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Thursday-Friday, March 6-7, 2025

# Council opts out of early voting by mail for June election

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — After its public hearing on the issue, the Town Council voted 6-1 to opt out of early voting by mail for this year’s local election. But voters will still be able to get absentee ballots by simply requesting them from the Town Clerk’s office.

In fact, according to Councilor John Daniel, the law states that the council’s opt-out vote makes all residents eligible for such ballots without needing to provide the explanations they usually require. The vote formally eliminated the requirement to pay for “mailing postcards to every individual voter” that early ballots are available.

During the council’s debate on it, Town Manager Jack Jovan said, “There will be no early voting either way, no in-person early voting. It’s not allowed in this election” under state law.

Clerk Madaline Bonadies confirmed that, but said absentee ballots are always available. She said the postcards would cost about \$22,000, while running the election itself costs \$10-15,000. While people might recall getting multiple notices last year, those were paid by the state since it was a federal election year. Many did vote by mail – the town “sent out about 1,500 ballots and received about 800 back” – but “It does not change the (total) numbers. The people who want to vote will come out and vote,” Bonadies said.

Before the council’s decision, though, it was clear there was some confusion over what the process actually meant. Most citizens speaking on it were supportive of continuing to have early voting.

Kali McConnell said eliminating early voting “puts another barrier on people” with anxiety, mobility and other issues and is essentially “taking away, rather than giving them autonomy and agency.”

Shelley Klein said she looked into voter turnout data over the last 10 years, and specifically noted there were 520 more votes in 2024 than in 2023. She credited that to the mailed ballots, saying there was a “terrible turnout” without them, and “we should be looking at ways to get people out to vote.” She later specifically noted “not a single 18-year-old has voted in the last three years.”

To John Pulawski, the debate sparked the idea “Could we save some money and just have mail-in voting?” He said he thought doing so would “bring up our voting numbers,” and suggested having local businesses offer coupons to voters.

Nobody answered that, but Southbridge wouldn’t be the first place to do it. Oregon has been a vote-by-mail only state (at least for federal and statewide elections) since 2000. According to the Multnomah County elections Web site (<https://multco.us/info/historical-turnout-and-registration-statistics>), primary turnouts have hovered around 50 percent, general election turnouts around 75 percent, and special elections (typically ballot questions) around 40 percent over the years. The site doesn’t state whether they use it for municipal races.

When the council got to its debate, Jasmin Rivas was the lone supporter of keeping the mailings, saying she felt they were worth the expense.

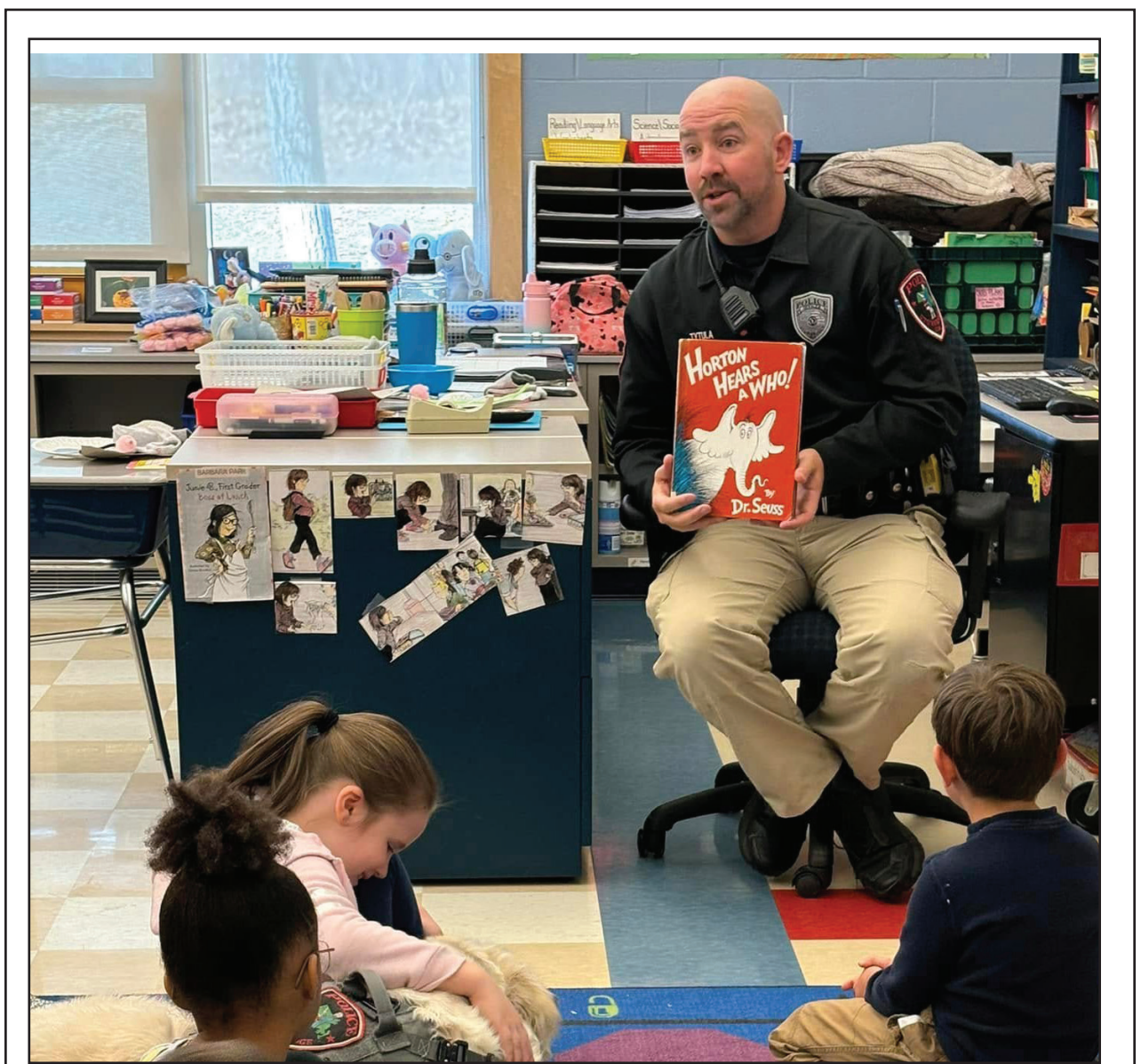
“In a climate where voting rights are being suppressed all over the country, it’s important not to create more obstacles,” she said. “...So many people in our community don’t have that access” to get to the polling places or even to contact the clerk’s office to get absentee ballots. To her, the fact in-person early voting can’t happen makes it more important to allow early voting by mail. she advocated for “giv(ing) it the chance to work” and decried not doing so as “a disservice to our residents with disabilities in particular.”

To Mike Montigny, though, last year’s results showed “barely 300 (new) people” voted, which he decried as an unsustainable cost of \$70 per “newly acquired customer.” He later said he thought the town needs to put a lot more effort into promoting elections by social media and other means.

Steve Kelly agreed, saying “the return on investment’s not worth it.” He was particularly concerned the town may need to use the \$22,000 for other things in light of proposed federal grant cuts.

In other business, the council appointed Vernon “Butch” Jackson as both interim DPW director and

Turn To **COUNCIL** page **A10**



Courtesy

Last Friday, members of the Sturbridge Police Department participated in Read Across America, an annual reading motivation and awareness program that calls for every child in every community to celebrate reading on or near March 2, which is the birthday of Dr. Seuss. The program is celebrated in schools, libraries and communities across the United States. The program is designed promote the love of reading and to encourage children to read. Sturbridge officers, along with members of Tantasqua Regional School District and local and state government leaders were invited to Burgess Elementary School on Friday to participate in Read Across America by reading to various classrooms to promote cultural awareness, improve literacy and to encourage a love of reading. Photo courtesy of the department’s Facebook page.

## Police recover body in Holland

HOLLAND — Police continue to investigate after a body was recovered in the area of Union Road last week.

On the afternoon of Feb. 26, police responded to the area of 100 Union Road. Upon State Police arrival on scene, a body was recovered in connection to a missing persons investigation conducted by the Worcester State Police Detective Unit.

“This is an ongoing investigation by the State Police Detective Unit assigned to the Hampden District Attorney’s Office, State Police Detective Unit assigned to the Worcester District Attorney’s Office, Sturbridge Police, and Holland Police,” read a statement released by the Hampden County District Attorney’s Office. “Identification will be forthcoming, pending positive identification and next of kin notification. There is no ongoing threat to the public.”

If you have information regarding the investigation, please contact the Hampden County District

Turn To **BODY** page **A10**

## Charlton keeping clean energy changes in mind

BY JASON BLEAU  
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — Charlton town officials are preparing for changes to the state’s clean energy laws which will affect how permitting is handled by consolidating state and local processes.

The 2024 Massachusetts Clean Energy Bill, also known as “An Act Promoting a Clean Energy Grid, Advancing Equity, and Protecting Ratepayers,” was signed by the Governor in November. The bill is designed to accelerate the permitting process by consolidating state and local permits while seeking to improve environmental standards and community engagement. Parts of the law seek to expand electric vehicle infrastructure in the state, incentivize the

Turn To **CHARLTON** page **A10**

## Southbridge updates open space plan

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — Last week, about a dozen local citizens threw their ideas into the mix as part of the town’s update of the Open Space and Recreation Plan in a workshop at the Community Center.

Participants looked at such things as what properties are and should be protected, how trails link them, what various kinds of indoor and outdoor recreational activities Southbridge should have, and more.

Among those proposed – often as sticky notes on the several easels provided – were a splash pad, playground renovations, ADA improvements, nature activities, community gardens and community-owned farmland,



Gus Steeves

BSC planner Aqsa Butt captures responses on her iPhone as resident Olivia Houde adds hers.

better signage for what already exists, and river kayak access.

In some respects, those ideas echoed what previous OSRPs have had. Southbridge has had such a plan since

1989, and is now updating the one from 2017. For many years, they’ve had the same five general goals: “Conserve and protect the watershed & aquifer-rich southwest quadrant of town;

Improve and maintain existing recreational resources/facilities; Protect important natural resource areas ... from future development;

Turn To **OPEN SPACE** page **A10**

# SENIORS NAMED TO BAY PATH'S QUARTER 2 HONOR ROLL

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical School congratulates the following students in grade 12 on being named to the honor roll for the second quarter of the 2024-2025 school year:

### High Honors

Kaelen James Anderson, Minos Anifantis, Yheraldine Mercedes Baez, Claire Elizabeth Baudreau, Amberlyn Avon Brindle, Kendra Nicole Brooks, Jameson Patrick Burke, Mikayla Lynn Crocker, Ryan Charles Dawson, Madison Rose Dolan, Conor Fergal Gadbois, Erin Elizabeth Gallant, Keegan Gary Pike Hall, Lexie Rose Harris, McKayla Rose Hoel, Ava Lillie Iozzo, Nathan William Lashua, Eva Noel Lombardi, Miranda Rose Magalhaes, Lillian Virginia Maglich, Joseph Charles Mancini, Ayla Milagros McGrail, Isabel Constance McLam, Calle Jean Merchant, Ava Patricia Millette, Cheyenne Elizabeth Monsen, Zachary Lee Moody, Jacob John Joseph Morello, Ava Reese Murray, Maya Selena Ortiz, Willis James Perreault, Naomi Rose Peterson, Dylan Michael Polinski, Gabriel Souza Prado, Kaylie Anna Richard, Lilianna Cassandra Rockwood, Savannah Rose Steiner, Cassandra Alyson Tinsley, Brady Logan Tremblay, Vincent William Van Dam, Angelica Vega, Alison Elyse Welton, Amelia Claire White

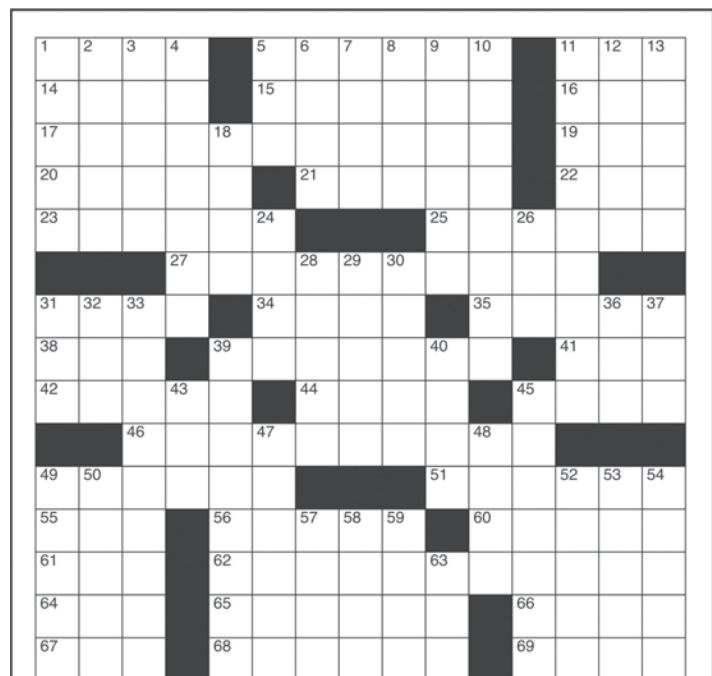
### Honors

Anna Marie Aboe, Kortnie Frances Adams, Nicholas Raymond Adler, Rima Ahmed Qays Al-Dulaimi, Wrique Gabriel Da Silva Alves, Connor Michael Belanger, Hope Elizabeth Belford, Jessica Claire Benoit, Joshua William Ricardo Blackwell, Briea Annmarie Bogar, Kendall Lynn Bond, Lake Sayge Boucher, Kaiden Conner Brochu, Brea Adriane Brunelle-Jacoby, Gianna Mary Burbank, Julia Loralie Burgos, Jonathan Riley Burke, Robert Edward Casati, Matthew Robert Chatterton, Joshua Michael Chumsae, Makayla Therese Collazo, Olivia Rose Collins, Catherine Anne Comeau, Noah Jonathon Cournoyer, Adison Lenna Daoust, Philipe Monte Santiago Dasilva, Hunter Kevin Davis, Jenna Marie Defosse, Rori Jean Rockwell Donohoe, Carly James Donohue, Jared Peter Dubovick, Emma Faith Marie Dwyer, Logan Shawn Edwards, Sophia Anna Falconer, Jaden James Fall, Claire Patricia Farrar, Midrose Davilena Freeman, Corey Michael Gaulin, Hailee Lynne Gelinas, Reyna Diane Lys Gonzalez, Noah Zachary Goulet, Alicia Marie Graveson, Devan Ryan Grensavitch, Matthew David Guerin, Savannah Lee Harrison, Joshua Drew Hemingway, Valerie Ana Hilner, Molly Ruth Isaacs, Kayah Jadczyk, Elena Gabriela Jerez, Jacob Matthew Johnson, Jacob Jaiden Jurado, Emma Rose Knott, Enzo Arnaldo Lagares, Samuel Keith Lamont, Katherine Ruth Landgren, Samantha Marlene Landgren, Emma Olivia Leclair, Benjamin Ryan Lombardi, James Danlan MacConnell, Brady Francis Marcoux, Corbin James Marcustre, Kyle Francis Mazur,

Emma Grace McLaughlin, Paul Joseph McManus, Jersey Alecea Mejias, Sullivan Joseph Brave Bear Morse, Elyce Chamberlyn Mort, Camron John Mortell, Julian Ryan Mucci, Yahir Jose Negron Claudio, Kayleigh Elizabeth Norris, Matthew Christopher Nowak, Dale William Nussey, Ashlyn Joy Olejniczak, Morgan Elizabeth O'Malley, Alaina Maria Pafume, Dominic Antonio Paldino, Jack Anthony Pagnani, Jocelyn Amylia Patterson, Bruna Fagundes Freitas Paula, Raegan Lydia Perreault, Isabella Britni Pettinelli, Brad Francis Guy Piekarczyk, Wojciech Alexander Plewa, Eva Amara Powers, Vince Jordan Randall-Ortiz, Nicholas Scott Reardon, Aidan Troy Roberts, Luzmarianne Jacsol Rodriguez Cirino, Jennalee Karielis Ruibal-Rios, John Cameron Rutter, Corey Justin Scovil, Nash Brennan Sicari-Swinimer, Raymond David St. Francis, Zaydyn John Streeter-Wornham, Zoeybeth Jane Streeter-Wornham, John Gustavo Sullivan, Aaliyah Brooklyn Szkutak, Madison Riley Teal, John Phillip Tighe, Hallie Calais Sampson Tod, Matthew Lee Twombly, Manaali Durgesh Vaidya, Nayelix Marie Vega, Adrian Joseph Vitkos, Mackenzie Marie Widen, Dayzyah Jahnay Wintzel Neely, Cayden James Young

### Principal's List

Connor Paul Allain, Dominic Michael Balducci, Zachary Kenneth Bogar, Camden Christian Bousquet, Noah Troy Brown, Jason Robert Brum, Adriana Marie Burdick, Aidan Patrick Carpenter, Hannah Mae Cavan, Mikayla Renee Clyne, Travis Kinsley Cronin, Isabelle Ann Crump, Mariah Lynne Cutroni, Ari Joseph Erkoc, Arianna Lynn Figueroa, Anthony Alexander Gonzalez, John Waring Gordon, Charlotte Elizabeth Hast, Skylar Jeannette Johnson-Mello, Austin Devin Kravitz, Jack Christopher Mahoney, Aiden Michael McCarthy, Kailyn Elizabeth McHugh, Jed Dean McManus, Blayke



### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Cut a little bit off
5. State with confidence
11. River in NE Scotland
14. Not narrow
15. Lacking social polish
16. Amount of time
17. Frame
19. Automobile
20. Toadstools
21. High school dances
22. Utilize
23. Challenged
25. One-sided
27. Showing extreme greed
31. Potted plants
34. Everyone has one
35. Lake in Botswana
38. E.T. rode in one
39. Juniors' parents
41. Small amount
42. Mother of Perseus
44. Ornamental box
45. Gov't investigators
46. Uncertain
49. A cotton fabric with a satiny finish
51. The vast grassy plains in S. America
55. Your consciousness of your own identity
56. Noted consumer advocate
60. Spanish sports club
61. Body part
62. Tractability
64. Woman (French)
65. Ready and willing to be taught
66. Muslim ruler title
67. Depressed
68. Gradually gave way
69. Clear-thinking

### CLUES DOWN

- 1. Brushed aside
2. Water sprite
3. Ones to look up to
4. Monetary units
5. A number everyone has
6. Marine invertebrate
7. One who takes you to court
8. Indicates outer
9. Parallelograms
10. Strains
11. Cross
12. A way to remove
13. Some pages are dog-\_\_
14. Ukraine city
18. A citizen of Denmark
26. Summer month (abbr.)
28. Hindu queens
29. Jewelry brand
30. Fictional rider of Rohan
31. Wet dirt
32. Russian city
33. Observed
36. Furious
37. Drivers' licenses
39. Musical composition
40. Auction
43. They \_\_
45. Women
47. Inspire with love
48. Japanese ankle sock
49. Appears
50. Old World lizard
52. The leading performer
53. Type of protein
54. Pennsylvania town
57. Art \_\_: around 1920
58. \_\_ Blyton, children's author
59. Abnormal breathing
63. A place to sleep

## Charlton

\$535,000, 135 Burlingame Rd, Healy, Scott A, and Healy Jeanine, to Chase, Stephen, and Dalio, Sharan.
\$444,000, 162 Sandersdale Rd, No Limit Assets LLC, to Gallaso, Deidre.
\$439,000, 60 City Depot Rd #501, J Jill Development LLC, to Chapin, Jessica M.
\$361,000, 21 S Sullivan Rd, Tremblay, Norman T, and Tremblay, Louise A, to Beaugard, Kelsey A, and Beaugard, Rita P.
\$330,000, Sandersdale Rd #2, Meagher, Katherine G, to Kendall Homes Inc.
\$330,000, Sandersdale Rd #3, Meagher, Katherine G, to Kendall Homes Inc.
\$330,000, Sandersdale Rd #4, Meagher, Katherine G, to Kendall Homes Inc.

## HOLLAND

\$227,620, 10 Pine Tree Dr, Flannery, Hollie L, and Jpmorgan Chase Bank Na, to Jpmorgan Chase Bank Na.
\$70,000, 6 Hillside Rd, Simpson Gail Est, and Anselmo, Joseph A, to Holdcraft, John D.

## SOUTHBRIDGE

\$470,000, 56 Main St, Chica, Cristian, to Aquino, Noelia, and Aquino, Manuel E.
\$388,000, 11 Liberty St, Chatzopoulos, Nicholas D, and Chatzopoulos, Emily E, to Vazquez, Carla, and Rivera, Alex.

## STURBRIDGE

\$535,000, 11 Summit Ave, Roche, Anthony J, to Morin, David, and Morin, Orene.

PUZZLE SOLUTION grid with filled-in letters for the crossword puzzle.

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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.stannestparish.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., Weekday Mass Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 a.m.
Wayside Church, 6 Haggerty Road, 248-5144
Assemblies of God Southern New England District Headquarters, Route 20, 248-3771, snedag.org, Office hours Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Living Word Church of Charlton, 10 Main Street - Grange building 1st Floor, Charlton, MA 01507, Pastor Craig Bellisario, (508) 233-8349
Sunday Service 10:00am. www.livingwordcharlton.com info@livingwordcharlton.com
New Life Fellowship A/G, SNED Chapel, 307 Sturbridge Road, Rt. 20, Charlton, MA, Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.
Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale - 8 Maple St. Sturbridge, 774-304-1021 www.sturfed.org
Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.
Bethlehem Lutheran Church- 345 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566 Phone 508-347-7297
Web: www.bethlehemsturbridge.org
Services - Sunday 9:00 am
Pastor Dan Purtell
Holland Congregation Church "Where the Bible is preached." 11 Sturbridge Road, Holland, 413-245-9926 Hollandchurch.org
Sunday Service @ 10:00 am
Pastor Dan Maketansky
Holy Trinity Episcopalian Church 446 Hamilton St., Southbridge, MA 01550 Phone: 508-765-9559
Web: www.holytrinitysouthbridge.org
Sunday Service 11:00 am
Pastor Dan Purtell

# Children enjoy free entry at Old Sturbridge Village



STURBRIDGE — Old Sturbridge Village invites families and friends to step back in time and celebrate the changing seasons with the exciting announce-

ment of their Kids Free Standard Daytime Admission Promotion, beginning March 1 through April 30.

During this spring-

time offer, up to two children, aged 17 years old or younger, will be admitted for free with each adult full price standard daytime admission ticket.

Spring is a time of renewal at Old Sturbridge Village, and visitors will witness history in motion—preparing fields for planting, potters shaping clay, blacksmiths making tools, and costumed historians sharing daily life in the 1830s. Guests can also meet heritage breed animals, participate in hands-on crafts (weekends only), and explore households and shops that bring the past to life.

In addition to the daily experiences, the Village will feature special events and themed programming in March, including:

**Maple Days** – Now through March 9

Discover the traditional craft of maple sugaring and enjoy sweet treats from our gift shops. 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.

**Celtic Celebration** – March 15 & 16

Celebrate cultural heritage through music, dance, storytelling, and poetry. Enjoy fiddle tunes, a demonstration of the bagpipes, and music by Celtic musicians. Watch a step dancing performance by the Lee Irish Dance School (Saturday only), and so much more.

“At Old Sturbridge Village, we believe that history should be both immersive and engaging,” said Chris Tieri, Chief Marketing Officer at Old Sturbridge Village. “This special offer allows families to step away from screens,

embrace the beauty of spring, and create lasting memories while exploring our living history museum.”

To maximize savings, visitors are encouraged to purchase tickets online in advance, with an additional \$3 discount compared to door prices. Full details and tickets are available at <https://www.osv.org/event/kids-free-march-april/>.

The Kids Free March and April offer applies to standard daytime admission only and does not include field trips or special ticketed events.

Old Sturbridge Village is open Wednesday-Sunday, 9:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. in March and extends to 5 p.m. starting April 2.

A full schedule of upcoming events can be found at [www.osv.org/events-experiences/calendar](https://www.osv.org/events-experiences/calendar).

## Here Today Adopted Tomorrow hosting “Spay”ghetti Supper

BRIMFIELD — Here Today Adopted Tomorrow (HTAT) invites all animal lovers to our annual “Spay”ghetti Supper fundraiser at the First Congregational Church of Brimfield on Saturday, March 15.

Enjoy a chef-prepared dinner while helping cats in need right here in our community! Whether you dine in or take your meal to go, it's the perfect way to gather with friends and family while supporting a great cause. Plus, enjoy raffles, prizes, and plenty of fun throughout the evening!

Now more than ever, shelters like HTAT are stepping up to help cats in need. Rising costs, limited access to veterinary care, and financial and housing challenges have led to more pets be-

ing surrendered.

According to HTAT Executive Director Rachael Max, “Every ticket sold helps HTAT do what we do best—care for cats that might otherwise fall through the cracks, cats that might be traditionally seen as ‘unadoptable.’”

Max continued, “Each year, this event brings our community together in support of local cats who need us most. The funds raised allow us to care for cats who might not get a chance anywhere else—those with medical needs, behavioral challenges, or simply a harder time finding a home. It's more than just a meal—it's a way to make a real difference.”

Every bite supports HTAT and helps cats

(and the people who love them) in our community. Bring your appetite, bring your friends, and enjoy an evening of great food, great fun, and giving back!

The “Spay”ghetti Supper takes place at the First Congregational Church of Brimfield on Saturday, March 15, from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Advance tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for seniors & kids. To purchase tickets at a discounted price, visit [www.heretoday-sanctuary.org](http://www.heretoday-sanctuary.org) or call 413-324-8224.

If you need assistance feeding or caring for your pet, HTAT can help. Local cat owners can spay or neuter their cats for \$80 or less, and strays and ferals can be fixed for free! Visit [www.heretoday-sanctuary.org](http://www.heretoday-sanctuary.org)

to learn more about our community assistance programs.

Here Today Adopted Tomorrow (HTAT) was founded by mother-daughter team Barbara Horn

and Rachael Max. HTAT is a volunteer driven group focused on helping cats and the people who love them in our community. In 2012 we opened our no kill, cageless cat adoption center for adult cats and kittens in Brimfield, MA. It is deeply important to us that every resident's stay at HTAT is comfortable and healthy, making for well-adjusted, happy animals. Shortly after opening, we realized there were

more homeless cats than we could handle by adoption alone. We believe that pets are cherished members of the family and our ultimate goal is to keep pets and people together. We have programs to help special needs cats flourish and get adopted, as well as community assistance programs to help pet owners keep their pets, such as our Pet Food Pantry, low-cost spay-neuter

program, and free cat behavior program. Each year, HTAT helps over 1,500 animals and their families. For more information, visit [heretoday-sanctuary.org](http://heretoday-sanctuary.org).

Visit Here Today Adopted Tomorrow on Facebook at [facebook.com/heretoday-sanctuary](https://facebook.com/heretoday-sanctuary), and follow us on Instagram at [@heretoday-adoptedtomorrow](https://instagram.com/heretoday-adoptedtomorrow).

## Local garden clubs team with Charlton Library for butterfly exhibit

CHARLTON — Join the Southbridge and Charlton Garden Clubs Monday, March 10 from 6-p.m. at the Charlton Public Library for a presentation on the importance of the Monarch butterfly, such as life cycle and migration. The program will cover all aspects of this important flagship species for pollination. We will cover their life cycle and migration as well as the process of tagging Monarchs, how their population has significantly declined, and how you could help with their protection. The program will also cover the flora that Monarchs

prefer and the connection between the two.

Co-presenter Lanette Lepper is Vice President of the Quiet Corner Garden Club, a Member of the Dudley Agricultural Advisory Commission, and a Board Member and Floral Superintendent for the Woodstock Fair. She and her husband operate Armstrong Acres, a micro-flower farm and CSA in Dudley, which was one of the first Homegrown by Heroes certified farms in Massachusetts.

Fellow co-presenter Nathan Dietz is currently a freshman at Westfield State University double majoring in Environmen-

tal Science and biology. He currently sits on the Town of Monson's Conservation Commission, marking him as one of the youngest commissioners in Massachusetts. Nathan also interns for Monson's Conservation Agent, sits on the Westfield State's Tree Committee and helped to form the university's Greenhouse Club. He achieved his Eagle Scout rank in 2021 through the construction of a Monarch Butterfly Conservation Garden, and maintains two Monarch Garden Waystations, saving over 2,000 butterflies in the last six years.

Go to: <https://charltonlibrary.assabetinter-active.com/calendar/firefly-program-w-southbridge-gc-charlton-gc/> to register.

The Southbridge Garden Club is a non-profit 501c(3) club dedicated to sharing an interest in horticulture and expanding our knowledge of

gardening for our mutual benefit and that of our local communities.

### WANTED TO BUY Antiques & Old Stuff

- Bottles • Crocks •Jugs •Costume Jewelry • Pottery •Toys
- Games • Glassware •Sterling Silver • Coins • Gold
- Silver Plated Items •Watches •Typewriters •Sewing Machines
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## Historical Society to explore covered bridges

SOUTHBRIDGE — On Wednesday, March 12, the Southbridge Historical Society presents Rich Paradise talking about “The Covered Bridges of Massachusetts” at The Ruth Wells Center for the Arts, 111 Main St.

The talk begins at 7 p.m., and is open to the public. There will be snacks and drinks afterward.

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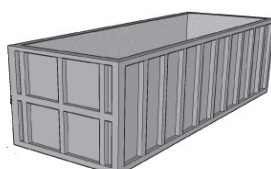
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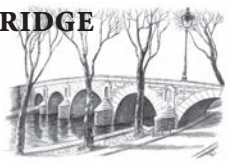
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FRANK G. CHILINSKI  
PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE  
EDITOR

## Neighbors helping neighbors — why sticking local matters more than ever

The world feels overwhelming right now. Between national headlines, global crises, and a constant stream of bad news, it's easy to feel powerless. But the truth is, the biggest impact we can make is right in our own backyard. When times are tough, neighbors helping neighbors is what keeps communities strong, and nothing embodies that better than mutual aid.

Mutual aid isn't charity. It's not about "helping the less fortunate" from a place of pity or obligation. It's about people looking out for one another as equals, sharing resources, skills, and support in a way that builds real relationships and resilience. It's knowing that today you might have something to offer, and tomorrow, you might be the one who needs a hand. It's the reminder that none of us are in this alone.

When we stick local, we see real change in ways that big systems and distant politicians never seem to deliver. A neighbor plows another neighbor's driveway without being asked. A small business donates food to families who need it. A community pulls together to keep the heat on for someone who's struggling. This isn't a feel-good fantasy; it's how people survive and thrive when they realize the best safety net is each other.

Relying on each other isn't weakness it's power. Mutual aid cuts through red tape, bureaucracy, and the "not my problem" mentality that can leave people falling through the cracks. It's fast, direct, and built on trust. While big institutions debate solutions, neighbors are already making them happen.

And the best part? It's contagious. When people see their community stepping up, they want to be part of it too. They realize that helping doesn't have to be complicated. It can be as simple as sharing a meal, giving someone a ride, or just checking in.

So, while the world feels like it's spinning out of control, the best thing we can do is turn toward one another. Forget waiting on the big guys to fix things. Stick local, help your neighbors, and build the kind of community where people know they can count on each other.

### 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

## TO THE EDITOR

### Anthony Aube for DCRSD School Committee

To the Editor:

I have always had a passion for education, and believe that learning is a life-long process. There is always something new and exciting to learn. I believe I have the skills needed to serve as a strong member of the school committee and advocate for student learning. I bring lots of experience, having worked in higher education for 15 years, and currently working as a municipal employee for over a decade.

Beginning my career early in life, I pursued technical courses and internships in photography, video broadcast, graphic arts and audio production starting at the age of 14. Four years later, I relocated to Boston, where I was freelancing and pursuing a college degree in Television Broadcasting. Working hard as a freelancer and attending college, I was hired as a Broadcast News Engineer in Boston. I earned my Associate of Science degree in 2001.

Later, I went on to acquire a Bachelor of Science degree, and was involved in the design and installation of Radio and Audio production studios at Zumix in East Boston, installation of audio recording and television production studios in Manhattan and crewed many live audio and video productions for Metronome Media Group to name a few.

Looking back over the past 30 years of my career, I have been presented with many awards, and have been published as a leading industry expert with many notable professionals including scientists from NASA. Some of my installation projects have been recognized and published in Mix Magazine and Government Video Magazine.

Having two young school age children, I learned of openings on the School Councils at both Charlton Elementary and Heritage and, later, Charlton Middle School. Without hesitation, I entered my application, and for the past three years, have been worked on each of the school councils.

Mass General Law requires every public school to establish a School Council with the following goals: assist educational needs of the students attending the school, assist in the review of the annual school budget, formulation of a school

improvement plan and make recommendations to the principal for the development, implementation and assessment of the curriculum accommodation plan. The councils have worked diligently to review and collaborate with the school principals during all of our meetings for the betterment of all students.

For the past 30 years, I have officiated ice hockey all over New England during the winter months. I am certified by USA Hockey, Federation of High Schools, American Collegiate Hockey Association, and the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Working as a hockey referee allows me to continue being involved with the sport I have loved since childhood.

Most notably, my greatest passion is my family. Being a father of a young family, I find myself learning something new every day. Spending time with my lovely wife, Lisa, son Jasper and daughter Aurora brings me endless enjoyment and lasting smiles.

Anthony Aube  
Charlton

## Five moves for young investors



FINANCIAL  
FOCUS

TREVOR  
NIELSEN

If you're just beginning your career, what are your financial priorities?

You might have student loans to deal with. And you may even be thinking about saving for a down payment on a house. These are certainly significant issues, and yet, you shouldn't ignore your long-term goals, such as retirement — which is why you may want to get started as an investor.

And as you invest, consider these suggestions:

Take advantage of your opportunities. Even while addressing your other concerns, such as loan payments, you may well have space in your life to invest — if you take advantage of the opportunities presented to you. For example, if you work for a business that offers a 401(k) or other retirement plan, try to put in as much as you can afford, or at least enough to earn your employer's matching contribution, if one is offered. And you may find that contributing to a traditional 401(k) or similar plan is more affordable than you think, as your contributions may be deductible, lowering your taxable income.

Think long-term. Some people make the mistake of seeking short-term gains by trying to "time" the market — that is, they try to "buy low and sell high." While this is a great strategy in theory, it's almost impossible to follow, as no one can really predict market highs and lows. The most successful investors follow a long-term strategy and don't jump in and out of the market.

Know your risk tolerance. Your investment choices should be based partially on your risk tolerance. Typically, the more investment risk you take on, the greater the potential reward, but it works the other way, too — riskier investments can result in greater losses, at least in the short term. You need to find a risk level with which you are comfortable. Also, your risk tolerance can change over time — when you get close to retirement, for instance, you might want to invest more conservatively than you did when you still had decades ahead of you in the working world.

Diversify your investments. The financial markets affect different investments in different ways, which means that, at any given time, some investments will perform better than others. But if you only owned one type of investment or asset class, your portfolio could suffer if a market downturn had a particularly strong effect on that investment or asset. By spreading your investment dollars among a range of investments, you'll have more opportunities for success, and you can help reduce the effects of market volatility on your holdings. Keep in mind, though, that diversification, by itself, can't guarantee profits or protect against all losses.

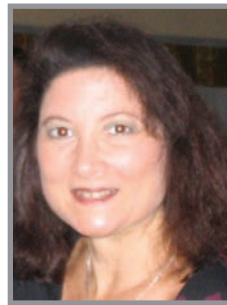
Prepare for the unexpected. You don't always know when you'll face a large expense, such as a medical bill or a major home repair. If you're not prepared, you could be forced to dip into your long-term investments, such as your 401(k), to pay for these costs. To help avoid this problem, you may want to take steps such as keeping a cushion of cash in your portfolio and building an emergency fund containing several months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid account.

By putting these moves to work, you can help yourself make progress on an investment journey that could last a lifetime.

*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.*

## From corned beef to pancakes, time to break bread together

BY DR. RB MCFEE  
CHARLTON CITY UMC



### BEYOND THE PEWS

BY DR. RB MCFEE  
CHARLTON CITY  
UMC

One of my favorite faith based songs — a hymn really, that transcends faith traditions or denominations is titled "Let us break bread together." It is in many ways as timely today as when it was written oh so long ago, and reveals the power of fellowship that can be found when we do in fact break bread together. The key words being "fellowship" and "together."

Even that phrase "breaking bread" conveys a sense of community. During times of disagreement, we often hear a cooler head in the mix invite folks with a simple offer "let's break bread together"; the implication that most people can and will put their differences aside over a meal.

If ever we need to promote a sense of camaraderie and togetherness, one could argue it is now. We do need to reach out to one another, whether across the political divide or some other rift.

And at a time when social isolation — for a variety of reasons that we could spend multiple articles discussing — can you think of a better and more important task before us than to promote community?

Thankfully there are many opportunities to overcome loneliness. Not surprisingly I think houses of worship are great places to meet people who tend to be hospitable, friendly, kind and in many cases pretty cool, too! Even for people who aren't sure about God, faith, or group worship, visitors are welcome. I have rarely visited a house of worship where I didn't feel welcome, and after a short time met some pretty interesting people, even developing friendships that have lasted.

Churches are also great places to "break bread," and not just during Communion.

Eating with others is pretty natural for humans who tend to be social beings. Consider, what do most of us engage in with new friends or at the beginning of a relationship? We meet at, and get to know each other over a meal.

Eating together is also a great way to share a sense of fellowship. In fact in it can be a great way to meet people, especially when attending an event hosted

by and focused on a commonly shared faith, hobby, interest, charity, athletic event or other activity.

Which brings me to share a variety of opportunities for "breaking bread" with friends, neighbors, co-religionists, or even friendly strangers (a potential friend you haven't yet met) in a warm and inviting setting.... church suppers and other meals hosted by houses of worship in our area.

Consider some really nice offerings coming up in our region....

Pull out your green outfit because Charlton City United Methodist Church is hosting their annual and highly popular St. Patrick's Dinner on March 15 from 5 to 7 p.m. Included in the meal of course is corn beef and cabbage, plus turnips, potatoes, carrots, plus green sparkly frosted cake. Family friendly prices, too! \$14 for adults, \$7 for children six to 12, free for kids five and under; family max \$50. Located at 74 Stafford St., Charlton, Mass 01507. Suggest calling ahead for takeout orders, or to make a reservation 1-508-248-7379. A great time to meet your fellow town members, check out a loving church, and get a good meal for a great price.

Speaking of good meals, who doesn't like a good spaghetti meal? First Congregational Church of Brimfield is hosting a "Spay-ghetti," Dinner — March 15 from 5 to 6:30 p.m., hosted by HTAT (Here Today Adopted Tomorrow) Animal Shelter.

All Saints/St. Mary's Church is hosting a pork chop supper March 22.

And can you think of a better way to start off a Sunday morning but with pancakes and bacon, washed down with hot chocolate? St. Joseph's Parish in Charlton, Mass. is hosting a Pancake Breakfast March 23 from 9 a.m. to noon.

This is a great time of year to "break bread" together, support good causes and ministries that benefit our community; from food pantries and youth groups, to animal shelters, and so much more. Check out the church breakfasts, lunches and dinners going on in our area and come on by for some great food and fellowship.

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# Roundup of Meatless Menu Ideas

Every year at this time, this column features meatless meal ideas in recognition of both Lent and the shift in dietary changes that promote less meat. While it can be a challenge to whip up exciting meat-free meals, there are a few tried and true recipes that find their way to my family's table not only during Lent, but all year round. Thus, this week's column will offer a roundup of some favorites previously featured in this column. And remembers readers, share your meat free menu ideas and you could win Dinner for Two at the Publick House!

First offered by the historic Toll House restaurant generations ago, this mock "chicken" pie that replaces chicken with tuna fish is the epitome of comfort food!

"California Chicken" Pie (as served by Ruth Wakefield at The Toll House, Whitman, MA in the 1930s)

I cheated and used a premade refrigerator pie crust; if you are really pressed for time, you can also substitute canned potatoes and carrots.

Ingredients: one medium sized onion,

chopped; one cup peas; two diced carrots; two diced potatoes; one large can tuna fish (ounces vary in today's cans, so use enough to equal one cup); 2 T flour; one T butter; one cup milk; 1 tsp. salt; 1/8 tsp. pepper; 1/4 tsp. paprika.

Preparation: Boil the carrots and potatoes. Add peas to chopped onion. Make a white sauce by melting butter; add flour and stir until smooth. Add milk, salt, pepper, and paprika. Cook until thick and smooth. Add one cup tuna, broken into small pieces.

Fill a baking dish with mixture in layers. Cover with an upper crust or buttered crumbs and bake until brown in a 450 degree oven. Serves 6.

Superb Spinach Quiche

Seasoned feta cheese hikes the taste quotient of this classic Lenten dish. If you're watching carbs, just omit the crust!

Ingredients: 1/2 cup butter; 3 cloves garlic, chopped; 1 small onion, chopped; 1 (10 ounce) package frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained; 1 (4.5 ounce) can mushrooms, drained, or use fresh, uncooked; 1 (6

ounce) package herb and garlic feta cheese, crumbled; 8 ounces shredded Cheddar cheese; 1 (9 inch) deep dish pie crust, unbaked; 4 eggs, beaten; 1 cup milk; salt and pepper to taste

Directions: Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a medium skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Saute garlic and onion in butter until lightly browned. Stir in spinach, mushrooms, feta and 1/2 cup Cheddar cheese. Season with salt and pepper. Spoon mixture into pie crust. In a medium bowl, whisk together eggs and milk. Season with salt and pepper. Pour into the pastry shell, allowing egg mixture to thoroughly combine with spinach mixture. Bake in preheated oven for 15 minutes. Sprinkle top with remaining Cheddar cheese, and bake an additional 35 to 40 minutes, until set in center. Allow to stand 10 minutes before serving.

I haven't tried this interesting vegetarian loaf, but it sounds delicious. This is from "The American Women's Cookbook," Culinary Arts Institute, 1947. Readers who try it are encouraged to send

in feedback!

**Baked Bean Roast**  
Ingredients: 4 cups mashed baked beans; 2 eggs, slightly beaten; 2 cups bread crumbs; one cup tomatoes; 2T minced peppers; 2T minced onion; 4 T olive oil; 1/2 tsp. paprika, salt and pepper.

Preparation: Cook pepper and onions in olive oil. Add other ingredients in the order given. Bake (350 degrees) in greased baking dish for 30 minutes. Serve with brown sauce or tomato sauce.

**Shrimp & Alfredo Sauce a la Olive Garden**

Here it is again, the clone of the popular sauce served at the Olive Garden. This is the dish that my husband jokingly accused me of killing him with. Yes it is very delicious, but it is also very rich and high in calories. However, after one bite, you might agree it's worth the risk!

Ingredients: one eight ounce package cream cheese, cut into pieces; 3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese; eight tablespoons butter; a half cup milk; one half to one pound fresh peeled and deveined shrimp.

Directions: Place first

four ingredients in large saucepan over medium heat. Stir constantly until thickened and remove from heat as soon as it gets hot. Add fresh shrimp and stir until warmed. Serve over eight ounces of cooked fettuccini. Recipe can be doubled.

**Retro Recipe: Tuna Fish Casserole**  
Peas and potato chips are a requisite for this Baby-boomer classic that's as good as you remember it!

Ingredients: 12 oz bag broad egg noodles or elbow macaroni; one can of cream of mushroom soup; 3/4 cup milk; two cans tuna fish; 10 oz package frozen peas; potato chips. Directions: Cook egg noodles/macaroni as directed on package. In a bowl, mix together cream of mushroom soup and milk. Add cooked noodles. Drain tuna and crumble it in mixture. Fold in peas. Season with salt and pepper. Pour into a buttered casserole dish. Top with crushed potato chips. Bake at 350 degrees for about 35 minutes.

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 email KDRR@aol.com. Hints are entered into a drawing for dinner for two at the historic Publick House Inn.



Today, we'll discuss number 8 on my top 10 antiques and collectibles list: vintage and antique posters and advertising signs. With eye appeal and a connection to products that collectors enjoy, advertising memorabilia has always been popular.

Several online sources, including esign.com,

## Vintage and antique posters and advertising signs

state that advertising dates back to 18,000 BC, when cave drawings were used to promote bartering during the Paleolithic Era. The advertising memorabilia I'll discuss begins in the 1800s and has progressed significantly since the days of cave drawings.

In a column last year, I shared results for brewery, soda, and automobile related advertising memorabilia. Here are some top auction results for those types of signs. An enamel and neon double-sided "Drink Coca Cola in Bottles" sign sold for \$37,000 in 2022. A 1950s era large Pearl Lager Beer of Texas porcelain lighted motion sign brought \$150,000 in 2023. A circa 1929 Porcelain Musgo Gasoline Ser-

vice Station Sign depicting a Native American went for \$350,000 in 2022.

You can also find advertising on items other than conventional signs. A stoneware figural pig marked "J.O. Sanders Dealer in Wines, Liquors & Cigars Elberton GA 1883" sold for \$8,500 last year. "Cigar Store Indians" were placed in front of tobacco shops and are said to symbolize Native Americans introducing tobacco to the colonists. A Samuel Robb (American, 1851-1928) Cigar Store Indian maiden figure brought \$37,500 in 2022. A hand-painted canvas Louis Vuitton advertising panel with images of Louis Vuitton trunks went for \$4,750 last year. A late 19th century "Ice Cream

& Fancy Cake" tin trade sign picturing a scoop of ice cream in a dish reached \$50,000 in 2016.

There are some recognizable characters you might immediately associate with certain brands, and items featuring those characters are always in demand. An early paper mache Michelin Man figure sold for over \$12,000 in 2023. A 1906 cast iron peanut roaster with Mr. Peanut sitting atop the roaster brought \$132,000 last year.

More recent character advertising pieces can also bring strong results. A Styrofoam Pillsbury Doughboy figure that was approximately 4 1/2 feet tall and said to be one of fifty produced for company executives brought

\$1,500 in 2021. A 7 1/2 foot Bob's Big Boy statue in his red and white overalls, holding up a hamburger went for \$4,300 earlier this year. A plastic Tony the Tiger Kellogg's Frosted Flakes cookie jar sold for over \$7,000 online last year. I'm sure the seller thought that price was more than good... grrreat!

We are still cataloging for the large one consignor Civil War memorabilia auction, Beacon Hill estate auction, and a comic book, sports memorabilia, and collectibles auction that will be taking place over



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the spring and summer. We are always accepting quality consignments for future auctions. Please visit our website <https://central-massauctions.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@central-massauctions.com](mailto:info@central-massauctions.com) or (508-612-6111).



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## Applications welcome for Ronald J. Denault Memorial Law Enforcement Scholarship

CHARLTON — A scholarship of \$1,500 honoring the memory of Ronald J. Denault, highly respected police officer at both the state and local levels, will be awarded again this June to a student in the Class of 2025.

To be eligible for consideration for this award, a student must be a Charlton resident who is planning to further his/her education in pursuit of a career in law enforcement or criminal justice. Applicants may be graduating from a public or private high school or

from a home-schooling program that has been approved formally by the School Committee. Ideally, applicants will show evidence of scholarship, leadership, and community service.

Interested students should submit a completed application packet no later than April 30. The application packet will include the following: an application form (available from the high school guidance office at Shepherd Hill or Bay Path, at the Charlton Public Library, or at the Charlton Police Station); a one-page essay summa-

rizing why the applicant is interested in a career in law enforcement; two letters of reference; and documentation of academic scholarship. Details regarding all requirements will be included with the application form. Further questions may be directed to Dr. Linda Denault, who can be reached at 508-248-7711(H) or 508-328-7817(C).

Completed application packets should be mailed to the Ronald J. Denault Law Enforcement Scholarship Committee c/o P.O. Box 352, Charlton City, MA 01508

BOSTON — The following local students have made the dean's list at Wentworth Institute of Technology for the Fall 2024 semester:

Jasper Barton of Charlton  
Lily Cepeda of Sturbridge

Imad LaPlante of Sturbridge

Noah Huckins of Wales

Wentworth Institute of Technology  
Founded in 1904, Wentworth Institute of

Technology provides a comprehensive, interdisciplinary, project-based education in architecture and design, computing and data science, engineering, management, and sciences and humanities that integrates classroom, laboratory, studio, cooperative and experiential learning to develop career-ready, skilled professionals,

and engaged citizens. The University of Opportunity, Wentworth aims to be a student-centered institution that offers high-quality undergraduate, graduate, and life-long learning programs, and embraces a culture of innovation and creativity. Hands-on. Future-Ready. Education that's worth it. Wentworth.

## Local residents make Dean's List at Wentworth Institute of Technology

## Friends of Charlton Library holding yarn sale

CHARLTON — In preparation for its upcoming Yarn Sale, which will take place on March 29 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Charlton Public Library, 40 Main St., Charlton, the Friends of Charlton Public Library is currently accepting donations of clean, unwanted yarn, knitting needles, crochet hooks, and knitting/crochet books. Donations can be placed in the designated bin behind the Circulation Desk.

**1910:** French aviator Raymonde de Laroche becomes the first woman to receive a pilot's license.

**1936:** Daytona Beach and Road Course holds its first oval stock car race.

**1979:** The compact disc is demonstrated for the first time.

Proceeds from fundraisers enable the non-profit Friends to support the mission of the Library by sponsoring a variety of programs, projects, and events, including museum passes, movies, author talks, music concerts and performances, and other cultural and educational experiences. The Friends of Charlton Public Library appreciate your continued support. For questions or more information, please email [charltonfriends@gmail.com](mailto:charltonfriends@gmail.com).

**SEND US YOUR NEWS!!!**



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**Food FACT:**

True or false?  
There is no perfect diet for everyone.

Answer: True; experimentation may be needed

### Math Blocks

Fill in the missing blocks with numbers between 0-20. The numbers in each row add up to the totals on the right. The numbers in each column add up to the totals on the bottom.

10	8		33
	11	9	22
6		5	15
18	23	29	

Solution

5	4	9
6	11	2
15	8	10

### Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.  
**EHLTYHA LMSAE**

Answer: Healthy meals

**NEW WORD**

**REFINED**

with unwanted elements removed by processing

**How they say that in...**

**English:** Protein  
**Spanish:** Proteína  
**Italian:** Proteine  
**French:** Protéine  
**German:** Eiweiß

**Did You Know?**

A combination of various foods, with a good deal of vegetables and fruits, is part of a healthy and balanced diet.

**Get the PICTURE?**

Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Smoothie

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# Sturbridge Planning Board approves Podunk cutting plan

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

STURBRIDGE — After months of discussion and public concern in various forums, the Planning Board approved National Grid’s tree-removal plan along Podunk Road with conditions Feb. 24.

As Planner Jean Bubon explained then, the company was seeking authority to cut down 110 town-owned shade trees and nine shared with abutters “to upgrade their (electric) lines,” which run mostly from a solar field in Charlton. The project will also cut or trim many other trees on private property, but those were not part of this hearing process, nor were dozens overseen by the Conservation Commission along what’s called Podunk Annex.

Bubon said the town bylaws call for two-to-one replacement of the healthy trees with young trees based on an “inch for inch (width) compensation.” That calculates to 202 trees (there are 55 deemed dead, declining or ashes subject to the ash borer) of at least two-inch caliper, which would be funded by National Grid compensation of \$147,000. They’ll specifically have to replant 62 trees, plus 820 plants of other types along the Podunk Annex.

Under state law (MGL Chapter 87), the town can replant trees within 20 feet of the right of way and still consider it a “public shade tree.” The tree warden will work with residents and the company to find good

locations, and if that’s not possible, the Grid will deposit an extra \$1,000 per tree for later use, she added. Nothing can be removed until all permits are obtained, any appeals are resolved, and this special permit and order of conditions have been recorded at the Registry of Deeds.

According to Administrator Robin Grimm, “Different residents have different desires for what those replantings will look like,” so many of them will be negotiated individually to address visual and noise concerns.

To Selectperson Mary Dowling, one concern was this – “Did we absolutely exhaust the possibility of trimming” versus cutting trees? She noted that residents wouldn’t see much “satisfaction” from new plantings for “many years, and probably not in the lifetime of the current residents.” She’d like to see the company replace trees with “a somewhat larger tree” because she thinks the cuttings will affect scenic and property values.

Chair Charlie Blanchard said the department and tree warden “did really look carefully at this, and this is the decision they made.” While Sturbridge could require larger trees, that would reduce the total number replanted, he said.

Tree Warden Tony Crane agreed, saying the new trees will need significant watering and maintenance for a while to get established.

A National Grid representative said they

were planning to give the trees “tree diapers” – bag-like devices that absorb water and slowly release it to the roots – and visit them regularly with a watering truck. Their goal is to keep all of them alive.

When asked what the survivability rate was likely to be, Crane said he couldn’t cite a number, but that all of the (mostly larger) trees Sturbridge planted four years ago using Arbor Day funds have survived, even without such “diapers.”

Bubon said some residents have said they don’t want replacements, but the town will look at individual properties to “find appropriate location, appropriate species and appropriate size.”

This project has been in the works for at least a year, with hearings for the pole replacements themselves having gone through the Selectboard in small numbers at a time. One of the issues is that many of the current poles are too far apart to handle the increased weight of new lines being used to carry power from a Charlton solar array.

The slow process has drawn criticism from town officials. Back in October, Selectboard Chair Jamie Goodwin said he’d like to see an “actual articulation of what they’re doing and where they’re doing it, from soup to nuts. This piecemeal [nonsense] is the same old song and dance. They’re a private company making money on a public utility, so we need better transparen-

cy from them.”

At that time, the town started getting clearer details of the whole scope of the project, in part because the town’s

normal Grid contact had been on medical leave for some time, but had just returned then, the selectmen’s meeting of Oct. 7 noted.

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

## Friday’s Child



**Kolton**  
**Age 14**  
**Registration # 8558**

and bouncing a basketball.

Kolton is energetic, funny, insightful, and thoughtful! He loves listening to NPR, and is good at the “Wait, Wait Don’t Tell Me” game show that is hosted on the channel. Kolton is also super creative. He can build any type of car or airplane with LEGO, and any toy he wants to play with by using paper and tape. He is also creative through other mediums, such as Mine Craft, and would play this all day if he were allowed. Kolton is not one for competitive team sports, however, he enjoys kicking a soccer ball, throwing a football,

<https://www.mareinc.org/child/21175660317>

### 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](http://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.



## SOUTHBRIDGE POLICE LOG

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of Feb. 24 to March 3.

Emmanuel Soto, age 33, of Southbridge was arrested on Feb. 25 in connection with a warrant for Distribution of a Class A Drug (subsequent offense). Felix J. Resto, age 35, of Southbridge was arrested during the same incident in connection with a warrant for Assault & Battery. Also arrested during this incident was Vianca Rodriguez, age

28, of Southbridge in connection with multiple warrants for Felony Breaking & Entering and Larceny, respectively.

Scott A. Gomes, age 19, of Southbridge was arrested on Feb. 26 for Assault & Battery with a Dangerous Weapon and Threatening to Hijack.

Deven Joseph Dodge, age 25, of Southbridge was arrested on Feb. 26 for Assault with a Dangerous Weapon, Carrying a Firearm Without a License, Possession of Ammunition Without FID Card, and Possession of a Firearm Without a

Serial Number.

Abel Manuel Carmona Andino, age 43, of Southbridge was arrested on Feb. 26 in connection with a warrant for operating a motor vehicle after suspension of license.

Jocelyn Dorfeuille, age 38, of Southbridge was arrested on Feb. 27 in connection with a warrant for Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle.

Ismael J. Colon, age 53, of Southbridge was arrested on Feb. 28 in connection with a warrant for Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle.

Jessiah David Hedman, age 22, of Webster was arrested on Feb. 28 in connection with a warrant for operating a motor vehicle after suspension of license.

A 39-year-old male from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on Feb. 28.

Samantha M. Derry, age 37, of Southbridge was arrested on Feb. 28 in connection with a warrant for operating an uninsured motor vehicle.

A 53-year-old female from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on March 1.

A 59-year-old male from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on March 1 for Shoplifting By Asportation.

A 51-year-old male from Worcester was taken into protective custody on March 1 for Destruction of Real Property, Disturbing the Peace, Disorderly Conduct, and Possession of a Class B Drug (subsequent offense).

## Public invited to Opacum Land Trust Annual Meeting Breakfast

PALMER — Do you enjoy hiking, hunting, fishing, or other outdoor recreation? Are you interested in protecting local land, water, and wildlife? Are you curious about Opacum Land Trust, land conservation, or how you could get involved? Join Opacum Land Trust for our 25th Anniversary Annual Meeting Breakfast – all are welcome to this free event! The breakfast will be held on Saturday, March 15th at Pathfinder High School, Panek Street, Palmer, from 10 a.m. to noon. At noon, Opacum Directors Glenn Colburn and Toni Uliana will lead an optional walk at the Stephen and June Skorupski Woodland Preserve on Silver Street in Monson.

Come for the delicious breakfast and stay for the celebration as Opacum Land Trust commemorates a quarter century of local land conservation. Reflect on 25 years of protecting the land, water, and wildlife of south-central Massachusetts and learn more about Opacum Land Trust’s plans for 2025 and beyond.

Please RSVP by March 6. You can RSVP on our Web site at <https://www.opacumlt.org/events/annual-meeting-breakfast/>, by scanning the QR code below or call the Opacum Land Trust office at (508) 347-9144.

Opacum Land Trust is a regional, non-profit land conservation organization that protects land, water, and wildlife for current and future generations. Founded in 2000, Opacum currently protects over 4,050 acres of land and is actively working to protect more land across south-central Massachusetts.

Reach out to us at Opacum Land Trust, PO Box 233, Sturbridge, MA 01566; [info@opacumlt.org](mailto:info@opacumlt.org), (508) 347-9144 and check out our website for events, properties you can visit, and ways to get involved at [www.OpacumLT.org](http://www.OpacumLT.org).



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Principal

508-769-5007

[jglickman@glickmankovago.com](mailto:jglickman@glickmankovago.com)



JONAH D. GLICKMAN  
Vice President

508-868-3765

[jdglickman@glickmankovago.com](mailto:jdglickman@glickmankovago.com)

# It's not about you!

POSITIVELY  
SPEAKINGTOBY  
MOORE

We've all been there. You're just minding your business, maybe running errands or sipping coffee, when—BAM—someone snaps at you like you personally ruined their day. A rude cashier, a cranky coworker, or a stranger in traffic acting like you committed a federal offense just by existing.

Bestselling author Robert Greene famously says, "What people do to you is not personal."

Wait, hold on—what? People's bad attitudes aren't personal? It sure feels personal!

Greene breaks it down like this: When someone says something cruel or mean, they aren't aiming it at you. They're aiming it at people from their past who left emotional scars. You happen to be standing in the crossfire.

Lisa was working as a flight attendant when

a man on her flight exploded over something trivial—his overhead bin space. "This is unacceptable!" he yelled, his face turning red.

Lisa, who had simply asked him to place his bag in a different compartment, was caught off guard. She felt embarrassed, even attacked. But later, as the man calmed down, he apologized. "I just got off a stressful business call," he admitted. "And my divorce was finalized yesterday."

Lisa then realized that the man's outburst had nothing to do with her. So she let it go.

I'm not excusing his behavior. Snapping at someone who's just doing their job is rude and unnecessary. But the point here isn't to justify it—it's to recognize that it's not about you. Understanding that doesn't mean you

have to tolerate disrespect, but it does mean you don't have to internalize it. And that can be incredibly freeing.

But let's be honest, that's easier said than done. It's one thing to brush off a stranger's bad attitude, but what about when it's someone you actually know—someone whose opinion does matter?

Like, say, your boss, who suddenly decides that your hard work is garbage?

Jake had always respected his boss, but one morning, she stormed into the office and called his recent project "a disaster." The criticism stung. He had spent weeks on that report, triple-checking every detail. That night, frustrated, he told his friend what happened. "I don't get it," Jake said. "She's never been this

harsh before."

A week later, he found out why. His boss's father had passed away, and she had barely slept in days. She wasn't angry at Jake—she was grieving, overwhelmed, and exhausted.

Let's be real—sometimes, the criticism is about you. If you're consistently missing deadlines, turning in sloppy work, or replying to emails with just "k," then yeah, your boss's frustration might be earned.

But more often than not, when someone's reaction feels way out of proportion, there's something else going on beneath the surface. People carry stress, grief, and frustrations that have nothing to do with you, yet you become the unsuspecting target.

Recognizing the difference can save you a lot of

unnecessary stress—and maybe even keep you from rage-quitting a perfectly good job.

Emma loved her morning routine—stopping by her local café, ordering her usual, and exchanging smiles with the barista. But one day, the barista, usually friendly, barely acknowledged her, handing over her coffee without a word. Emma felt a flash of insecurity. Did I do something wrong? she wondered.

That afternoon, she saw the same barista sitting outside on her break, eyes red from crying. It turned out she had just gone through a breakup and was struggling to keep it together at work. "I'm so sorry if I was off this morning," she said when Emma approached. "I was just in my head about some things." Emma realized that the barista's

mood had nothing to do with her—it was simply a reflection of her own pain.

How much easier would life be if we stopped taking things personally?

As Robert Greene says, "If you take the angle that, 'I'm not going to get emotionally involved with this,' it's incredibly liberating."

When you stop internalizing their negativity, you free yourself from unnecessary suffering.

So the next time someone gives you attitude, remember: it's probably not about you. It's about them—their stress, their history, their bad morning.

Protect your peace, take a deep breath, and move on with your day like the emotionally untouchable legend you are.

## LEGALS

### Town of Holland Zoning Board of Appeals Notice of Public Hearing

In accordance with M.G. L Chapter 40A the Holland Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing on **Wednesday, March 19, 2025 at 7:15 P.M.** at the Holland Town Hall, 27 Sturbridge Rd, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Community Room, Holland, MA 01521.

If dial in access is needed, please contact the Town Hall at 413-245-7108 x101.

The purpose of the hearing is to consider a request from **Charles Michaud** for a variance according to Holland Bylaw section 7. **Relief requested:** To build a 14-foot by 24-foot detached garage.

The property located at: **42 Craig Rd., Holland, MA** Parcel ID # **R23/B/9**.

Don Beal, Chairperson  
Zoning Board of Appeals  
Date: 2/25/2025  
March 6, 2025

### CHARLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Charlton Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on March 26, 2025, at 7 PM on the application of Christopher and Krystal Hansen.

The applicant has submitted an Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation to confirm Resource Area delineation. The site is located at Sandersdale Road, Parcel ID: 77-C-8. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Charlton Conservation Commission will be conducted in person and via remote means. Members of the public who wish to participate can access the meeting remotely by request.

Copies of the ANRAD may be examined at the Conservation Office by appointment during business hours.  
Thomas O'Malley  
Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission  
March 6, 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

**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. WO25P0595EA  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR  
FORMAL ADJUDICATION  
Estate Of:  
Yeimy Berroa Alcantara  
Date of Death: 10/21/2024**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Oscar Pena of Worcester 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: **Oscar Pena of Worcester MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **With Personal 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 03/18/2025**.

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 19 2025  
Stephanie K. Fattman,  
Register of Probate  
March 6, 2025

### CHARLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Charlton Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on March 26, 2025, at 7PM on the application of Steven Bressette.

The applicant has submitted a Request for Determination of Applicability for the proposed construction of a 28x28 barn and septic system within 100 feet of a Bordering Vegetated Wetland. Address: 30 Hill Road, Charlton, MA, 01507. Parcel ID: 31-D-6

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

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

Thomas O'Malley  
Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission  
March 6, 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. WO25P0641 EA  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR  
FORMAL ADJUDICATION  
Estate Of:  
Patrick Michael Triggs  
Date of Death: 01/17/2025**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Maria Triggs of Springfield 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: **Maria Triggs of Springfield 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 04/01/2025**.

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 25 2025  
Stephanie K. Fattman,  
Register of Probate  
March 6, 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. WO22P2233EA  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR  
FORMAL APPOINTMENT OF  
SUCCESSOR PERSONAL**

### REPRESENTATIVE Estate of:

Florence G. Lacroix  
**Date of Death: 04/05/2020**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition has been filed by **Raymond E Pion Jr of Plymouth MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order that: **Raymond E Pion Jr of Plymouth MA** be appointed as Successor Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

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 03/18/2025**.

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.

The estate is being administered under formal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but recipients are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can 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 18, 2025  
Stephanie Fattman,  
Register of Probate  
March 6, 2025

### LEGAL NOTICE

The Brimfield Elementary School Committee will hold a public hearing on its proposed 2025-2026 Elementary School Budget on Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at the Brimfield Elementary School, in accordance with the M.G. L., Chapter 71, § 38N. A copy of the proposed budget is available from the Office of the Principal, Brimfield Elementary School.  
Jennifer Custance, Chair  
Brimfield School Committee  
March 6, 2025

### CHARLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with the Town of Charlton Stormwater Management Rules & Regulations, the Charlton Conservation Commission will be accepting comments on the following application:

The applicant, Michael Dyer, has submitted a Land Disturbance/Stormwater Management Permit on February 11, 2025, for stormwater infrastructure associated with the construction of a single-family home. The project site is located at Hill Road, Charlton, MA 01507, and is also known as: Parcel ID 46-B-3.2 & 46-B-4.2.

Copies of the Land Disturbance Application are available at the Charlton Conservation Commission office during business hours.  
Thomas O'Malley  
Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission  
March 6, 2025



# Celebrate the Year of the Asclepias by planting milkweed



Melinda Myers

**Milkweed (Asclepias) supports monarch butterflies and other pollinators.**

Grow milkweed (Asclepias) to support monarch butterflies, hummingbirds, and bees while adding color, fragrance, and beauty to your landscape. You'll find native milkweeds through-

out North and South America. In recognition of this garden star's attributes, 2025 has been deemed the Year of the Asclepias by the National Garden Bureau.

With so many to choose from, select the milkweed that is best suited to the growing conditions, your landscape design, and garden maintenance. Some milkweeds are very aggressive and can quickly take over garden beds and large areas in the landscape, requiring time and effort to maintain their spread.

Butterfly milkweed (Asclepias tuberosa) is one of the tamer milkweeds with lots of ornamental appeal. This adaptable milkweed is hardy in zones three to ten and was named the 2017 Perennial Plant of the Year.

Grow butterfly milkweed in full sun with well-drained soil. You'll appreciate its drought tolerance once it's established. If you are gardening in clay soil, consider growing Asclepias tuberosa var. clay, a natural variant found growing on clay soil. Mark the location of any butterfly milkweed in the garden or plant some spring-flowering bulbs nearby to avoid accidentally digging up this late-to-emerge perennial.



## GARDEN MOMENTS

MELINDA MYERS

You'll enjoy the orange blossoms in meadow, prairie, and even semi-formal gardens. Combine this beauty with yellow, purple, and blue flowers. Deadhead faded flowers to extend bloom time and prevent reseeding if this

is a concern.

When looking for a bit larger plant that tolerates moist to wet and occasionally dry soils, check out red milkweed (Syriaca incarnata), also known as pink and swamp milkweed. You'll enjoy the fragrant reddish-pink flowers and the butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds that visit the flowers.

It's hardy in zones three to nine plus red milkweed grows three to five feet tall in upright clumps. The flowers are followed by narrow pods that release silky-haired seeds like other milkweeds. It grows best in full sun with moist soil and is less aggressive than common milkweed. Grow this milkweed in sunny mixed borders, natural gardens, rain gardens, and alongside ponds. And best of all, the deer and rabbits tend to leave it, and other milkweeds, be.

Common milkweed Asclepias syriaca is a favorite of monarchs, hardy in zones three to eight, but very ag-

gressive, spreading by deep rhizomes and seeds. The purple-pink flowers are fragrant at night, and you will find a variety of butterflies stopping by for a visit. Keep it contained by persistently removing unwanted suckers and seedpods before they open to prevent reseeding

Sullivant's milkweed Asclepias sullivantii is similar but a bit less aggressive. It has the same great butterfly appeal and is hardy in zones four to seven.

These are just a few of the more than 100 native milkweed species, many of which you may want to add to your gardens. You can find out more about the species native to your region in the Milkweed Regional Guides located on the Xerces Society website. You are sure to find one or more to add to your garden beds.

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

# Home Winter Auto

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**COUNCIL**

continued from page A1

part-time project manager without any discussion. He's replacing Rich Benoit, who resigned suddenly in mid-February.

According to the Feb. 20 DPW subcommittee meeting video, Jovan said Jackson will serve both roles part-time for a \$60,000 a year salary without benefits until the director's role can be filled full-time. After that, Jackson will continue as project manager 20 hours a week. A retired DPW director from another town, Jackson has experience in roads, water and sewer, served as interim director here previously, and can help train an incoming director, Jovan added.

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

**BODY**

continued from page A1

Attorney's State Police Detective Unit at 413-505-5993.

"The Holland Police Department offers deepest condolences to the victim's family. This is an ongoing investigation and is being led by the State Police assigned to the Hampden County DA's Office," read a statement released by the HPD.

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**CHARLTON**

continued from page A1

use of natural gas, and streamline the permitting process for projects such as solar or wind power.

The bill was one of the few major talking points during a short Charlton Board of Selectmen meeting on Feb. 25 where Town Administrator Andrew Golas reminded selectmen that the changes will alter the permitting process significantly for all towns.

"There are new reg-

**OPEN SPACE**

continued from page A1

Expand recreational resources, green spaces, and open space; and Link existing and potential trails and recreational resources."

Planner Aqsa Butt of BSC Group, which is writing the plan, said this plan adds climate resilience goals partly based in the town's Municipal Vulnerability Plan and looks at environmental justice issues. Among the latter are such things

ulations that are in promulgation for clean energy infrastructure regulations. The new clean energy law that passed through the legislature last year requires changes to the permitting process for the clean energy infrastructure both at the state and local level. Municipalities will be required to use a consolidated permitting process for projects under their jurisdiction which includes generation projects less than 25 megawatts and storage of less than 100 mega-

as whether Southbridge has enough parks for its population, trying to ensure amenities are within a 10-minute walk of most people, and have ADA access. Fulfilling the ideas will depend on funding, but having an updated OSRP makes Southbridge eligible for various grants.

She said her background is in landscape architecture and urban planning, and doing OSRPs "encompasses the things I care about." She particularly likes working with local people and

watts," said Golas.

The town administrator explained that the new process will include consistent standards for permitting different categories of clean energy projects. If those standards are met, cities and towns will have little authority to reject the project and will be required to approve it within one year of receiving a complete application. Golas' update was meant to be purely informational, keeping the impending changes on the Board of Selectmen's radar,

although he did admit the new law may cause some frustrations as municipalities adjust to the changes.

"As we get more information, we'll make sure we pass it on to the Planning Board and keep (the Board of Selectmen) involved, but I'm sure there'll be more local pushback on this, these are just kinds of things being brought up now to give local towns public knowledge," Golas said.

It should be clarified there was no vocal opposition to the law present-

ed during the Board of Selectmen's Feb. 25 meeting. Golas also clarified that the law shouldn't impact any projects currently approved.

The regulations are currently being drafted by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources. The law is part of a larger mission on the state level to help the commonwealth reach net zero emissions by 2050.

reservoirs and town ownership.

Butt said BSC has already spoken to some town officials and various citizens, collected responses to a public survey, and will compile this forum's responses. Going forward, they plan a second public event (not yet scheduled) to look at prioritizing things and funding sources for each action. The overall goal is to finish the plan in June, she said.

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

**Local schools receive grant funding for mental health services**

BY KEVIN FLANDERS  
STAFF WRITER

REGION — Local school districts will receive grant funding as part of a state effort to expand student access to behavioral and mental health services.

The Healey-Driscoll Administration will award \$5,540,875 in grants to 60 school districts, educational collaboratives, and charter schools across Massachusetts.

Funds can be used to create or expand student support programs and services. Funds can also assist with building school partnerships with community-based mental health agencies or providers.

In addition, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

(DESE) will provide related professional development opportunities for school staff members.

"We have a mental health crisis that was only made worse by the pandemic, particularly for students. That's why improving students' access to behavioral and mental healthcare is a priority for our administration," said Gov. Maura Healey. "These grants will help districts connect students with the services they need to be safe, healthy, and successful today and into the future."

Local grant recipients include Southbridge Public Schools (\$63,125); Uxbridge Public Schools (\$50,864); Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School (\$37,150); and Belcher-

town Public Schools (\$25,080).

"We are grateful to the educators and community-based providers who are partnering and innovating to improve supports for students," said Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll. "These services are essential for helping students be successful academically and to build healthy relationships with their peers and teachers."

Grant funding will provide students with a range of services and resources to help them address mental health and behavioral health challenges. Additionally, funds will help school districts establish cross-system coordination to improve integration of behavioral and mental health supports, ensuring seamless tran-

sitions between schools and communities while improving data systems to track efforts and results.

"The Healey-Driscoll Administration is focused on healing, stabilizing, and transforming our education system that is still recovering from the lasting impacts of the pandemic. These grants are providing our schools, from North Adams to Dennis, with the funding they need to foster environments that support healthy social and emotional development in their classrooms and beyond," said Massachusetts Education Secretary Patrick Tutwiler, who recently visited the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District and has been active across central and western Massa-

chusetts.

Addressing the youth mental health crisis remains a top priority for the Healey-Driscoll Administration. Healey's Fiscal Year 2026 budget includes more than \$21 million to support student behavioral and mental health services.

"Our educators are working to create safe and healthy learning environments that are joyful, engaging, and equitable for every child," said Massachusetts Elementary and Secondary Education Acting Commissioner Russell Johnston. "These grants will help provide student supports that advance that important work."

To learn more about grant opportunities and recipients, visit [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov).

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A minimum of a high school diploma required. Efficient knowledge of Microsoft Office including Excel and Word. One or two years of office or secretarial experience, or one year of office administration. Bookkeeping experience and previous CCMC certification or experience helpful but not necessary. CCMC certification would be required within 4 years of employment if not currently certified.  
Salary commensurate with experience. Full job description available on the Town website: [www.pomfretct.gov](http://www.pomfretct.gov). Submit letter of interest, application and 3 letters of reference to: Selectman's office, 5 Haven Road, Pomfret Center, Ct 06259.  
Application deadline March 24, 2025. EOE/AA

**The Spencer Housing Authority has an opening for a Full-Time Administrative Assistant**  
The Spencer Housing Authority is seeking a qualified full-time Administrative Assistant to assist with a variety of tasks including, but not limited to, processing applications, maintaining waitlists, calculating rent determinations, and general reception duties including answering phones, entering work orders, filing and assisting the public. This is a full time (40 hours) benefited position. Retirement is through the Worcester County Retirement Office. Successful candidates must have excellent written and verbal communication skills and be proficient in computer skills. Working knowledge of EOHLC, CHAMP, or PHA-Net software. The selected applicant must be able to pass a criminal background check (CORI). The full job description can be found on the SHA website. Pay: \$20.00 per hour  
**Applicants should submit a cover letter and resume to:**  
Spencer Housing Authority 13 McDonald Street Spencer, MA 01562  
Attn: Kimberly Hurlbrink  
You may also email cover letter and resumes to Kimberly Hurlbrink: [kim.hurlbrink@spencerhousing.org](mailto:kim.hurlbrink@spencerhousing.org)  
Resumes will be accepted until 2:00PM on March 21, 2025  
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**WEBSTER -  
22 COOPER RD.**

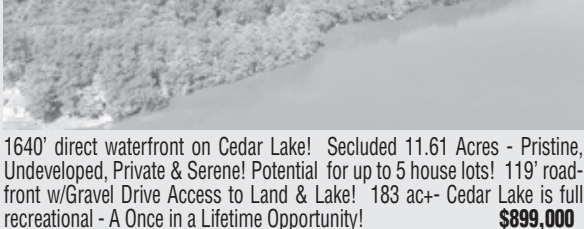
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# Assumption students tour Sheriff's Office



Courtesy

Assumption University students recently took part in a tour of the Worcester County Sheriff's Office.

REGION — The Worcester County Sheriff's Office recently hosted Assumption University students interested

in pursuing careers in sociology, criminology, or criminal justice.

Students participated in a tour of the WCSO

Jail and House of Correction, learning about several facets as they work toward launching their own careers in law

enforcement or related fields.

"The group visited multiple parts of our facility, heard from staff,

and learned about day-to-day operations," read a statement released by the Sheriff's Office. "It is always a pleasure to edu-

cate groups on what the Sheriff's Department does and the different career paths in the law enforcement field."

## Brimfield Auction Acres welcomes Rob Wolfe of "American Pickers"

BRIMFIELD — Brimfield Auction Acres, birthplace of the world-famous Brimfield Antique Shows, will host a special Meet and Greet with Rob Wolfe, of History Channel's popular reality show "American Pickers," May 16 & 17 from 10-11:30 a.m. and 2-3:30 p.m.

Wolfe will be out and about throughout the day, filming, interacting with dealers & shoppers with two scheduled "meet & greet" sessions on the property at the Brimfield Winery Wine Garden.

With an impressive track record spanning



Rob Wolfe

ing stories behind each piece he discovers.

Wolfe's journey as an everyday archaeologist began at a tender age of eight, when he stumbled upon the joy of refurbishing bicycles for profit. This early experience ignited a lifelong fascination with historical artifacts, prompting him to expand his expertise to encompass a diverse range of antique items. Guided by the belief that every object holds a narrative waiting to be retold, Robert strives to restore these treasures to their rightful place in history.

As the brother of

Mike Wolfe, Rob has had the honor of joining forces with him on the popular reality show, "American Pickers," featured on the History Channel. Together,

they have traversed the length and breadth of the United States, delving into forgotten barns and garages, unearthing what they affectionately term "rusty gold."

Whether you are a collector, fellow enthusiast, or simply captivated by the allure of the past, Robert invites you to join him for this interactive discussion.

## National Quilting Day exhibit and demonstration at Charlton Public Library



Courtesy

Probably the most famous quilt of all time, the Jane Stickle Quilt is comprised of 169 five-inch blocks, each in different patterns, containing a remarkable total of 5,602 pieces surrounded by a unique scalloped border. The craftsmanship of the quilt has been mentioned in numerous quilting books, and is the topic of Dear Jane, The Two Hundred Twenty-Five Patterns from the 1863 Jane A. Stickle Quilt, by Brenda Papadakis.

CHARLTON — Saturday, March 15 is National Quilting Day and Cornerstone Quilters Guild is holding their Third Annual Quilting Day Exhibit and Demonstration in Dexter Hall from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 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. The Cornerstone Quilters Guild is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

founded in the spring of 2000. The Guild has over 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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