadcasting news, information and entertainment to individuals in Central Massachusetts who are blind or print disabled.

“The entertainment aspect of the evening will include jazz, classical and folk standards of vocal and instrumental, solo and group artists. The event promises to be filled with surprises contributing to a musical night to remember,” according to Executive Director Harry Duchesne of Audio Journal.

Starting at 5:30 p.m. with a cash bar, silent auction and raffle opportunities, the show and dinner are set to begin at 6:30 p.m. A single ticket costs \$75 with tickets for two at \$130. A table of eight costs \$500 with a table of 10 for \$600 in the front two rows. The dinner meal choices offered are chicken, fish, vegetarian/vegan, special choice for those with dietary needs.

This year's silent auction will begin online on April 1 and will be open to the public. The online auction will end the morning of the event and will continue as a live auction the night of the event.

“The silent auction and raffle offerings at Audio Journal events are exceptional and are the cause for enthusiastic bidding,” says Duchesne.

Audio Journal's mission in Central Massachusetts is to connect individuals with a visual impairment, or an inability to access print material, to their communities through broadcasting of local news, information, and entertainment with exclusive programs and content. Listeners hear broadcasts via an iPhone and Android App, smart speaker (Amazon Echo), internet, telephone, cable TV, or a special receiver tuned to Audio Journal's frequency. Audio Journal's 170 volunteers read newspapers, magazines, books, grocery and retail flyers, health information, and more. There are more than a dozen specialty programs including Speaking Volumes, Radio Active Theatre and Talking Topics and Another Point of View. This local reading service for the visually impaired and print disabled is a valued source of information and companionship.

Dog licenses now on sale in Southbridge

SOUTHBRIDGE — Dog licenses are now on sale for the town of Southbridge for the year 2025.

A one-year license for a non-altered dog is \$20. If the dog is spayed or neutered, the price is \$10 for a one-year license. A certificate of spaying or neutering must be shown for first-time licenses. A current rabies vaccination certificate must be presented when licensing dogs.

Dogs may be licensed through the mail if all the paperwork is in order. For more information, call the office of the Town Clerk at (508) 764-5408. The deadline to license your dog without any late fees is April 30.

UTampa student Payton MacDonald of Fiskdale earns Dean's List honors

TAMPA, Fla. — Payton MacDonald, of Fiskdale, earned dean's list honors at University of Tampa for the Fall 2024 semester. MacDonald is a Freshman majoring in Marketing BS. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.75 or higher to be eligible for the dean's list.

The University of Tampa is a private, comprehensive university located on 110 acres on the riverfront in downtown Tampa. Known for academic excellence, personal attention and real-world experience in its undergraduate and graduate programs, the University has about 200 programs of study and serves more than 11,000 students from 50 states and most of the world's countries.

Sturbridge Historical Society presents “The Covered Bridges of Massachusetts”

STURBRIDGE — On Thursday, Feb. 27, the Sturbridge Historical Society will present Rich Paradise speaking about “The Covered Bridges of Massachusetts.” The program begins at 7 p.m. at the Publick House.

Nineteenth century New England covered bridges, those iconic wooden structures that feature a roof and siding to protect the bridge's wooden beams from harsh weather, are considered a testament to early American engineering. Once seen everywhere, today there are only about a dozen covered bridges left in Massachusetts and some of them are on private property. Rich has managed to photograph them all and will provide detailed descriptions of how to find them.

Paradise will open his talk with a brief discussion of the different methods of bridge construction, followed by a review of the existing Massachusetts bridges. And no talk on covered bridges would be complete without bringing up the Graton family's business in New Hampshire. During the flood control of the 1950's, Graton Associates was hired to remove covered bridges from the rivers that were in the floodplain. This process started their unique career of restoring and building new covered bridges. Milton Graton who started the business wrote the book “The Last of the Covered Bridge Builders.” Paradise has a signed copy of this book which will be on display at his talk.

Rich Paradise, as many of you may remember, was last year's “stone wall guy.” He is also a huge fan of covered bridges and has studied them for years. Since moving to Sturbridge in 2002, Rich has been an avid hiker of our local trails. For the past 14 years, he has been a member of the Town's Trails Committee. He has volunteered his chainsaw skills to the Committee, and at numerous places around Town following the 2011 tornado. He is also a recent member of the Historical Society and has worked to help develop programs and presentations for the group.

This program, which is generously hosted by the Publick House, is free and open to the public.

Sophomores named to honor roll at Bay Path

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical School congratulates the following students in grade 10 on being named to the honor roll for the first quarter of the 2024-2025 school year.

High Honors

Anais Annette Alamo-Abad, Lillian Lauren Araujo, Boden Richard Barrell, Brett Julius Beltzer, Alexandria Helene Blanchard, Sagasse Mpolo Budimbu, Clara Mae Burlingame, Jenna Lynne Cianci, Trinity Chevelle Crompton, Benjamin Jackson Cryan, Luciana Isabel Flores, Brooke Nicole Fuller, Jadyn Marie Goodwin, Emma Grace Harrington, Vikram Kanchan Jha, Jayme Douglas Kenney, Jared Thomas Magnusson, Emily Arlene Malia, Thomas Andrew Nault, Johnny Ly Nhan, Katie Ann Putnam, Jason Timothy Richard, Jordyn Alexandra Sabotka, Owen Wajer Sanford, Isabella Christina Sepulveda, Kyle Dennis Twombly, Ryan James Ugrinow, Jazzelle Gia Wolverson, Jackson Robert Young

Honors

Salete Hellen Alves, Trevor Riley Amaral, Winifred Donna Aucoin, Collin William Bachand, Kenadie Taylor Balcunas, Vincent Louis Balducci, Zaclayia Rose Ballard, Benjamin Whitman Bassett, Lyla Rose Beauchene, Samantha Mackenzie Belanger, Kayleigh Rose Bissell, Alyssa Rose Bonnevill, Benjiman Russell Boulmetis, Gavin Gradley Boyd, Alexia Rose Brown, Olivia Raychal Burgos, Ariana Kathleen Byrnes, Bella Kristina Calnan, Michaela Sarah Carter, Evalynn Rose Cedillo, Miya Elizabeth Chauvin, Keziah Sage Chipman, Leianna Marie Collins, Liam Zachary Colon, Eric Murphy Day, Hunter William Defosse, Livia Cassandra Deluca, Madisson Clara Drewry, Brianne Nyarkoa Dwomoah, Molly Elizabeth Dwyer, Elizabeth Joyce Eccleston, Dylan Michael Filipkowski, Samantha Lynn Fleck, Aria Faith Fournier, Jinnette Lynn Goguen, Adrian Dariusz Golemo, Dakota Rylie Goodwin, Liam Reed Greenwood, Julia Abigail Holton, Colin Paul Hurley, Dominik Ignatovich, Evangeline Noelle Jackson, Kelsey Rose Karłowicz, Finnian John Keefe, Owen John Kennedy, Abena Kwartemaa Kwarteng, Benjamin Mitchell Labbe, Sangey Dawa Lama, Maximilian Thomas Lapriore, Ethan Michael Lemire, Damon James Libby, Perry Khai Lima, Apollo Ridge Logan, Julie-Anna Marie Marchetti, Jack Moriarty Maroney, Christopher Warren Martin, Aaron Robert Mazur, Finn McDaniel, Ava June McKelleck, Joshua Daniel McLaughlin, Johan

nys Marie Melendez, Nicholas Isaac Meneguzzo, Jayden Anthony Minardi, Alexis Kayla Moore, Miles Joseph Moriarty, Miguel Angel Mosqueda, Nathaniel Thomas Munson, Kaiya Rowan Murphy, Anastasia Marie Nieuwenhoff, Daniel Anthony Nowlan, Sarah Hazel O'Donnell, Elijah Ziarre Orfori, Jacey Okyere-Tawiah, Izabella Grace Paquin, Matthew Dean Parmenter, Kiley Marie Paronto, Aylah Mae Patraw, Mayli Ann Pedersen, Iban Alexander Pelaez, Kyla Carmen Farai Pierre, Ava Marie Rennie, Isabella Lynn Richard, Dani Roemer, Leilani Marie Rohena Torres, Yarisbeth Michelle Rojas, Jennavicia Marie Roseberry, Julian Benjamin Saez, Isaiah Omar Santiago, Ella Lanmei Schofield, Kayla Lynn Schroeder, Michael Ryan Scott, Jannessa Ellie Sepuka, Lucas Clement Silva, Zachary Stephen Sirard, Tiano Joseph Caole Sousa, Hadleigh Anne Splaine, Logan Frederick Stake, Dylan Robert Strzelewicz, Arianna Jayde Thomas, Rachel Lynnette, Torres, Nicholas Aiden Tremblay, Timothy Nicholas Tripp, Bryce Joseph Vautour, Sophia Ann Vigeant, Bradey Matthew Weeks, Connor Patrick Welsh, Christopher Paul Willey, Nico Anthony Yacavace, Lucy Vivian Zaleski

Principal's List

Lacie Rose Andrews, Riley Norman Baillargeon, Nolan Scott Barton, Dominic Francis Carofaniello, Eli Choiniere, Aidan Connor Clyne, Naomi Natania Cooper, Maya Janara Cronin, Liam Michael Cunniff, Nathan Stephan Donnelly, Zachary Michael Dumas, Brayden Alex Erickson, Ava Lila Erko, Tobias Michael Falc-Foreman, Marcus Anthony James Feliciano, Ely Eric Gemboski, Cole Michael Going, Emma Lynn Grensavtich, Brady Nicholas Johnson, Cameron Joseph-Michael Kittredge, Alexander James Kowalski, Owen David Lemansky, Andrew Tadeusz Levitzky, Laiyiah Rose Marquez, Colin Archak McIlvaine, Alysia Marie Melendez, Ayden Michael Morin, Corey Amoako Ntim, Jacob Jan Perry, Dylan James Poissot, Sophia Morrigan Ramirez-Murphy, Sophia Rivera, Evan Mitchell Roberts, Devin Matthew Robinson, Jake Albert Roemer, Adrian Miguel Rosa Bouthot, Gianna Kaylee Rosario, Trevor Anthony Rose, Eziajah Gianni Santiago, Logan James Schoff, Julia Rose Simpson, Addisyn Theresa Skeates, Brady Patrick Smith, Rebecca Marie Smith, Skyla Marie St. Francis, Amelia Jean St. Peter, Sean Michael Francis Sullivan, Travis Jacob Tong, Isabella Anna Vangel, Dahsiel Robert Williams, Payton Cailee Ziemski

Cornerstone Bank now accepting applications for annual scholarships

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank, a community bank with locations throughout Central Massachusetts, is inviting high school students who are interested in pursuing studies in business or finance to apply for the Bank's 2025 scholarship program. Cornerstone is awarding \$2,500 scholarships to 16 students who best demonstrate achievement in academics, extracurricular activities and community involvement. Applications are being accepted through April 8.

“It's always inspiring to hear fresh ideas from young people interested in pushing our industry forward,” said Cornerstone CEO Todd Tallman. “The more we support and invest in these teenagers now, the brighter the future will look for all of us.”

Applicants must submit an official transcript and GPA from their guidance office and be on track to

graduate high school in 2025. They also must provide a one-page typed essay based on the following prompt:

Describe your career goals and the steps you are taking to achieve them. How will this scholarship help you overcome challenges and support your path to success?

Interested students should complete and submit the application found here: cornerstonebank.com/community/scholarship-form. Recipients of the scholarship will receive funds after successful completion of the first college semester, and upon presentation of an official copy of the first-semester transcript and second-semester bill. For more information, please visit cornerstonebank.com/scholarships.

Libraries reach out for public support

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY — Area library fans came together last Friday at Pearle L. Crawford Public Library to start their annual push for library support from the Legislature. In the process, they got an update on some of the bills being proposed, pro- and con-.

Naturally, the core of them were those seeking funding for the Mass Board of Library Commissioners (which provides grants to most public libraries), the Mass Center for the Book (which promotes literacy and supports Bay State writers), and more general state library aid.

According to Commissioner Karen Traub,

“it’s been a while since we’ve seen an increase,” but that’s particularly important now with “the challenges we’ve seen lately.”

Those include an increased push for censorship in some places, increasing need for English-language education, proposed federal cuts, increasing costs for materials, and more.

Regarding the MCB, Traub noted that promotes the annual reading challenge with a different theme monthly (some audience members said what they were reading), Letters about Literature (where students write to authors culminating in a Statehouse ceremony), Children’s Literature Festival and book awards.

For some people, she added, libraries were their “only contact with the outside world” during the pandemic, and some credit them with saving or changing their lives.

One of those was Dudley resident Kate Evanski, a teacher in Auburn.

“The library is and always has been my safe place, my happy place,” she said.

In poetry, she told the story of how being able to escape to the library, especially to Tolkien’s books, helped her “quiet the noise” and get through her father’s unexpected death as a teenager.

In the library, she recalled, “I was no longer the girl who’d just lost

her father. I was just a girl reading a book. I was free.”

Eventually, fiction “pulled me from the depths of despair,” she said.

For Ed Bazinet, the library has been his refuge for 80 years. He recalled his first book in the late 1940s was about an egg in a barnyard hatching into a strange chimera creature that faced discrimination from other beings until it saved their community. To him, that book made him see the importance of “how you look at something through your difficult eyes ... and come to understand its purpose.”

Both of those messages resonated with Jason Homer, Worcester’s li-

brary director, who said libraries are safe spaces open to everyone “regardless of your belief system.” He talked about how they need to be safe for the staff, too, promoting the Safe Spaces for Librarians bill, which aims to protect “people facing direct threats over materials that are in their libraries.”

Furthermore, Homer talked about the Act for Free Expression (S.141/H.625), which aims to challenge book bans in schools. According to its text, it expands student rights to specifically include “receive information, including through materials determined to be educational and age-appropriate ... by the school library teacher” or whomever selects such materials, based on policy drafted by the school committee that includes a process for book challenges. It also gives students, parents and guardians the right to challenge book removals.

One issue, he noted, is that Massachusetts doesn’t require librarians be certified in K-6 schools, and many don’t have one. To him, that raises the question of “where are they getting digital literacy knowledge” and other issues.

On the finance side, Homer said a growing concern is e-books. The publishers charge libraries three to six times more per copy (up to \$120 each) than they charge everyday people, and each copy goes away after 26 check-outs or two years, forcing the library to repurchase

them repeatedly. That’s “wasting taxpayer money,” he argued, advocating for HD.1221/SD.2329 to correct such abuses. The bills prohibit contracts that stop libraries from “disclosing any terms of [their] license agreements” or “require or enable libraries to violate the confidentiality of patron records.” It also creates a board to investigate how to make library prices be the same as everyone else’s, let the library determine loan periods, prohibit license and number of loan-out restrictions and other things.

CWMARS Executive Director Jeanette Lundgren said digital and physical item use has been growing, with a 5 percent increase in physical check-outs (10 million items) and 26 percent in digital (3 million items). The library network now has 165 members, including 18 new, small ones in the last four years, some of whom now have their first online catalogs.

She described libraries as being in “very trying times. We don’t know what will happen at the federal level, and we don’t know its impact on the state budget.”

Lundgren and others urged library lovers to contact legislators with their personal stories of why libraries matter to them. They noted such stories, even brief ones, matter far more than form letters.

Gus Steeves can be reached at gus.steeves2@gmail.com.

UnderGround screenings continue with “The General”

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Shawna Foundation’s UnderGround Thursday Screening is the classic Buster Keaton movie “The General” (1926).

Taken from the history books, the story is based on the Great Locomotive Chase where the volunteers from the Union Army, led by civilian scout James J. Andrews, commandeered a train, The General, and took it northward toward Chattanooga, Tennessee, doing as much damage as possible to the vital Western and Atlantic Railroad (W&A) line from Atlanta to Chattanooga.

Interesting for that time, and even now, Keaton chose to tell the story from the Confederate standpoint because he didn’t believe anyone at that time would see them as villains.

He may have been wrong as the movie bombed at the box office.

But it has since been hailed as one of the best movies ever made including routinely making

Sight and Sounds and by Orson Welles as the greatest Civil War movie ever made.

Still the controversy lingers, as most believe it is one of the greatest comedies, but feel that it also promotes the Lost Cause of the Confederacy, as did films like “Birth of a Nation” and “Gone With The Wind.”

Come and see for yourself and join in the conversation after with hosts Patrick Bracken and Skip Shea.

The screening takes place on Thursday, March 6, 7 p.m. at starlite, 39 Hamilton St. in Southbridge, and is free!

UnderGround Thursday is funded in part by the Southbridge Cultural Council and the Mass Cultural Council.



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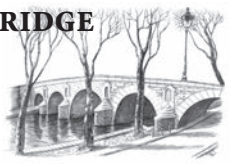
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PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

Baby, it's cold outside

Newsflash: it's cold. Our little neck of the woods here has finally hit frigid sub-zero temperatures. Folks may be running low on fuel, or even running empty, causing frozen pipes to burst. Fuel companies are scheduled two weeks out in some cases, and several customers are feeling stressed due to the financial burden this cold weather brings. Our only advice is to hold on tight and think about how toasty things will be when temperatures soar into the teens and low 20s again.

The winter solstice on Dec. 21 has passed, and the days are getting longer...and, we hope, sunnier. One perk to this post-New Year's time is that, well, the holidays are over. The hustle and bustle starts in late November and doesn't calm down until the week following New Year's. Is it overrated? Maybe. We hope you are all able to relax in the days ahead.

When weather hits sub-zero, it's hard to remember why we live here. We live in New England because winter, for the most part, is fun and manageable. We love our snow sports, the smell of wood stoves cranking and the beauty of the snow-capped mountains.

Some of you may think of our ancestors who had to cut chords of wood by hand all year long just to prepare for the harsh New England winters. Houses way back when had no insulation or the walls were stuffed with straw and mud. Common houses were much smaller, therefore easier to keep heated with one wood stove. The fireplace was the focal point of a colonial home and was the place where family members would talk and work on small projects during the evening. The average size of a house according to today's standards is about 2,600 square feet. A home of that size hundreds of years ago was often occupied by the wealthy, who were able to afford to put a wood stove in each room of the house. Children of ten slept in lofts where the heat would rise and often shared a bed with siblings, using body heat to keep warm.

In days of old, people used thick curtains and down comforters to keep the heat in. Before bedtime, many would use a bed warmer, which was a brass pan with a long handle that was filled with hot rocks. Foot warmers were popular as well. These fancy contraptions were made of a wood framed tin box also with heated rocks that would be placed by the feet under the comforter. This heating method was used for trips in the horse and buggy as well. Church goers would bring their own boxes of heat and blankets to keep warm during a Sunday service.

Important to note is the fact that over the years humans have increasingly adapted to warmer weather as a result of modern technology. Our ancestors were able to withstand much colder temperatures and re-

Turn To **EDITORIAL** page 13

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

Celebrating Garlic's Greatness!

A recent bout with the cold/flu virus that is going around prompted me to rediscover the healing benefits of garlic. The truth is, I didn't have the energy, time or patience to wait half a day at the doctor's office to get checked out, so I took matters (and a bunch of garlic bulbs) into my own hands. The result? I was feeling "practically perfect in every way" (to quote Mary Poppins) in about four days!

While garlic isn't meant as a substitute for medical attention, the inexpensive and tasty herb can be a good first step in warding off a cold or flu. Read on for some old fashioned garlic home remedies, several of which have appeared in previous columns through the years.

Note: Garlic is a natural herb so please check with your physician before eating large amounts of garlic or while on any medication.

Did you know centuries ago, the bubonic plague killed one in three Europeans, but garlic vendors (who wore garlic braids around their necks) were among those who were largely spared? The belief back then was that the plague was spread by vampires; thus the legend that vampires are afraid of garlic was born. Today, we know that raw garlic contains a natural immune boosting compound. The more garlic you eat (and apparently the vendors ate plenty) the stronger the hike to your immune system.

Garlic is praised as an antibacterial, antiviral and antifungal remedy, and in fact, scientific studies reveal that people who eat garlic regularly suffer less from colds than those who don't. In addition, research shows taking garlic at the onset of a cold can reduce the time taken to recover. But it's important to know that garlic must be fresh for optimal benefits. Garlic's active ingredient, allicin, is destroyed within an hour of smashing the clove. So eat fresh garlic, or run it through a juicer in a vegetable drink for best results.

Garlic was once called Poor Man's Penicillin, and it's no wonder. According to Tanushree Podder, author of "You are what you Eat," an average clove of garlic contains substances equivalent to 100,000 units of penicillin (about 1/5 the average dose), without its side effects! Research even indicates garlic may be efficient in preventing heart disease and cancer. More studies show garlic reduces cholesterol and high blood pressure, and may even help regulate blood sugar for pre-diabetics.

But here's the kicker: to reap most of these long term health benefits you need to eat one to three fresh cloves per day for at least three months before positive results are seen.

The book, "The Healing Power of Garlic," suggests garlic nose drops can kill the viruses that cause cold or flu. Here are the book's instructions on concocting the drops: Crush some garlic to obtain juice, and add ten parts water and mix well. Apply as you would regular nose drops.

According to a home remedy published long ago, if you place a clove of garlic on each side of the mouth between the teeth and cheek, a cold will disappear within a day. It's worth a try!

Colds and flu are often accompanied by congestion. Users of this generations-old homemade expectorant claim it works better than costly commercial brands.

Ingredients: one white onion, chopped; three cloves garlic, chopped; sugar to cover.

Directions: Place onion in a deep bowl. Cover with sugar, and allow mixture to set for at least an hour. A



TAKE THE HINT
KAREN TRAINOR

syrupey juice will result. Take a spoonful or two of the mixture to relieve congestion.

According to Prevention magazine garlic is among the top nine "power foods" that best boost immunity. They are: Yogurt; Oats and Barley; Garlic; Fish; Chicken Soup; Tea; Beef; Sweet Potatoes and Mushrooms.

Did you know garlic is quick and easy to grow? It can even be grown on a windowsill indoors! And the garlic plant does not give off an odor, so plant away!

To do: Save a clove from a garlic bulb and remove all the skin. Plant pointed end up in a container with soil to which you've added a layer of pebbles for drainage. Feed with fish emulsion every couple of weeks. Keep the soil moist and in a sunny area, and in about four weeks your plant will be nearly a foot tall!

Spicy foods such as garlic may be the weapon to battling mucus. Studies show foods such as chili peppers, horseradish and garlic help reduce congestion by driving out mucus. How? The same agent that induces tears also helps thin out excess mucus.

The combination of hot, steaming chicken broth with a dash of garlic and hot pepper has proven especially beneficial to thin mucus. As a bonus, garlic has antibiotic properties that aid the immune system.

Did you know? Garlic is an herb that has a reputation for igniting romance. Long ago, Tibetan monks were forbidden to enter the monastery if they had been eating garlic, due to the belief it stirs up passion. The Greeks and the Egyptians also used to hail garlic's aphrodisiac properties.

Garlic has also been hailed as a natural tick repellent. A natural spray for grass and garden can be made by pureeing in a blender three peeled cloves of water and about two cups of water. Strain out the garlic and then dilute it with enough water to make a gallon. Add a couple of drops of liquid dish detergent to help it dispense. Spray the grass and foliage where people congregate and along wooded borders.

Some folks are also convinced eating garlic during the summer months helps prevent mosquitoes and ticks from biting them!

Win a Three Course 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 I receive enough tips for a column) will win a fabulous three course dinner for two at the renowned restaurant, located on Route 131 across the town common in historic Sturbridge. Because I'm in the business of dispensing tips, not inventing them (although I can take credit for some), I'm counting on you readers out there to share your best helpful hints!

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

What to know before "reversing" your retirement



FINANCIAL FOCUS

TREVOR NIELSEN

After working for decades, you may have been looking forward to retiring. But what if you decide to "reverse" your retirement?

You could rejoin the workforce for any number of reasons. You might need the added income to help pay for your living expenses, but you also might miss the social interactions with co-workers, or simply desire more purpose or stimulation in your life.

And if you do un-retire, you'll have plenty of company. More than 13 percent of previously retired baby boomers returned to the workforce in 2023, the highest level in five years, according to data from LinkedIn, the online career networking platform.

When pondering the decision to go back to work, you'll want to evaluate the advantages and the possible drawbacks.

First, let's look at the benefits of re-joining the workforce. By improving your cash flow, you may be able to do more of the things you enjoy, such as traveling. And you might also be able to reduce your debt load, which can free up even more cash. You might also use the extra money for other purposes, such as contributing to a tax-advantaged 529 education savings plan for your grandchildren.

Furthermore, depending on where you're returning to work, and whether you go back full- or part-time, you might gain access to your employer's benefits programs. If you aren't already enrolled in Medicare, you could find it financially advantageous to sign up for your employer-sponsored group medical plan. And you may also be able to contribute to your employer's 401(k) or similar plan. Even if you're not eligible for an employer-sponsored retirement plan, you can contribute to an IRA if you have any earned income.

And here's something else to think about: By bringing in income from employment, you may be able to take less out each year from your existing 401(k) and IRA, giving them a chance to potentially grow more. (Once you turn 73, or 75 if you were born in 1960 or later, you'll have to start taking withdrawals from your traditional IRA and 401(k). With a Roth IRA and 401(k), you're not required to take withdrawals at any age.)

Now, let's consider some potential areas of concern about returning to the workforce. If you've been taking Social Security, your 2025 benefits will be reduced by \$1 for every \$2 earned above \$23,400 if you haven't reached your full retirement age, which is likely between 66 and 67. In the year in which you do reach your full retirement age, your benefits will be reduced by \$1 for every \$3 earned above \$62,160. Starting in the month in which you reach your full retirement age, you can earn as much as you want without losing benefits. (Also, Social Security will then recalculate your payments to give you credit for the months in which your benefits were reduced due to your earned income.)

Another area of concern might be your Medicare premiums. Because these premiums are based on your income, they could rise if you start earning more money. Also, if your income increases enough, you might be pushed into a higher tax bracket.

Ultimately, you'll want to weigh the pros and cons of returning to work. If it seems the advantages outweigh the disadvantages, you may well enjoy embarking on your "second act" in the working world.

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

Chinese antiques

In this column, I'll be discussing Chinese antiques, which came in at number 9 on my recently updated top 10 antiques and collectibles list.



ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES & ESTATES
WAYNE TUISKULA

Chinese time periods are referenced according to dynasties, indicating a succession of rulers from the same family. Some of the earliest are the Xia (Hsia) Dynasty from 2100-1600 BCE and the Shang Dynasty circa 1600-1050 BCE. Some more recent ones are the Ming Dynasty from 1368-1644 and the Qing (Ch'ing) Dynasty from 1644-1912. Chinese antiques are referred to by the century in which they were made or the dynasty when they were produced. For example, a vase from 1500 would be referred to as a Ming vase. China's dynasties lasted until 1912. The Republic Period took place from 1912-1949 and it has been the People's Republic of China from 1949 through the present.

Since 2007, China has had a policy that antiquities being exported must be from 1912 or later, when dynasties no longer ruled. There is also a requirement that exported pieces can't be "cultural property." As a result of the policies, I haven't found anything particularly valuable in collections of Chinese memorabilia that were obtained in the last 18 years.

However, there are plenty of Chinese antiques that came to America before the stricter regulations went into effect. For example, jade pieces have been selling very well. In 2023, we auctioned a jade incense burner that brought \$700. An 18-karat gold and jade ring went for \$800 in 2021. Three small jade figures, including one with a gold chain, fetched \$2,100 last year. We sold a Chinese silk tapestry with dragon designs for \$1,800 last year. Over a decade ago,

we sold a 17th century bronze figure (pictured in the accompanying



photo) for several thousands of dollars.

I've reported on some major finds of Chinese antiquities in past columns. I previously wrote about a \$35 Connecticut yard sale find of a 15th century Chinese bowl that brought over \$700,000 in a 2023 auction.

There are many other stories of Chinese items bringing astronomical results with even post-1911 items sometimes bringing high figures. A 1968 stamp from China's Cultural Revolution depicted China in red. The government destroyed the stamps because they

didn't include Taiwan in red. A few copies escaped destruction, and one sold for \$2 million in 2018, according to the South China Post and other sources. Artist Qi Baishi's "Twelve Landscape Screens," that was painted in 1925 became the first Chinese artwork to top \$100 million, selling for \$140.8 million at a 2017 Beijing auction.

Older pieces can bring some jaw-dropping figures. A 17th century bronze bowl with Phoenix head handles and gold accents sold for \$4.9 million in 2019. The family had been storing tennis balls in the bowl when an auctioneer spotted it, according to CNN.

A UK Daily Mail article published last month described the sale of a family heirloom vase that took place over a decade ago. During the 1970s, a family brought the vase to an appraiser on a British Broadcasting Corporation show called "Going for a Song." The appraiser believed it to be a "clever reproduction" worth

Turn To **ANTIQUES** page 13

What goes up must come down—or does it?

CAPSTONE

CHRISTOPHER MALLON
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, PROGRAM MANAGER
LPL REGISTERED PRINCIPAL, THE CAPSTONE PLANNING GROUP
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Most of us have visited an amusement park and been on a rollercoaster at some point in our lives. Some people love these fast paced, stomach dropping, thrill rides—while others prefer to keep their feet planted firmly on the ground. Imagine for a moment you are buckled in, slowly ascending a rollercoaster's giant peak. As you steadily climb higher and higher, your heart rate and nerves start to increase. Why? Going up the hill isn't scary—but the inevitable drop back down is.

When it comes to investing your money, the same emotional scenario can play out. Seeing your account value climb higher over time isn't scary...it's great! But the fear of a big drop can be terrifying. Sadly, for some people that fear can become so paralyzing they avoid investing all together and forgo potential growth.

Is there any way to eliminate those potential drops? Is it possible for an account value to go up... but not back down? The short answer is yes. Certain products have been created for that specific purpose.

Most investors understand that traditional long-only investment products like stocks, mutual funds, and ETFs, offer upside growth potential. They also understand these investments can be volatile. Volatility is defined as "the potential to change rapidly and unpredictably". In other words, values can go up... and values can go down. À la the rollercoaster.

Insurance companies realized investors were looking for alternatives to the scenario above. If they could create a vehicle which provided upside potential and eliminated the "drops", they'd have a powerful product with lots of demand. Enter stage right: fixed-indexed annuities.

A fixed indexed annuity (FIA) is a long-term investment that combines growth potential with protection from market downturns. If you're an investor willing to give up "a portion" of the market's upside, the insurance company will in-return guarantee to protect your principal from loss.

While not all FIAs are alike, here are some of their common features:

Fixed term: to structure these products insurance companies typically require a term of 5 years or more. If you need to make a withdrawal, many allow for 10% free withdrawals per year (without penalty)

Principal protection: when your contract ends, you are guaranteed to receive at least 100% of your initial investment back

Earnings: potential earnings are paid at the end of each year and based on the performance of an underlying index. Earnings are usually "capped" at a certain level. For this example, let's assume your cap rate is 10 percent based on the S&P500's performance.

If the S&P500 was up +7 percent: you would be credited +7 percent for the year

If the S&P500 was up +15 percent: you would be credited +10 percent for the year (remember the 10 percent cap)

If the S&P500 was down -20 percent: you would receive zero earnings for the year...but experience no loss!

Tax deferral: FIAs have tax-deferred status which allows you to benefit from compounded growth

Should investors have all their money in a fixed-indexed annuity? Absolutely not. But when used appropriately, they can be a powerful tool for some of your assets. This is particularly true for individuals in or around retirement that do not want to experience the potential "drops" of the stock market. FIAs can be a great compliment to traditional portfolios of stocks, bonds, and mutual funds -- and help to smooth out their overall volatility.

To determine if a FIA is appropriate for you, it is

Turn To **CAPSTONE** page 13

Dr. Bhaumik

I was invited to a Super Bowl party in LA, so I figured—why not? I flew out, rented a car, and as I wound my way up the hills of Bel Air, I realized this wasn't just any party. The address led me to an opulent mansion owned by Dr. Mani Bhaumik—a scientist, entrepreneur, and someone whose life story made the Super Bowl seem like just another event.

The game was on, the food was great, and the energy in the room was electric—but being someone who is fascinated by those who have accomplished great things, I was more interested in getting to know Dr. Bhaumik than in watching the game.

As I spoke with him, I realized his life's journey was extraordinary.

He was born into abject poverty in a remote village in India, so poor his family had trouble meeting basic needs. He didn't receive his first pair of shoes until he was a teenager, but he made up for his lack of resources with an unstop-

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pable hunger for knowledge.

Opportunities were scarce, and success was predetermined. Still, as destiny would have it, he lived with Mahatma Gandhi for a time, absorbing the wisdom of one of history's most outstanding leaders, not knowing that he, too, would one day leave a profound mark on the world.

Through sheer determination, he earned a place at the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology, where he pursued physics and eventually became the institution's first doctoral graduate.

In 1959, he set his sights on the United States to pursue postdoctoral research at UCLA. Arriving in the U.S. with almost nothing, he faced an entirely new set of challenges. He was an immigrant scientist in a time when opportunities for foreign researchers were not easily handed out.

But failure wasn't in Dr. Bhaumik's nature. His relentless curiosity and determination eventually led him to breakthrough research in laser technology.

In 1968, he secured a position as the director of the laser technology lab at Northrop Corporation, where he played a pivotal role in the development of the excimer laser. This technology would later revolutionize vision correction, leading to the LASIK surgery that millions rely on today.

Yet, his success wasn't limited to science alone. Dr. Bhaumik had an entrepreneurial spirit that allowed him to expand his work beyond research labs and into the world of business.

His ventures in technology and industry earned him a fortune, enabling him to become a philanthropist.

Adding a touch of Hollywood glamour to his rags-to-riches story, He dated Eva Gabor and was featured in an episode of "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous" with Robin Leach!

Despite reaching the pinnacle of both scientific and financial achievement, he sought something even more significant. The fundamental questions of existence. How does science intersect with spirituality? Could quantum physics explain the mysteries of

Turn To **POSITIVE** page 13

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Charlton Public Library celebrates National Quilt Month with presentation, quilt show

CHARLTON — Celebrate National Quilt Month with Charlton Public Library and Cornerstone Quilters Guild! On Saturday, March 1 from 11 a.m.-noon, Charlton Public Library will host a presentation by local quilting legend Holic Turnbow.

Join Holic as he takes you through his fifty-plus years as a quiltmaker. To many the word “quiltmaker” probably brings to mind a mother, grandmother and friends sitting around a quilting frame busily stitching a layer of multicolor fabric pieces into some kind of object which will cover and keep warm while sleeping on a cold night. Holic’s introduction began when he was young as he helped attach the quilt to a frame and then played under it hanging from the ceiling of his grandparent’s farmhouse as aunts, grandmother and relatives busily stitched the next bed quilt. His professional quilt making life began just before the Bicentennial when quilt making, along with other hand crafts, gained renewed interest.

While quilting was at one time something to satisfy a creature comfort, it has grown into a multi-billion dollar industry of new technology, millions of yards of colorful fabric, threads, more books and magazines than anyone can ever read, and people traveling the country and world teaching both old and new techniques. While quilt making was at one time considered women’s work, men have discovered the satisfaction of creating wonderful works of utility and art as well. Come listen to Holic tell his story and show examples of his accomplishments during these fifty-plus years. His first quilt, quilted clothing, articles he has written, samples of products created, television (PBS) and a few amusing stories will add interest and excitement to his presentation. You won’t want to miss this program! Registration is requested but not required. This program is generously funded by Friends of Charlton Public Library.

And on Saturday, March 15, Cornerstone Quilters Guild will host their Third Annual Mini Quilt

Show and Demonstration. This show will run from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. in Dexter Hall. The room will be filled with many different types of quilts, and participants will host demonstrations of hand and machine quilting techniques highlighting the diverse world of quilting from traditional to modern to contemporary. They will also be available to answer questions. They will have information about their workshops and community outreach as well. This event is free and open to all; no registration is required. Stop by! Cornerstone Quilters Guild is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in the spring of 2000. The Guild has more than 100 members from the Central Massachusetts and Northeast Connecticut areas. They welcome everyone with an interest in the art of quilt making, both beginners and experienced quilters alike!

Charlton Public Library is located at 40 Main St.

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Charlton City UMC to host Community Play 'N Trade Night

CHARLTON — Passionate about or interested in trading cards? Pokemon, sports, The Magic, etc.? Join Charlton City UMC's Community Play N Trade Night! The first one March 6, 6-8 p.m., 74 Stafford St.

Our successful Dynamic Cards and Collectibles Shows inspired us to support the community further. We've met several people from the area who've exclaimed, "I had no idea anything like this existed around here! I've been waiting!" So we decided we should do our part and continue building up the community however we can.

We'll provide snacks, a warm space, a fun and safe place to trade amongst other collectors and a space to self organize some TCG gameplay of whatever game you want. We will have people available to help teach kids how to play the different TCGs with sample decks or learn how to build your own! We hope to see you there!

Alfred Laskowski named to Salve Regina Dean's List

NEWPORT, R.I. — Alfred Laskowski of Fiskdale was named to the Dean's List during the Fall 2024 academic semester at Salve Regina University. To qualify for the Dean's List, students must earn a semester grade point average of 3.6 for full-time students completing at least 12 graded credits, or a semester grade point average of 3.8 for part-time students completing at least six credits.

Salve Regina University is a Catholic, coeducational institution of higher education founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1947. For more than 75 years, Salve has offered rigorous, innovative academic programming in the liberal arts tradition that prepares students to be global citizens and lifelong learners. More than 2,700 undergraduate and graduate students from around the world are enrolled at Salve in 48 undergraduate majors, nine master's degree programs, combined bachelor's/master's programs, and doctoral programs.

Every undergraduate student engages in Salve Compass, a four-year transformational program through which they develop the experience, skills, and wisdom required for a fulfilling career and to make a positive difference in the world. The University is also home to the Pell Center for International Relations and Public Policy, a multi-disciplinary research center focused on the intersection of politics, policy, and ideas. For more information visit salve.edu.

Lizza Vega makes Goodwin Dean's List

EAST HARTFORD, Conn. — Lizza Vega has earned a spot on the Goodwin University Dean's List for fall 2024.

Vega, a student from Southbridge, is one of 503 students to make the Dean's List, reserved for those who demonstrate great academic performance.

Dean's List inclusion requires a student to earn a minimum 3.5 GPA, the equivalent of an A- average, during a given academic session. The student must also be enrolled in a minimum of six academic credits to qualify.

Goodwin University congratulates Lizza on making the Dean's List and demonstrating such a high standard of excellence in the classroom and beyond! Goodwin University in East Hartford, Connecticut, is an innovative learning community that empowers hard-working students to become sought-after employees. We tailor our programs to address the needs of employers, and we shape them to fit the lives of students. Classes are conveniently offered year-round - days, evenings, weekends, and online. Degrees may be flexibly layered across certificate, associate, bachelor's, and master's programs in a variety of in-demand fields. Better still, we surround our students with the personal support and the professional guidance they need - not just to earn degrees, but to change lives for themselves, their families, and their communities.

Gateway Players Theatre celebrates 50 years!

SOUTHBRIDGE — Fifty years! How exciting for an all-volunteer, non-profit organization! We are very proud to be part of a vibrant community, bringing live entertainment and performing opportunities. Please join us as we celebrate a long history of theater and fun. Our first production of Season 50 is Neil Simon's "Plaza Suite"- first performed in 1975. Another performance was done in 1987.

Our beginnings
As we celebrate our 50th year, we must begin with our founding members, especially Aileen Lau. Every organization needs a driving force and Aileen was the force. In her honor, we recognize individuals who have lent their talents to us with the "Aileen Lau Award." Past recipients are: David Corkum, Barbara Day, Patri-

cia Haddock, Pam Soper, Linda Boutillier, Bill Guy, Sue Adams to name a few.

In researching through the Gateway archives, this article in the Southbridge Evening News by Mark Ashton provides the best insights into what Aileen Lau meant to Gateway Players Theatre and to our community:

Wednesday, April 16, 2014

In 1975, upon arriving in Southbridge Aileen Lau said "What - no theater here? We have to do something about that!". According to Elaine Black, a founding member, "I think she put an ad in the paper and got about 60 people to attend a meeting at Holy Trinity Church (in January 1975). She wasted no time."

Anyone who ever met Aileen Lau knows how instrumental she was in bringing the arts scene to

life in Southbridge. With her husband, Ed, president of the Optical Division of the American Optical Co. at the time, she arrived in the Tri-Community about 1974 and - during the next four years - organized theatrical, musical, and other arts-related ventures into what remain vital today as the Quinebaug Valley Council on the Arts and Humanities and Gateway Players.

Not just a behind-the-scenes organizer and delegator, however, she was an orchestrator, at the forefront of whatever project she envisioned. In addition to directing, producing, and spearheading the first few productions for Gateway Players Theatre, she was also active in cleaning, restoration, and beautification projects that ultimately resulted in Southbridge's being named an All America City about 35 years ago.

Valen Burke named to dean's list at Tufts University

MEDFORD — Valen Burke, Class of 2027, from Southbridge, was named to the dean's list at Tufts University for the fall 2024 semester. Dean's list honors at Tufts University require a semester grade point average of 3.4 or greater.

Tufts University, located on campuses in Boston, Medford/Somerville and Grafton, Massachusetts, and in Talloires, France, is recognized among the premier research universities in the United States.

Tufts enjoys a global reputation for academic excellence and for the preparation of students as leaders in a wide range of professions. A growing number of innovative teaching and research initiatives span all Tufts campuses, and collaboration among the faculty and students in the undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs across the university's schools is widely encouraged.

Liam Noonan receives degree from Georgia Tech

ATLANTA, Ga. — Liam Noonan of Fiskdale has earned a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering with Honors from the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta.

Noonan was among approximately 6,400 undergraduate and graduate students to be presented Georgia Tech degrees during the Institute's 267th Commencement exercises Dec. 12 - 14, 2024, at McCamish Pavilion (Ph.D. and Bachelor's) and Bobby Dodd Stadium (Master's).

Learn about Georgia Tech's goal to attract, retain, and inspire more students by visiting Trans-

forming Tomorrow: The Campaign for Georgia Tech and read more about Georgia Tech's accomplished scholars on Gold Letters: A Spotlight on Student Achievement.3

The Georgia Institute of Technology, or Georgia Tech, is one of the top public research universities in the U.S., developing leaders who advance technology and improve the human condition.

The Institute offers business, computing, design, engineering, liberal arts, and sciences degrees, as well as professional development and K-12 programs for fos-

tering success at every stage of life. Its more than 53,000 undergraduate and graduate students represent 54 U.S. states and territories and more than 143 countries. They study at the main campus in Atlanta, at instructional sites around the world, and through distance and online learning.

As a leading technological university, Georgia Tech is an engine of economic development for Georgia, the Southeast, and the nation, conducting more than \$1 billion in research annually for government, industry, and society.

For more information, visit gatech.edu.

Trevor Wallace named to dean's list at Tufts University

MEDFORD — Trevor Wallace, Class of 2026, from Charlton, was named to the dean's list at Tufts University for the fall 2024 semester. Dean's list honors at Tufts University require a semester grade point average of 3.4 or greater.

Tufts University, located on campuses in Boston, Medford/Somerville and Grafton, Massachusetts, and in Talloires, France, is recognized among the premier research universities in the United States.

Tufts enjoys a global reputation for academic excellence and for the preparation of students as leaders in a wide range of professions. A growing number of innovative teaching and research initiatives span all Tufts campuses, and collaboration among the faculty and students in the undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs across the university's schools is widely encouraged.

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OBITUARIES

Bernice Ann Stone-Kirwin (née Stevens), 84,

CHARLTON—Bernice Ann Stone-Kirwin (née Stevens), 84, passed away on February 12, 2025, in Charlton, Massachusetts, surrounded by family.

Born on October 13, 1940, in Southbridge, Massachusetts, to the late Ira and Grace Stevens (Latour). Bernice lived a life marked by resilience and an unwavering spirit. She was dedicated to Hubbard Hospital and Catered by Adams, where her hard work and commitment left a lasting impact. Beyond her professional life, Bernice was known for her boundless energy and determination—always on the move and embracing life with a strong will.

Bernice found great joy in volunteering at the Charlton Senior Center, giving back to the community she cherished. Above all else, she treasured time spent with family, creating countless memories filled with love and laughter. She loved her brothers and sisters dearly.

She is survived by her sons, Alvin Stone and his husband Dana Briggs,



David Stone and his wife Jessica; grandchildren Eric Moir and his wife Tara, Ashley Haggerty and her husband Thomas, and Brianna Stone; and great-grandchildren Eric Moir Jr., Elizabeth Moir, Ellieana Haggerty, and Lawson Haggerty. Bernice was predeceased by her husband, Bill Kirwin and daughter, Joanne Stone.

Bernice's legacy of strength and warmth will be deeply missed by those who knew her. May her memory bring comfort to all who loved her.

A funeral service will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, February 21, 2025, at the Wayside Church, 6 Haggerty Rd., Charlton. Those attending are respectfully requested to meet directly at the church. Calling hours are Thursday, February 20, 2025, from 5-7 p.m. at Paradis-Givner Funeral Home, 357 Main St., Oxford. Burial will be private at West Ridge Cemetery in Charlton.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Charlton Senior Center, 37 Main St., Charlton MA 01507.

Bruce Lee McKinstry, 72

Charlton: Bruce Lee McKinstry, 72, of Oakridge Dr., Charlton, passed away peacefully with his loving family by his side on Saturday, Feb. 8th, after a brief illness.

He leaves his beloved wife of 51 years, Nancy R. (Reil) McKinstry; his brother, Gary S. McKinstry and his wife Virginia of Norway, ME; their son and nephew, Scott L. McKinstry; his three sister-in-law's, Judy Henderson of Douglas, Sally Longwell of Tyngsboro, Peggy LaDow and her husband Tom of Spencer and many nieces and nephews.

Bruce was born in Webster the son of the late Leon Joseph "Bud" and Sophie Rose (Borowski) McKinstry. He graduated from Bartlett High School in Webster in 1970 and went on to work as a Shipper/Receiver in textile, motorcycle parts/accessories and NDT businesses, retiring from the Mistras Group in Auburn in 2017. He was a very talented musician playing both the guitar and the ukulele. Bruce owned several motorcycles over the years and enjoyed spending time



on poker runs and cruising the back roads. He and his wife Nancy loved their more than 20 trips to the Hawaiian Islands. Bruce truly loved all things Hawaiian and had a special love for the island of Maui. Bruce and his wife also loved spending time on the Cape at their condo and taking long walks on the beach.

Please join us in a Celebration of Life for Bruce on Saturday, March 1st, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm in the Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge, with a remembrance service to follow in the funeral home at 1:00 pm.

In lieu of traditional mourning, we request the joy of your company in bright colors and Hawaiian shirts to celebrate Bruce's love of the aloha spirit.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Maui Strong Fund, 827 Fort Street Mall, Honolulu, HI 96813 or VNA Hospice and Palliative Care, 67 Millbrook St. 500 North, Worcester, MA 01606.

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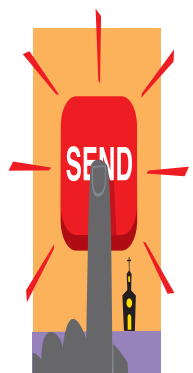
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LEGALS

PUBLIC HEARING ON FY 26 WALES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUDGET
A public hearing on the proposed Wales Elementary School budget for 2025-2026 will be held on **Wednesday, March 05, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at the Wales Elementary School**, in accordance with M.G.L., Chapter 71, S. 38N. Copies of the proposed budget are available from the Office of the Principal, Wales Elementary School.
The regular school committee meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m.
February 21, 2025

PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 166, §22F notice is hereby given of a public hearing to be held by the Town Manager on March 4, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. in the George Parent Meeting Room, second floor of the Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, in regards to a petition filed by National Grid for the following Order for JO Pole relocation:
Central St.:

Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England, Inc requests permission to locate poles, wires, and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along and across the following public way:

Central Street - National Grid to remove 1 JO pole and relocate 2 JO poles on Central Street. Beginning at a point approximately 65 feet North of the centerline of the intersection of Central Street and Depot Street (Larochelle Way). National Grid proposes to remove 1 pole, relocate 2 poles for DOT project Southbridge, MA.

Anyone wishing to be heard regarding this petition will be given the opportunity to speak.

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE

John D. Jovan Jr,

Town Manager

February 20, 2025

February 27, 2025

Town of Sturbridge Select Board Public Hearing

The Town of Sturbridge Select Board in accordance with the M.G.L. Ch 92, Acts (2022) and effective as of June 2022, and M.G.L. Ch 54, Section 25 B, hereby give notice that a public hearing will be held on Monday, March 3, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. The purpose of the public hearing is to consider to opt of the option to Vote by Mail and Early Voting for the Annual Town Election of April 2025.

Any person interested in or wishing to be heard on the issue should appear at the time and place designated. The public hearing will take place at the Veteran's Memorial Hall 2nd Floor, Town Hall located at 308 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA.
February 20, 2025

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate
and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO25P0507EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION**

Estate Of:

Kevin J MacConnell

Date of Death: 11/07/2024

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Patricia M Affenito of Fiskdale 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:
Patricia M Affenito of Fiskdale 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 03/11/2025**.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised

administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.

Date: February 12, 2025

Stephanie K. Fattman,

Register of Probate

February 20, 2025

PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 166, §22F notice is hereby given of a public hearing to be held by the Town Manager on March 4, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. in the George Parent Meeting Room, second floor of the Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, in regards to a petition filed by National Grid for the following Order for JO Pole relocation:
Foster St.:

Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England, Inc requests permission to locate poles, wires, and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along and across the following public way:

Foster Street - National Grid to install 1 JO pole on Foster Street. Beginning at a point approximately 275 feet South of the centerline of the intersection of Foster Street and North Street and continuing approximately 30 feet in a West direction. National Grid proposes to install 1 pole for DOT project Southbridge, MA

Anyone wishing to be heard regarding this petition will be given the opportunity to speak.

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE

John D. Jovan Jr,

Town Manager

February 20, 2025

February 27, 2025

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing on the proposed Tantasqua Regional School District budget for 2025-2026 will be held on Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the Cafeteria of Tantasqua Regional Junior High School, in accordance with M.G.L., Chapter 71, § 38N. A copy of the proposed budget is available at the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, 320A Brookfield Rd., Fiskdale, MA.

NOTE: The regular school committee meeting will begin following the Public Hearing at 6:30 p.m.

Michael Valanzola

Chairman

Tantasqua Regional School District Committee

February 20, 2025

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing on the proposed Sturbridge School District budget for 2025-2026 will be held on Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. in the Cafeteria of Burgess Elementary School, in accordance with M.G.L., Chapter 71, § 38N. A copy of the proposed budget is available at the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, 320A Brookfield Rd., Fiskdale, MA.

Samantha Kaitbenski

Chairwoman

Sturbridge School Committee

February 20, 2025

(SEAL)

**COMMONWEALTH
OF MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL
COURT**

25 SM 000356

ORDER OF NOTICE

TO:

Seth Parenteau; Jennifer C.

Parenteau

and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act: 50 U.S.C. c. 50 § 3901 (*et seq*): Guild Mortgage Company LLC claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Southbridge, numbered 82 Prince Road, given by Seth Parenteau and Jennifer C Parenteau to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Mortgagee, as nominee for Guild Mortgage Company LLC, A California Limited Liability Company, dated August 15, 2022, and recorded at Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 68070, Page 1, and now held by the plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then

you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before **March 24, 2025** or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the grounds of noncompliance with the Act.

Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of said Court on **February 6, 2025**.

Attest:

Deborah J. Patterson

Recorder

February 20, 2025

PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 166, §22F notice is hereby given of a public hearing to be held by the Town Manager on March 4, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. in the George Parent Meeting Room, second floor of the Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, in regards to a petition filed by National Grid for the following Order for JO Pole relocation:
Hamilton St.:

Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England, Inc requests permission to locate poles, wires, and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along and across the following public way:

Hamilton Street - National Grid to install 1 JO pole and relocate 4 JO poles on Hamilton Street.

Beginning at a point approximately 55 feet South of the centerline of the intersection of Hamilton Street and Hook Street. National Grid proposes to install 1 Pole, relocate 4 poles for DOT project Southbridge, MA

Anyone wishing to be heard regarding this petition will be given the opportunity to speak.

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE

John D. Jovan Jr,

Town Manager

February 20, 2025

February 27, 2025

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Division
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO23P3617EA**

Estate of:

David A. Mccurdy

Date of Death: **05/20/2023**

CITATION ON PETITION

**FOR ORDER OF
COMPLETE SETTLEMENT**

A Petition for **Order of Complete Settlement** has been filed by **Dennis A. Mccurdy of Sturbridge MA**

requesting that the court enter a formal Decree of Complete Settlement including a determination of testacy and heirs at law, the allowance of a final account, and first account and other such relief as may be requested in the Petition.

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 03/11/2025**.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

Witness, Hon. Leilah A Keamy,

First Justice of this Court

February 7, 2025

Stephanie K. Fattman, Register of Probate

February 20, 2025

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**The Trial Court
Worcester Probate and Family
Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
Docket No. WO23D2593DR
DIVORCE SUMMONS BY
PUBLICATION AND MAILING
Kayla Marie Marengo
vs.**

Erick Roland Castillo Lopez

To the Defendant: **Erick Roland Castillo Lopez**

The Plaintiff has filed a Complaint for Divorce requesting that the Court grant a divorce for Irretrievable Breakdown. The Complaint is on file at the Court. An Automatic Restraining Order has been entered in this matter preventing you from taking any action which would negatively impact the current financial status of either party. **SEE Supplemental Probate Court Rule 411.**

You are hereby summoned and required to serve upon:

Kayla Marie Morengo

7 Lelandville Road

Charlton, MA 01507

your answer, if any, on or before **02/18/2025**. If you fail to do so, the court will proceed to the hearing and adjudication of this action. You are also required to file a copy of your answer, if any, in the office of the Register of this Court.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.

Date: February 6, 2025

Stephanie K. Fattman

Register of Probate

February 20, 2025

February 27, 2025

March 7, 2025

(SEAL)

**COMMONWEALTH OF
MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL
COURT**

23 SM 001569

ORDER OF NOTICE

TO:

Heirs, Devisees or Legal Representative of the Estate of Susan L Bourdelais, David C Bourdelais, II, Marie Dunn as Guardian for Michael Mathieu Ringeisen

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

Longbridge Financial, LLC

claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in **Southbridge**, numbered **775 Dennison Drive**, given by Susan L. Bourdelais to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), as mortgagee, as nominee for One Reverse Mortgage, LLC its successors and assigns, dated April 30, 2012, and recorded or filed in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 48949, Page 119, and now held by Plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court an amended complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before **3/24/2025** or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act.

Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of this Court on **2/10/2025**.

Attest:

Deborah J. Patterson

Recorder

(ON ORDER OF NOTICE)

February 20, 2025

PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 166, §22F notice is hereby given of a public hearing to be held by the Town Manager on March 4, 2025 at 2:15 p.m. in the George Parent Meeting Room, second floor of the Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, in regards to a petition filed by National Grid for the following Order for JO Pole relocation:
Clemence Hill Road.:

Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England, Inc requests permission to locate poles, wires, and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along and across the following public way:

Clemence Hill Road – National Grid to relocate 1 JO pole on Clemence Hill Road beginning at a point approximately 220 feet North of the centerline of the intersection of Clemence Hill Road and P28 and continuing approximately 123 feet in a West direction, Relocating JO pole P30 6' North towards P31to accommodate the new 3 phase connection to the solar farm. Clemence Hill Road – Southbridge, MA.

Anyone wishing to be heard regarding this petition will be given the opportunity to speak.

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE

John D. Jovan Jr,

Town Manager

February 20, 2025

February 27, 2025

LEGAL NOTICE

A public hearing on the proposed Holland Elementary School budget for 2025-2026 will be held on Thursday, March 13, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at the Holland Elementary School, in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 71, S. 38N. Copies of the proposed budget are available from the office of the Principal at Holland Elementary School.

NOTE: The regular school committee meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m.

Laura Alden

School Committee Chair

February 20, 2025

MCAS

continued from page 1

notable decreases in performance for high needs, low-income, and multilingual students as well as students with disabilities. However, the high school saw increased participation and performance from those taking Advanced Placement tests.

While True didn't express significant concern for the results, she did say the data is clear that more work

needs to be done to make sure their students are prepared and familiar with the material.

"There are a lot of different things that we can do which stems around having targeted interventions and developing Multi-Tiered Systems of Support at every level," said True. "We want to continue to build in opportunities to improve what we already have in place for Multi-Tiered Sys-

tems of Support. Those are most predominantly working well at the elementary level, but we really need to look at how we can provide more tiers of support at the secondary level, at both the middle school and the high school levels for students who are showing that they could use more support, especially our core classes."

Among the recommended solutions in her presentations were

continuing to build in opportunities to improve our Multi-Tiered System of Support, a focus on struggling subgroups, exploring funding sources for high quality instructional materials, enhancing training for teachers, expanded AP opportunities, enhanced resource allocation, and an increased writing focus. A full document of True's presentation has been made available for the

public as part of the regional School Committee Jan. 29 agenda of the Dudley Charlton Re-

Charlton FD

continued from page 1

public as part of the regional School Committee Jan. 29 agenda of the Dudley Charlton Re-

ties in heavily trafficked areas also considering that only one vehicle needs to be on scene with its lights on to activate the warnings. The sensors will also provide data about how many vehicles receive the warnings allowing Charlton to assess the impact of the sensors over time. The Board of Selectmen fully supported the new addition and even discussed exploring adding the sensors to other town vehicles. Barring any grants or other outside funding, increasing the utilization of the sensor would require an allocation in the town budget.

GRANT

continued from page 1

Jacob Edwards Library; Dora Tevan, "Paper Bag Puppet Family-Our Southbridge Legacy," Southbridge YMCA; Lynda Shoup, "Making Junque Journals" at the Jacob Edwards Library; Audie Bridges, "Betty's Bounce-Jazz," Jacob Edwards Library; Ed Cope, "Ed the Wizard-A Multi-Generational Magic Show," Southbridge Community Center; M. Morrissey, "My Triggering Town"; Aaron Larget-Caplan, "Music of the East and West" at the Jacob Edwards Library; Nathaniel Seelan, Ezekiel's Wheels Klezmer Band, Jacob Edwards Library; Michelle Wilson, "Michelle and the Evil Gal Festival Orchestra," Jacob Edwards Library; Zach Combs, "Crocodile River Music," Jacob Edwards Library; Richard Hamelin, Pottery Wheel Demo with Hands-on Pinch

at the Jacob Edwards Library; Noah Harrington, Acoustic Nomads concert,

Pot at the Southbridge Community Center; George Sateriale, "The Magic of Your Imagination," Jacob Edwards Library; Monique Byrne, "Contemporary Folk Music Concert," Jacob Edwards Library; John McDonough, "The Library Puppet Show," Jacob Edwards Library; James Manning, "Balloons, Books and Magic," Jacob Edwards Library; Seema-Jayne Kenney, "Working With Census Reports," Jacob Edwards Library; Gateway Players Theatre, "Fiddler on the Roof," Southbridge High School; Mike Bent, "Abra-ki-dabra! The 2025 Summer Reading Magic Show," Jacob Edwards Library; Bridget Nault-Badger and Nault Performance, Jacob Edwards Library; Garine Aarakelian, "Soap Attack and Soap Making," Southbridge Community Center; Leslie Havens, live, The Quintessential Brass Concert, Jacob Edwards Library; Margaret Morrissey, Carlos Codria Trio Concert, Jacob Edwards Library; Del-

vena Theatre presents "Lizzie Borden and the Forty Wacks," Southbridge Community Center; Anthony Tran, "Flamenco Dance and Music Show," Jacob Edwards Library; Heather Simpson, Winter Wildlife Tracking Program, Southbridge Community Center; Raianne Richards, Community Concert, Mark Mandeville and Raianne Richards at the Jacob Edwards Library.

The Southbridge Cultural Council extends its gratitude to the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the above grant applicants/recipients who, by their grant requests and acceptances, have shown a special interest in expanding the cultural life of Southbridge for the benefit of all ages. The cultural benefits the public of the area communities as well, who also attend some of the programs presented in Southbridge.

EDITORIAL

continued from page 6

main more comfortable in colder temperatures than we do today. All of that aside, we are pretty lucky to have the conveniences we do during these cold blasts.

Since winter is not nearly over, here are a few tips with regard to winter survival. Avoid frost bite and frost nip at all costs. When the

water molecules in your skin cells freeze, they die. Once this happens, they can cause damage to your muscular and nervous systems. Exposed skin can develop frostbite within 30 minutes with winds of 10 mph and a temperature of -5 degrees. If you are outside and find your hands freezing, the warmest place for them to go is under your armpits, the warmest part of

your body.

Another culprit is hypothermia. When your body hits 95 degrees you're entering the danger zone. When your organs start to drop in temperature they begin to shut down. If you notice yourself shivering or lacking coordination, it's time to get warm fast. Other more severe symptoms include low energy, difficulty speaking, a weak pulse and the

cessation of the shivers. It's important to stay well nourished during any time spent outside, as your body needs that energy to stay warm. Always have a Snickers bar or something similar handy just in case. Staying hydrated is a must as you need water to keep your nervous system running properly. One rule of thumb is to never eat snow while trying to

survive in frigid temperatures. Your body will be forced to warm it from the inside which wastes energy and can cause hypoglycemia. Try to keep your heart rate up as cold temperatures cause your heart rate to decrease. A higher heart rate will generate heat within your body however be sure not to do so much that you start to sweat, cold

and sweat are never a good combination.

We hope none of you ever find yourselves in a situation where you need to implement any of the information above, however knowledge is power. Stay warm, summertime is just about six months away, where we will of course crank the air conditioning and complain about the heat and humidity.

CAPSTONE

continued from page 7

important to analyze your individual financial situation and goals. Working with a qualified financial planner that is also insurance licensed can be helpful in this process. He or she can help educate you on the pros and cons of different options, and how they may or may not be suitable for your needs.

Apparently not "everything that goes up has to come down" after all.

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 or call 508-764-0046

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ANTIQUES

continued from page 7

£800 (slightly over \$1,000). The family later brought the piece to another auctioneer who told them that it was "either the best replica in the world, or it's worth millions." When it was auctioned in 2010, it ended up reaching £53 million (\$66.75 million). The fami-

ly described as "not having a lot" was overwhelmed with the mother brought to tears. The story didn't end there, though, because the buyer backed out. Fortunately, the sale was negotiated with another buyer. Thankfully, this family hadn't been storing their tennis balls in the fragile vase.

We are still working on a large one

consignor Civil War memorabilia auction, Beacon Hill estate auction, and a comic book, sports memorabilia, and collectibles auction. We are always accepting consignments of quality pieces for future auctions. Please visit our website https://centralmassauctions.com for links to upcoming events.

Contact us to consign items or for

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

POSITIVE

continued from page 7

consciousness? Was there a higher power woven into the fabric of the universe?

These questions led him to write "Code Name God," a book exploring the intersection of cutting-edge physics and the search for meaning.

He wrote, "There is a grand design in nature, and that grand design is the reflection of a grand intelligence."

Dr. Bhaumik didn't frame this as religious doctrine—he wasn't preaching faith in a traditional sense. Instead, he proposed that science itself, through the discoveries of quantum mechanics, points toward a unifying intelligence behind the cosmos.

Dr. Bhaumik's journey isn't over. Even now, he stays

up late writing research papers, speaking at conferences around the world, and funding initiatives that promote education and science.

While many might have retired to enjoy the fruits of their labor, Dr. Bhaumik remains as driven as ever, not for more success, but for deeper understanding; he's still asking questions, exploring, and giving back.

I finally turned my attention back to the game. But as I watched the players fight for victory, I couldn't shake the thought—here we were, celebrating champions on the field, and yet I was in the presence of a different kind of champion.

If there's one lesson to take from Dr. Mani Bhaumik's story, it's this: whether you're on the field, in a lab, or just navigating life, never stop learning, never stop striving.

LEGALS

PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 166, §22F notice is hereby given of a public hearing to be held by the Town Manager on March 4, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. in the George Parent Meeting Room, second floor of the Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, in regards to a petition filed by National Grid for the following Order for JO Pole relocation:

Hook St.: Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England, Inc requests permission to locate poles, wires, and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along and across the following public way:

Hook Street - National Grid to relocate 1 JO pole on Hook Street. Beginning at a point approximately 25 feet North of the centerline of the intersection of Hook Street and Hamilton Street. National Grid proposes to relocate 1 pole for DOT project Southbridge, MA.

Anyone wishing to be heard regarding this petition will be given the opportunity to speak.

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE

John D. Jovan Jr,

Town Manager

February 20, 2025

February 27, 2025





REAL ESTATE

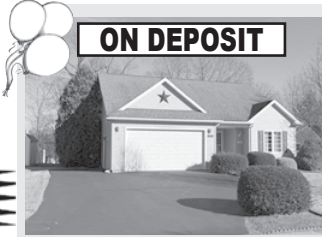


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* June Cazeault * Laurie Sullivan * Lori Johnson-Chausse * William Gilmore II * Maureen Cimoch * Bryan Pelletier

SOUTHBRIDGE - 140-152 HAMILTON



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Featured New Listing!!

WEBSTER - 25 SLATER ST



Location! Location! This Oversized & Well Maintained 2 Family offers 2,472 sf Total! Apt 1 >1st Floor Unit >has 1,052 sf, 3 BRs & 1 Bath! Apt 2 >2nd & 3rd Floor Unit has 2 levels >1,420 sf, 5 BRs, 2 Baths. Corner lot w/.30 acre, 22'x22' Two Car Garage! 12'x16' Concrete Patio. Apartments fully occupied. PLEASE DO NOT TRESPASS onto the Property. **\$559,900**

DUDLEY 3 PRINCE CIRCLE



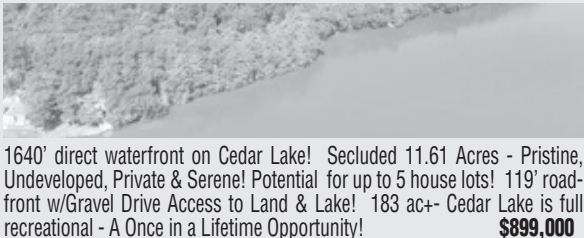
Come to Pierpont Estates! Young 2100 Sq Ft +/- Colonial on 1+ acre! Featuring 8 rooms, 4 Bedrooms! Master Bed w/Master Bath & Walk-in Closet! 2 Baths and 1/2 Bath! Cozy propane gas fireplace. Hardwood flooring & carpeting. Central air. 2 Car Garage. Yr. 2024 Taxes \$5448 . **assisted sale. \$620,000**

OXFORD - 25 SUTTON AVENUE



Location ~ Location! Move-in ready Commercial Office &/or Retail Space ! Ideal for >>> Small Businesses, Companies looking to expand, Banks, Medical facilities etc...2 Level Free Standing Building on a Corner Lot - Located in an Active area of Restaurants & Retail 1 Minute to Rt 395 & Rt 20...Zoned GB 10 units - .71 Acre - 26 Parking Spots **\$1,150,000**

STURBRIDGE - 66 WESTWOOD DR 1640' FRONTAGE - 11.61 ACRES! WATERFRONT LAND



WEBSTER - 38 COLONIAL RD. LAKE RESIDENTIAL

Webster Lake Area! Investors take notice! Charming Ranch with possible extra buildable lot! Home has 2 bedrooms, 1 Bath, 1 Car Garage. Recent Furnace and Ductless Mini-Split System. Vinyl Siding, Replacement Windows. 100CB. Interior needs updating* **\$399,900**

On the shores of Lake Chargoggagogmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg



Featured New Listing!!

Webster Lake Waterfront- 88 Union Point
Excellent opportunity! Un altered Natural Western Facing Shoreline- Beautiful Sunsets - Panoramic Views of Middle to North Pond! 7,000 +/- Sq. Ft. Waterfront Lot! Utilize this one Bedroom Winterized cottage while making plans to construct your dream home! Or just live in, as is! Fireplaced living room ! 12 X 30 one car garage. Beautiful Pine trees at the water's edge! Do not trespass. Here is your chance!! Showings by Appointment, don't walk on property without Listing Agent **\$660,000**



WATERFRONT

Webster Lake - 237 Thompson Rd.
FOR RENT....1st floor 1 Bedroom Apartment! Sliders to large deck with outstanding views! Located in the mid section of the Lake. Catch the sunrises! Heated by fuel efficient Natural Gas forced hot air. Enjoy Lake living!



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<p>CHARLTON- 1.3 ACRES</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *4 Spacious Bedrooms * 2.5 baths *Office *Dining Room *Step Down Livingoom <p>93 Haggerty Rd \$654,900</p>	<p>OXFORD- 2 UNITS IN A GREAT LOCATION!!</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *1t Floor Vacant - Ideal for Owner * New Septic System * 2 Bedroom each unit * Garage w/ Loft * Ask About a Rate Buy Down <p>9 Quobaug Ave \$425,000</p>	<p>CHARLTON- 6 ACRES NEW CONSTRUCTION</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *30' Familyroom *Gourmet Kitchen w/ Breakfast Bar and Center Island *Hardwood Floors • 3.5 Baths <p>12 Elliot Drive \$675,000</p>
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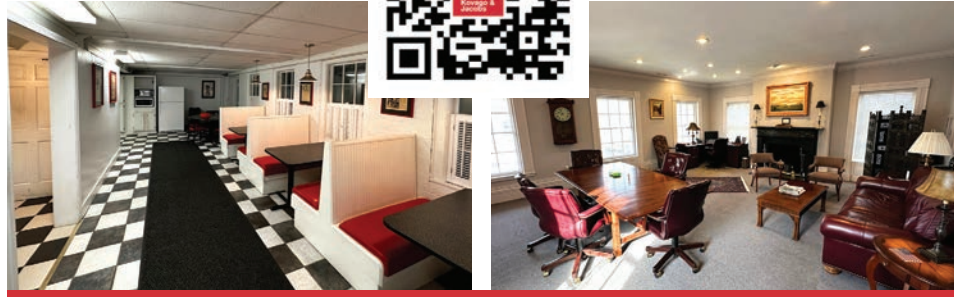
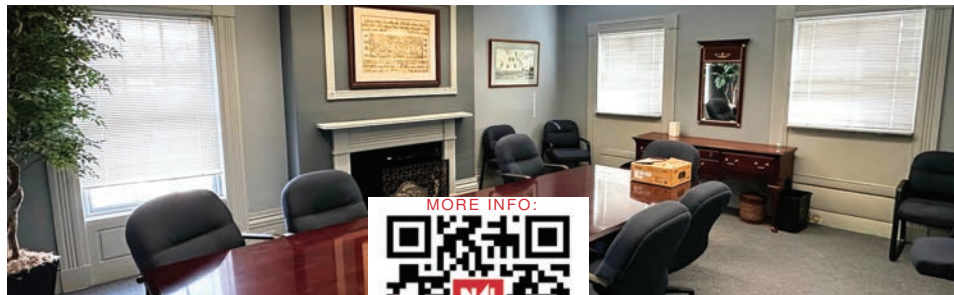
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