



SPENCER NEW LEADER

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Free by request to residents of

East Brookfield, West Brookfield, North Brookfield, Brookfield, Leicester and Spencer

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Friday, February 7, 2025



Courtesy

Congratulations to the Leicester-Spencer Raiders cheerleading team, who recently punched their ticket to globals in Atlantic City.

Stabilization project underway at Spencer library

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

SPENCER — A major structural stabilization project is underway at Richard Sugden Library.

The project will include the installation of new bracing, roof repairs, a new interior ceiling, and repairs to gutters and downspouts.

“The roof system was causing the walls to bow out due to the weight. This problem was originally identified in the 1990s and some steps were taken to address it, but the condition exists,” said Town Administrator Jeffrey Bridges.

The project is expected to take several months to complete. Town officials and library patrons are thrilled about work finally taking place after seeing conditions gradually worsen.

“This project is long overdue. There are structural issues there that need to be taken care of,” said Selectman Ralph Hicks.

The project is being funded through a combination of federal ARPA funds (American Rescue Plan Act), grant funds, and municipal funding.

Throughout the project, no public access will be available to the Pleasant Street front entrance of the library. Patrons will be able to enter through the doors on the lower level. Additionally, the reading room and local history museum will be blocked off, officials said.

“We anticipate most library programming will not take place in the building during construction,” read a statement released by library officials. “We appreciate your patience during this time and will do our best to provide services throughout the construction work. We look forward to the completion of the project, which will help to preserve our 1889 library.”

The repair project may affect library services for the months of January and February, officials said. No in-house programs will take place until at least March. Check your email and the library website for updates on Zoom programs.

The library is expected to remain open for the majority of the project. Collections may be temporarily moved to new locations in the library. For more information on changes, check with librarians for assistance.

“Curbside delivery will be available. If you want items delivered to your car, please call the library at 508-885-7513, ext. 1 for adults and ext. 2 for children’s,” the library statement read.

To learn more about library programs and Zoom offerings, visit www.spencerpubliclibrary.org.

Local nonprofit seeks continued community support

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

BROOKFIELD — The leadership team of S.O.N.G., Inc. (Supporting Orphans Nationally and Globally) is seeking continued community assistance in its quest to help children in need.

During a program scheduled last month at Sacred Heart Church in West Brookfield, a presentation was arranged to share the organization’s ongoing projects supporting children around the globe. These include efforts to assist kids orphaned by the conflict in Ukraine, as well as the organization’s S.O.S. Pakistan Mission.

S.O.N.G.’s volunteer program coordinator from Pakistan, Rafay Joseph, was slated to serve as the event’s guest speaker.

S.O.N.G., Inc., a Brookfield-based nonprofit organization run exclusively by volunteers, has provided support for orphaned children since 1999. Residents from throughout the region and the nation continue to show their support for the organization each year.

Since the start of the war in Ukraine, S.O.N.G. founder Wally Connor has worked with the Aerial Recovery Group to rescue Ukrainian children fleeing war-ravaged cities.

During Connor’s first trip to the Poland-Ukraine border in early 2022, his organization and other volunteers helped the Aerial Recovery Group rescue 841 orphaned children, 3,988 refugees, and 89 animals. Many of the victims were living in camps after fleeing their country, and they were supported by international volunteers offering food, clothes, and medical care.

Looking ahead, local residents are invited to attend fundraisers and other events throughout the year that help S.O.N.G. leaders support as many children as possible.

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Local fire departments receive funding for safety equipment

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — The Spencer and Leicester Fire Departments received state grant funding that will cover the purchases of safety equipment.

The Spencer Fire Department received \$19,000 in grant funding from the state’s Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, as well as the Department of Fire Services (DFS).

The money will be used to purchase air bags, vehicle stabilization struts, and two pieces of extrication equipment.

“Thank you to the Commonwealth for allowing us to apply for and funding this grant,” read a statement released by the SFD.

Grant funding is supplied by the state’s Fiscal Year 2025 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant Program. In the wake of the brush fire outbreak across Massachusetts last fall, state officials continue to focus on securing added funding for municipal fire departments.

“With each new challenge, the fire service in Massachusetts demonstrates its ability to adapt, overcome, and continue providing the excellent level of services that the citizens of the Commonwealth have come to expect,” read a letter issued to municipal fire leaders by Gov. Maura Healey. “Please know how thankful I am for this, and how grateful I am to be able to provide your department with this important equipment. The Healey-Driscoll Administration is committed to supporting local fire departments.”

This past October and November, Spencer Fire Chief Robert Parsons and his team not only responded to brush fires in local communities, but also in towns as far away as Holden and Monson. Due to an extended regional autumn drought, local firefighters logged hundreds of miles to pro-

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North Pond Ice-Out Contest underway!

BROOKFIELD — As winter lingers, anticipation for spring grows, and with it comes the 2025 North Pond Ice-Out Contest, hosted by the Quaboag Quacumquasit Lake Association (QQLA). It’s time to have a little bit of fun at nature’s expense and predict when you think the ice will melt enough to send Norpondapus, the QQLA lake monster, back into North Pond.

After a couple of false starts in previous years due to lack of ice, QQLA’s legendary Norpondapus has finally taken its place on the frozen surface of North Pond near the Quaboag boat ramp. When the ice weakens enough for the lake mon-

ster to break through, its fall will trigger a timing mechanism that will officially mark the “ice-out” moment—and determine the contest’s winners.

The general public is invited to predict the exact date and time when Norpondapus will make its descent. The contestant whose guess is closest—without exceeding the actual recorded time—will claim first place, winning 30 percent of the proceeds. Additional prizes will be awarded to second and third place winners, earning 20 and 10 percent of proceeds, respectively. Prizes will grow depending on the number of entrants. The remaining 40 percent of proceeds

will benefit the Quaboag Quacumquasit Lake Association’s mission of preserving and protecting the quality of the two lakes (better known as North and South Ponds) and the surrounding watershed through the promotion of responsible, effective, environmental policies.

Entries must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. on Feb. 13. The official ice-out period runs from Feb. 15 to April 13, and only one ticket is available for each unique 15-minute time interval. Each guess costs \$5 per interval, and there is no limit to the number of guesses a participant can purchase.

To enter, participants can visit [qqla.org/ice-](http://qqla.org/ice-out)

out to select their chosen date and time. After

Turn To **ICE-OUT** page **A14**



Courtesy

The deadline to submit a guess in the QQLA North Pond Ice-Out Contest is Feb. 13.

Bay Path Nursing students celebrate 100 days of school

CHARLTON — “Thank you for celebrating 100 days in nursing school!” shared Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, Academy Director to the PN Class of 2025.

The Nursing Students who are members of Team Fairlawn were on campus with Professor Angela McGrath and celebrated the 100th day of nursing school in their own unique way.

To commemorate the event, Professor McGrath brought healthy snacks, distributed flowers, and all posed with a 100th day sign.

“Celebrating the 100th day is celebrating the learning and growing and incorporating some fun,” said Bolandrina. “Nursing school is busy, life is busy, but our nursing students enjoy the build up to this day, and it is amazing to see their progress over the preceding months.”

Originally, the academic premise behind the 100th day is to integrate learning to count with fun activities that encourage young children to explore their environment while applying what they’ve learned in the classroom. This is the first time that the Practical Nursing Academy celebrated the 100th day with the adult learners.

Courtesy

Photo shows members of Team Fairlawn from left front row Giselle Rosario of Southbridge, Flory Muleka of Worcester, Katelyn Smith of Charlton, and Donita Bytyqi of Rutland. Standing from left, Nadeige Octavius of Millbury, Ferdinand Lukadi of Framingham, Anakeesha Gray of Worcester, Ashley Rincon of Southbridge, and Professor McGrath.

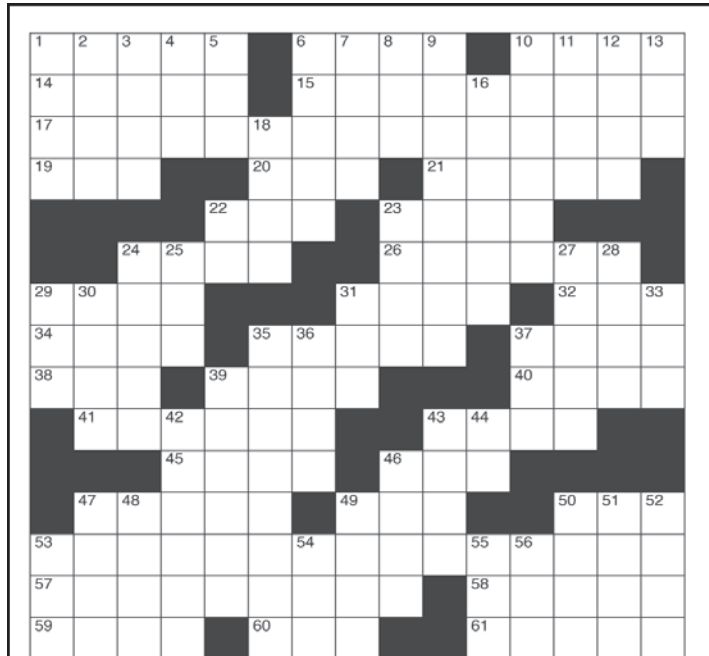


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CLUES ACROSS

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. “The Las Vegas of the East” | 37. Beige |
| 6. Cook | 38. Mental sharpness |
| 10. Manning and Wallach are two | 39. Valley |
| 14. Chameleon | 40. Alcyone’s husband |
| 15. A way to fill up | 41. A place to gamble |
| 17. What MLBers hope to play in | 43. Flightless Australian birds |
| 19. Unhappy | 45. Call out somebody’s name over a P.A. system |
| 20. Indefinite period of time | 46. US spy group |
| 21. Excites | 47. Pancakes from buckwheat flour |
| 22. Males | 49. Swiss river |
| 23. Mongol leader Genghis | 50. Disfigure |
| 24. Turfs | 53. Have surgery |
| 26. Soda comes in them | 57. Formal withdrawal |
| 29. Not nice | 58. Early English council |
| 31. Professional organization | 59. Square measures |
| 32. Part of a play | 60. 2,000 lbs. |
| 34. Sea eagle | 61. Siskel and __, critics in “Sicario” |
| 35. Emily Blunt’s character in “Sicario” | |

CLUES DOWN

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Mouths | 28. Predict the future |
| 2. Buffalo | 29. Cage for trained hawks |
| 3. You plug it in | 30. Musician Clapton |
| 4. Each | 31. Frozen water |
| 5. Largest English dictionary (abbr.) | 33. Semi-formal men’s evening attire |
| 6. King of Thebes | 35. Most worn |
| 7. English name meaning “mythical hunter” | 36. Common soap ingredient |
| 8. Indicates near | 37. Former EU monetary unit |
| 9. More herbaceous | 39. Provisions |
| 10. Gas-powered cars need one | 42. Book parts |
| 11. Dishonest individual | 43. Republic of Ireland |
| 12. Systems, doctrines, theories | 44. Partner to “Pa” |
| 13. The woman | 46. Sammy __, songwriter |
| 16. The whole of one’s holdings | 47. Dutch colonist |
| 18. Witnesses | 48. Clare Booth __, American writer |
| 22. Doctor | 49. Solar disk in Egyptian mythology |
| 23. Paul __, Swiss painter | 50. Minute arachnid |
| 24. Kids look for him on December 24 | 51. From a distance |
| 25. Single | 52. Monthly apartment cost |
| 27. Competitions | 53. Young women’s association |
| | 54. Tourist destination |
| | 55. “Woman” in Ojibwe language |
| | 56. Pointed end of a pen |

PUZZLE SOLUTION

L	R	E	B	E		N	O	L		S	E	H	V	
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S	I	L	E		F	E	H	C		O	V	C	V	W

SENIORS NAMED TO BAY PATH HONOR ROLL

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

High Honors
 Kaelen James Anderson, Minos Anifantis, Yheraldine Mercedes Baez, Claire Elizabeth Beaudreau, Amberlyn Avon Brindle, Jameson Patrick Burke, Joshua Michael Chumsae, Catherine Anne Comeau, Mikayla Lynn Crocker, Philippe Mote Santiago Dasilva, Madison Rose Dolan, Jaden James Fall, Keegan Gary Pike Hall, Valerie Ana Hilner, McKayla Rae Hoel, Ave Lillie Iozzo, Kayah Jadczyk, Samantha Marlene Landgren, Nathan William Lashua, Logan Charles Letourneau, Eva Noel Lombardi, James Danlan MacConnell, Lillian Virginia Maglich, Joseph Charles Mancini, Ayla Milagros McGrail, Emma Grace McLaughlin, Calle Jean Merchant, Jacob John Joseph Morello, Julian Ryan Mucci, Ashlyn Joy Olejniczak, Maya Selena Ortiz, Alaina Maria Pafume, Dominic Antonio Paldino, Bruna Fagundes Freitas Paula, Willis James Perreault, Dylan Michael Polinski, Eva Amara Powers, Melany Rose Rebeiro, Kaylie Anna Richard, Lilianna Cassandra Rockwood, Savannah Rose Steiner, Cassandra Alyson Tinsley, Manaali Durgesh Vaidya, Vincent William Van Dam, Amelia Claire White

Honors
 Kortnie Frances Adams, Nicholas Raymond Adler, Rima Ahmed Qays Al-Dulamimi, Werique Gabriel Da Silva Alves, Connor Michael Belanger, Jessica Claire Benoit, Cherise Elaine Berthiaume, Joshua William Ricardo Blackwell, Briea Anmmarie Bogar, Kendall Lynn Bond, Lake Sayge Boucher, Camden Christian Bousquet, Kaiden Conner Brochu, Kendra Nicole Brooks, Jason Robert Brum, Brea Adriane Brunelle-Jacoby, Gianna Mary Burbank, Adrianna Marie Burdick, Julia Loralee Burgos, Alivia Tiara Marie Cannon, Aidan Patrick Carpenter, Robert Edward Casati, Matthew Robert Chatterton, Nathan Richmond Clemence, Makayla Therese Collazo, Olivia Rose Collins, Noah Jonathon Cournoyer, Isabelle Ann Crump, Mariah Lynne Cutroni, Adison Lenna Daoust, Ryan Charles Dawson, Jenna Marie Defosse, Angelina Sophia Degon, Jasai Manuel Diaz, Rori Jean Rockwell Donohoe, Carly James Donohue, Jared Peter Dubovick, Braelyn Elizabeth Dunn, Emma Faith Marie Dwyer, Logan Shawn Edwards, Ari Joseph Erko, Kayla Marie Evans, Sophia Anna Falconer, Claire Patricia Farrar, Midrose Davilena Freeman, Conor Fergal Gadbois, Erin Elizabeth Gallant, Corey Michael Gaulin, Hailee Lynne Gelinis, Reyna Dianelys Gonzalez, John Waring Gordon, Noah Zachary Goulet, Alicia Marie Graveson, Devan Ryan Grensavitich, Matthew David Guerin, Lexie Rose Harris, Savannah Lee Harrison, Charlotte Elizabeth Hast, Joshua Drew Hemingway, Bryce James Hutchinson, Molly Ruth Isaacs, Elena Gabriela Jerez, Jacob Matthew Johnson, Jacob Jaiden Jurado, Dylan Edward Kasprzycki, Shane Kempkise, Emma Rose Knott, Austin Devin Kravitz, Samuel Keith Lamont, Katherine Ruth Landgren, Hayden Sivert Larson, Emma Olivia Leclair, Benjamin Ryan Lombardi, Miranda Rose Magalhaes, Brady Francis Marcoux, Corbin James Marcustre, Kyle Francis Mazur, Troy Clayton McCaffrey, Kailyn Elizabeth McHugh, Isabel Constance McLam, Jed Dean McManus, Paul Joseph McManus, Jersey Alecea Mejias, Ava Patricia Millette, Cheyene Elizabeth Monsen, Zachary Lee Moody, Blakey James Morse, Sullivan Joseph Brave Bear Morse, Elyce Chamberlyn Mort, Camron John Mortell, Robert Lawrence Mousseau, Ava Reese Murray, Yahir Jose Negron Claudio, Andy Manuel Nieves, Kaylieh Elizabeth Norris, Matthew Christopher Nowak, Dale William Nussey, Morgan Elizabeth O'Malley, Julia Carolyn Osche, Dakota Mathew Ouellette, Jocelyn Amylia Patterson, Catherine Emily Pavone, Raegan Lydia Perreault, Naomi Rose Peterson, Brad Francis Guy Piekarczyk, Ryan Donald Plante, Gabriel Souza Prado, Nicholas Scott Reardon, Casey Abigail Renaud, Lexiana Marie Resto-Nichols, Luzmarianna Jacsel Rodriguez Cirino, Lizmarie Taiz Rodriguez-Soto, Joseph Anthony Roman, Jennalee Alexis Rousseau, Shairy Karielis Ruibal-Rios, John Cameron Rutter, Brayden Roland Ryan, Jeisery Santiago Martinez, Nash Brennan Sicari-Swinimer, Ed Simon, Raymond David St. Francis, Zaydyn John Streeter-Wornham, Zoeybeth Jane Streeter-Wornham, John Gustavo Sullivan, Kathryn Alayna Szretter, Aiden Le Tat, Madison Riley Teal, John Phillip Tighe, Hailie Calais Sampson Tod, Brady Logan Tremblay, Matthew Lee Twombly, Colin Job Vaillancourt, Kevin Yail Vazquez-Rivera, Angelica Vega, Nayelix Marie Vega, Adrian Joseph Vitkos, Alison Elyse Welton, Dayzyah Jahnnay Wintzel Neely, Cayden James Young

Principal's List
 Anna Marie Aboe, Peter James Barbale, Noah Troy Brown, Teagan Daniel Carey, Johnathon Cameron Carter, Jason John Checka, Ryan Michael Christiano, Hunter Kevin Davis, Gabriella Ivy Dube, Ian Donald Farber, Anthony Alexander Gonzalez, Evan Paul Gunnard, Ella Jade Houle, Skylar Jeannette Johnson-Mello, Justin Daniel Kelly, Felix Jose Lopez, Evan Jason Lotti, Aiden Michael McCarthy, Isabella Sofia Pabon, Isabella Britni Pettinelli, Wojciech Alexander Plewa, Nevin Vega Rivera, Alyssa Marie Santos, Dominic Bradley Schoff, Benjamin Lucas Scobie, Aysel Silva Nieves, Mackenzie Marie Widen, Brady Charles Wisniewski

SPENCER ALMANAC

— REAL ESTATE —

BROOKFIELD
None

EAST BROOKFIELD
None

LEICESTER
\$310,000, 23 Sunset Dr, Giard, Jane M, to Giard, Nicole L.

NORTH BROOKFIELD
\$675,000, 91 Shore Rd, Morrissey Mary B Est, and Morrissey Jr, Alfred P, to Paquette, Benjamin M, and Paquette, Lynn A.

SPENCER
\$138,200, 57 Jolicoeur Ave, Carmel, Richard J, to John Hoff Properties LLC.

WARREN
\$617,500, 196 Dunham Rd, Leger Ft, and Leger, Deborah B, to Fountain & Sons Constructi.

WEST BROOKFIELD
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BUSINESS MANAGER
 RYAN CORNEAU
 860-928-1818 EXT. 102
 ryan@salmonpress.news

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR
 JIM DiNICOLA
 508-764-6102
 jim@stonebridgepress.news

EDITOR
 BRENDAN BERUBE
 508-909-4106
 news@stonebridgepress.news

PRODUCTION MANAGER
 JULIE CLARKE
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 julie@villagenewspapers.com

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QCC nursing students achieve high success rate on licensure exam

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College recently confirmed that in 2024, graduates from the Associate of Science in Nurse Education pro-

gram and the Practical Nursing Certificate program achieved close to a 100 percent pass rate on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), a nationally

recognized exam required to become a registered nurse (RN) and licensed practical nurse (LPN). “Our faculty members are incredibly dedicat-

ed and continually align course learning outcomes with the resources we provide, ensuring that students benefit from all available supports,” said Pat Schmohl, dean of the School of Healthcare.

“Our faculty are multi-cultural and their diversity is reflective of our student population. We have students from different countries, cultures and various socio-economic statuses, as well as single parents and many English language learners,” said Yoder.

Of the 80 Practical Nursing graduates who took the NCLEX in 2024, 97.5% passed. Of the 132 graduates from the ADN program, 97% passed the NCLEX.

“These are highly motivated students who are actively seeking to improve their lives by entering this profession,” said Chair of Nurse Education Patricia Creelman. “Additionally, the clinical agency partners who collaborate with the program provide comprehensive clinical learning opportunities for students at all levels of our educational program.”

Creelman noted that QCC’s up-to-date educational equipment and individualized student support helped contribute to students’ academic and licensure achievements. “All of the additional services offered through the college including the food pantry, social service referrals, tutoring and counseling are very important to the students’ success,” said Yoder.

Graduates who become LPNs can now work in settings such as nursing homes, ambulatory care centers, mental health facilities, as well as in-home care and some hospitals. Graduates who become RNs can work in many of the same facilities however, they are more frequently hired into hospital settings.

There is still a shortage of nurses in Massachusetts, Yoder continued. “Understaffing and burnout have caused undo stress on the nurses, causing them to exit the workforce or seek jobs in different areas of health-care,” she said, adding that it’s critical to support these students who are vital to the state’s health-care system.

PeoplesBank, Cornerstone Bank complete merger of holding companies

WORCESTER — PeoplesBank is opening two new banking centers in February.

PeoplesBank and Cornerstone Bank have announced that they have completed the merger of their holding companies and will now operate under PeoplesBankcorp, MHC, as of Jan. 31. The holding company will have over \$6 billion in assets. However, PeoplesBank and Cornerstone Bank will continue to operate independently under their own names and brands, and there will be no changes from a customer perspective. Both banks are adding new branches. Cornerstone Bank added a new branch in 2024 and expects to add another in the second quarter of 2025.

PeoplesBank, “and asset size matters for scalability. This new relationship means that with our mutual charter, we will realize a new ability to efficiently compete, as well as attract and retain the highest-quality associates, while also continuing to invest in our communities.”

“This merger was always about the people—not only our employees but also the community,” explained Todd Tallman, CEO of Cornerstone Bank. “It provides an immense opportunity to invest in people, communities, technology, and, of course, growth.”

With the completion of the merger, Thomas Senecal remains CEO and Chairman, Todd Tallman has become President, and Brian Canina has become the Chief Operating Officer of PeoplesBankcorp, MHC, and will remain President of PeoplesBank.

Both institutions benefit from the combined financial strength of two strong community banks coming together to create one of the largest mutual multi-bank holding companies in the Northeast. PeoplesBank, serving western Massachusetts and northern Connecticut, and Cornerstone Bank, serving central Massachusetts, will each continue their normal operations with no disruption to customers. Both banks’ account information, branch banking, and digital access remain the same.

Law enforcement officials lobby for more leeway in detaining non-citizens

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — As the new bi-annual legislative session begins for Massachusetts lawmakers, local officials are promoting a bill meant to improve public safety.

Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis and Plymouth County Sheriff Joseph McDonald, Jr. have expressed their support of the proposed legislation, which calls for a 36-hour buffer for their departments and other law enforcement agencies to hold non-citizens with ICE detainers.

Bill HD.4221, An Act to promote and protect safety in the Commonwealth, seeks to enhance cooperation among state court officers, local and state law enforcement, and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE).

Specifically, the bill addresses a loophole in state public safety laws that arose from the 2017 Lunn v. Commonwealth ruling, officials said. This loophole prevents law enforcement officials from holding non-citizens with ICE detainers beyond certain timeframes, allowing these individuals to walk free after committing serious crimes, supporters of the bill said.

As part of its mission to identify removable non-citizens, ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) lodges immigration detainers against non-citizens who have been arrested for criminal activity and taken into custody by state or local law enforcement. An immigration detainer is a request from ICE to state or local law enforcement agencies to notify ICE as early as possible before a removable non-citizen is released from their custody.

In 2017, ICE detainers were challenged in the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court (SJC). As a result, the SJC deferred to the legislature to create guidelines for local and state law enforcement agencies to follow when complying with immigration detainers.

After a failed attempt by the Baker Administration to pass legislation addressing the ruling, the topic has since fallen dormant.

“With the Massachusetts SJC ruling almost eight years ago that the legislature should create guidelines, it is beyond time for us to enact laws that allow local and state agencies to detain those here illegally and charged with additional crimes,” said State Sen. Peter Durant (R-Spencer). “These new laws will improve public safety by allowing time for ICE to remove people who are increasingly victimizing others, including children, while illegally in the United States.”

In October 2024, Evangelidis issued a statement highlighting an increase in crimes committed by non-citizens.

“The number of individuals with ICE detainers coming through our facility has more than doubled since 2021,” Evangelidis said. “These individuals have committed serious crimes, including murder, rape, drug trafficking, and more. This bill will ensure that my staff can utilize all available tools to protect the safety of Massachusetts residents.”

According to ICE officials, detainers focus enforcement resources on removable non-citizens who are already in custody for criminal activity.

Since detainers result in the direct transfer of a non-citizen from state or local custody to ERO custody, they also minimize the potential that an individual will re-offend, officials said.

Supporters of the bill encourage Massachusetts residents to request that their legislators advocate for the passage of the bill. Residents can find their legislators’ contact information by visiting www.MALegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator.



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HASTON LIBRARY ANNOUNCES FEBRUARY PROGRAMS

BY KEVIN FLANDERS STAFF WRITER

NORTH BROOKFIELD — The Haston Free Public Library team invites guests of all ages to enjoy popular activities and new programs this month.

Craft Night for Adults returns on Thursday, Feb. 13, at 6 p.m. Guests will take part in painting activities. Please register for this event in advance by contacting the library by phone or email.

The library's Book Discussion Group will next meet on Feb. 25 at 7 p.m. This month's featured book is "The Revolutionary: Samuel Adams," written by Stacy Schiff.

The library's Movie Discussion Group will next meet on Feb. 27 at 6 p.m. Group members will watch "Me Before You," a 2016 film.

Guests are also invited to check out a series of free watercolor classes for beginners. The first session is slated for Thursday, Feb. 27, from 5-7 p.m. Award-winning watercolor artist Debbie Roberts Kirk will offer this workshop to introduce participants to the techniques and enjoyment of the process.

Class size is limited for the watercolor program; please register by contacting the library. Additional sessions will take place on March 6 and March 13.

Several February story-time programs will be offered to youngsters on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. Winter-themed books will be paired with craft activities covering such topics as window hearts, valentine hand-prints, DIY bird feeders, and freeform art.

Additionally, the library will host Community Connections programming for kids on Feb. 5 and Feb. 12. Both sessions will begin at 10 a.m. Explore reading, crafts, and play activities with your child.

Contact the library for information on age groups for each session.

The library continues to host the Children's Art Club on the first and third Monday of each month. All lessons last from 4-5 p.m.

The library's Lego Club takes place every Thursday at 4 p.m.

The library's book sale will take place from Feb. 18 through March 4. Officials are currently accepting donations for the upcoming sale. Please contact the library for more information about how to get involved.

Finally, library officials invite residents to stop in and welcome new Director Lia Tulip. "I love the idea of creating a space where everyone feels welcome and supported. This feels like a great opportunity to make a difference in a place I truly care about," read a statement released by Tulip.

The library will be closed on Monday, Feb. 17, in observance of Presidents Day.

For more information about upcoming library events, or to register for an activity, call 508-867-0208. You may also send an email to: hastonfreepubliclibrary@gmail.com.

The library is located at 161 North Main St.

Worcester Polytechnic Institute announces Fall 2024 Dean's List

WORCESTER — A total of 2,393 undergraduate students at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) were named to the university's fall 2024 Dean's List. The criteria for the WPI Dean's List differ from that of most other universities as WPI does not compute a grade point average (GPA). Instead, WPI students are named to the Dean's List based on the amount of work completed at the A level in courses and hands-on projects.

"WPI's academic programs are rigorous and require a level of independence beyond what is required in traditional courses. WPI students work on real-world, open-ended problems on campus and in communities around the globe. Far from being simple academic exercises, the projects students complete have genuine and lasting impacts in our partner communities," said Provost Andrew Sears. "Some of this nation's best and brightest students come to WPI to study engineering, science, business, and the humanities. Those named to the Dean's List have excelled in all of their work, and we are exceptionally

proud of these outstanding students."

The following students were named to the Dean's List for Fall 2024:

Kane Barnes of East Brookfield, class of 2027, majoring in Mechanical Engineering

Jacob Bergeron of Spencer, class of 2026, majoring in Computer Science and Data Science

Brendan Halloran of Spencer, class of 2025, majoring in Biology and Biotechnology

Madison Laflamme of Brookfield, class of 2026, majoring in Mechanical Engineering

Grace McGovern of West Brookfield, class of 2026, majoring in Business

William Panepinto of Leicester, class of 2028, majoring in Civil Engineering

James Sweeney of Leicester, class of 2028, majoring in Chemical Engineering

About Worcester Polytechnic Institute

WPI is a top-tier STEM-focused research university and a recognized pioneer and global leader in proj-

ect-based learning. Founded in 1865 on the principle that students learn most effectively by applying the theory learned in the classroom to the practice of solving real-world problems, WPI's continued mission is to transform lives, turn knowledge into action to confront global challenges, and revolutionize STEM through distinctive and inclusive education, projects, and research. WPI's project-based curriculum engages undergraduates in solving important scientific, technological, and societal problems throughout their education and at more than 50 project centers around the world. Today WPI offers more than 70 bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs across 18 academic departments in science, engineering, technology, business, the social sciences, and the humanities and arts. To help address ongoing challenges, improve lives, and help create a more sustainable world, WPI faculty and students pursue groundbreaking research in such areas as the life sciences, smart technologies, materials and manufacturing, and global initiatives.

Anna Maria College announces Dean's List

PAXTON — Anna Maria College recently announced academic honors for students named to the Dean's List for Fall 2024 Semester. Anna Maria College awards Dean's List recognition to students enrolled in a full-time undergraduate day program in good standing who have attained in the previous semester a GPA of 3.5 with no grade lower than "B" for a minimum of four courses.

The following Massachusetts students achieved Dean's List:

Rafael Albino	Auburn
Ayva Borelli	Auburn
Nathan Cook	Auburn
Aleigha Martinsen	Auburn
Paige Stewart	Auburn
Emily Goodwin	Blackstone
Donovan Turner	Blackstone
Ivy Ballou	Charlton
Megan Burdett	Charlton
Jenna Johnson	Charlton
Chloe Lanier	Charlton
Sarah Happy	Douglas
Lucas Miglionico	Dudley
Ethan McInerney	Grafton
Megan Wajer	Grafton
Mae McGowan	Leicester
Sage Charpentier	Leominster
Tyler Godin	Leominster
Julianna Lavoie	Leominster
Emily Crowther	Linwood
Lia Mucera	Milford
Angelina Botelho	Fritze North Brookfield
Evan Calderone	North Grafton
Lauren Decoteau	Northbridge
Macy Hutchinson	Oxford
Erika Melendez	Southbridge

Manuel Abraham Toribio Spencer

Joseph Barbato Spencer
Marissa Randall Spencer
Patricia Rwandarugari Asimwe Spencer

Drew Gage Sterling
Jenelle Remy Sterling
Brooke Macey Sturbridge
Heather Monroe Sturbridge
Naomi Moura Sturbridge
Thomas Vanasse Sturbridge
Michael Mosher Templeton

Sophia Mone Uxbridge
Madison Tousignant Uxbridge
Kayla Berthiaume Webster
Kayla Brown Webster
Nyia Gonzalez Webster
Carly Impey Webster
Becky Ramirez Webster
Tyler Withers West Brookfield

James Donnelly Whitinsville
Sehila Ryerson Worcester
Tiffany Salazar Worcester
Karisya Suarez Worcester
Matthew Sullivan Worcester
Justin Taylor Worcester
Patrick Tineo Ruiz Worcester
Melannie Valdes Worcester
Seth Williams Worcester

About Anna Maria College
Founded in 1946 and located in Paxton, Massachusetts, Anna Maria College is a private, co-educational institution inspired by the ideals of the Sisters of Saint Anne. We prepare our students to become ethical leaders by combining a values-based, service-focused education with strong function-

al knowledge and the skills necessary to address the rapidly changing needs of their world. Anna Maria delivers undergraduate and graduate degrees along with certificate programs on campus and online. For more information, visit www.annamaria.edu

West Brookfield Historical Commission announces 2025 scholarship

WEST BROOKFIELD — The West Brookfield Historical Commission is pleased to announce its 2025, 14th annual scholarship in the amount of \$2,000. Qualified students must reside in West Brookfield and may attend Quaboag Regional High School, or be school-choice students, home schooled students, and independent school students.

This award is made possible through the J. Irving and Jane L. England Charitable Trust.

Application criteria:

The students must be planning to attend either a four-year college/university program or a two-year college with the intent to a transfer to a four-year college. The Commission will show preference to study plans with concentration on History and History-related areas. Major or minors may include Political Science, Social Studies, Anthropology, Archaeology, Historical Preservation, Museum Studies, and Education in any of these related fields.

Applicants must submit a brief essay based on one of the Notable Persons or Significant Places listed on the application. All necessary information will be found on the West Brookfield Historical Commission website. <http://westbrookfield.org>
Essays are due no later than April 11.

email: info@westbrookfield.org
Mail:
West Brookfield Historical Commission, PO Box 372, W. Brookfield, MA 01585.

The application and details can be found on the Historical Commission Web site, <http://westbrookfield.org>.

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Assumption students named to Dean's List

WORCESTER — Assumption University has announced those who have been named to the University's Dean's List for the fall 2024 semester. Students named to the Dean's List must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 for a five-class, 15-credit semester to be included on the prestigious list, which is announced at the completion of the fall and spring semesters.

- Kya Birtz of Leicester, Class of 2026
- Anne Bisson Ingersoll of West Brookfield, Class of 2026
- Breana Escobar of Rochdale, Class of 2026
- Madeline Johnson of West Brookfield, Class of 2025
- Maria Kapoukranidis of Leicester, Class of 2026
- Morgan Smith of Leicester, Class of 2025

Assumption University, founded in 1904 by the Augustinians of the Assumption, is a premier New England University for high-quality education, integrating career preparation and education of the whole person, drawing upon the best in the rich and centuries-long tradition of Catholic higher education. Assumption's graduates are known for their intellectual seriousness, thoughtful citizenship, and dedication to the common good. Located in Worcester, Massachusetts, Assumption has undergone a series of major advancements since transitioning to a university, including new academic buildings, degree programs, and athletic facilities for our NCAA Division II student athlete population. The University offers 37 majors and 50 minors in the liberal arts, sciences, business, nursing, and professional studies, and other areas, as well as graduate degrees and professional credentials. For more information about Assumption University, please visit www.assumption.edu.

Local students achieve Dean's List at TCNJ

EWING, N.J. — Abigail Bouchard of West Brookfield has earned the esteemed honor of placement on the Dean's List at The College of New Jersey for the fall 2024 semester. To achieve this honor, a student must carry 12 or more credits that semester and earn a 3.5 (or above) grade point average:

Founded in 1855 as the New Jersey State Normal School, TCNJ delivers an exceptionally high-quality education, in a collaborative and supportive environment. The college has the ninth highest four-year graduation rate among all public colleges and universities. The college is situated on 289 tree-lined acres in suburban Ewing Township, New Jersey, in close proximity to both New York City and Philadelphia. A strong liberal arts core forms the foundation for a wealth of degree programs offered through the college's eight schools: Arts and Communication; Business; Education; Engineering; Graduate, Global, and Online Education; Humanities and Social Sciences; Nursing and Health Sciences; and Science.

Endicott College announces local Dean's List students

BEVERLY — Endicott College, the first college in the U.S. to require internships of its students, is pleased to announce its Fall 2024 Dean's List students. In order to qualify for the Dean's List, a student must obtain a minimum grade point average of 3.5, receive no letter grade below "C," have no withdrawal grades, and be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits for the semester.

W. Brookfield
Lily Potvin, Education

Endicott College offers doctorate, master's, bachelor's, and associate degree programs at its campus on the scenic coast of Beverly, with additional sites online and at U.S. and international locations. Endicott remains true to its founding principle of integrating professional and liberal arts education with internship opportunities across disciplines. Through the Endicott Experiential Edge, students gain unparalleled hands-on learning experiences that prepare them for career success and lifelong personal growth. For more, visit endicott.edu.

The following students have met these requirements:

N. Brookfield
Riley Rischitelli, Nursing

Rochdale
Annalisa Hair, Nursing

Nomination papers available in North Brookfield

NORTH BROOKFIELD — The Town Clerk reminds residents that nomination papers are available for the 2025 Annual Town Election.

"While everyone spends so much time thinking about those who represent us in Boston and Washington, it is those who represent us at the local level who have the biggest impact on our everyday lives," read a statement released by Town Clerk Tara Hayes.

The offices that will be on the ballot this year include Selectmen, Moderator, Town Clerk, School Committee, Water Commissioner, Board of Assessors, Board of Health, Cemetery Commissioner, Library Trustees, Planning Board, and Constables.

To learn more about these positions and their functions within the community, contact the Town Clerk's office.

"If you have ever thought of trying to make a difference in our town, we encourage you to explore these seats and learn what is involved," Hayes added.

Springfield College recognizes Dean's List students

SPRINGFIELD — Springfield College Recognizes Dean's List Students for the 2024 Fall Semester.

Springfield College has named Grace Bujak from Leicester to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Bujak has a primary major of Exercise Science / Applied ES.

Springfield College has named Avianna Gregoire from Spencer to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Gregoire has a primary major of Health Science / Pre-PA.

Springfield College has named Peyton Knott from Leicester to the dean's list for academic excellence for

the 2024 fall semester. Knott has a primary major of Exercise Science / Applied ES.

Springfield College has named Isabelle Russell from W. Brookfield to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Russell has a primary major of Health Science / Pre-PT.

Springfield College has named Margaret Stevens from W. Brookfield to the dean's list for academic excellence for the 2024 fall semester. Stevens has a primary major of Pre-Prof Athletic Training.

Springfield College has named Julianna Torres from Rochdale to the dean's list for academic excel-

lence for the 2024 fall semester. Torres has a primary major of Health Science / Pre-PA.

The criteria for selection to the Dean's List are as follows: The student must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded coursework for the term, exclusive of "P" grades. The student must not have any incompletes or missing grades in the designated term. The student must have a minimum semester grade average of 3.500 for the term. Student must not have been barred from Dean's List due to disciplinary action.

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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
 PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
 EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Slow down—technology is stealing your time

We live in a time where technology promises to make life easier, yet somehow, we have less time than ever. Every advancement, faster Internet, instant messaging, smart devices, claims to free up space in our schedules, but instead, we're drowning in notifications, endless emails, and a to-do list that never seems to go away. Life has become a constant cycle of "work, work, work," and the simplicity many of us grew up with feels like a distant memory.

Think about it: technology was supposed to cut down on the time we spend working. Instead of making things easier, it has made us always available, always connected, always doing something. The lines between work and personal time are blurred, and instead of freeing us up to enjoy life, our devices keep us tethered to obligations. We're answering emails at dinner, checking texts before bed, and scrolling through social media when we could be outside, catching up with friends, or just doing nothing for a change.

Somehow, we've been tricked into believing that productivity equals worth, that every spare moment should be filled with checking off tasks. Half the time we spend responding to "urgent" messages, organizing digital clutter, or trying to keep up with the latest trends is time wasted. The hours we lose staring at screens, overthinking schedules, and squeezing in one more thing could be spent actually living.

Remember when life was simpler? When fun wasn't something we had to "schedule," but something that just happened? As kids, we didn't check emails or try to multitask joy. We just had fun riding bikes, playing outside, having actual conversations without checking our phones every five minutes.

It's time to reclaim some of that simplicity. Give yourself permission to step away. Carve out time not just to cross things off your to-do list, but to breathe, to laugh, to enjoy. Be deliberate about setting boundaries with work and technology. Put the phone down. Close the laptop. Go outside. Call a friend instead of sending a text. Spend an afternoon doing something just because it makes you happy.

Life isn't just about being productive. It's about being present. The world won't fall apart if you take a break. And when you do, you might just realize how much time you've been wasting trying to keep up with a pace that was never meant to be sustainable in the first place.

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.

VIEWPOINT

OPINION AND COMMENTARY FROM SPENCER, LEICESTER AND THE BROOKFIELDS



Courtesy

The David Prouty High School community recently welcomed the latest National Honor Society inductees. "Congratulations to our newest inductees to the National Honor Society. On behalf of all of us at David Prouty High School, we are proud of your hard work and dedication to scholarship, service, leadership, and character," read a statement released by Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District leaders.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

On the cusp of buyer's remorse

To the Editor:

Congrats to the Great Pumpkin on accomplishing the initiation of more lawsuits pushing back as he blunders through more unconstitutional territory than any of his predecessors. It turns out that he defines draining the swamp as doing all that he can to ignore the constitution.

I wonder if any of his advisors are smart enough to explain how amending the constitution works? Considering how the SCOTUS refused to allow a state to omit him from their ballot, based upon section #3 of the 14th Amendment, saying it was the job of congress. What the amendment says is that it takes a two thirds vote of each house to remove the ban on his holding federal office. I guess I missed when that happened.

The parade of unqualified appointments marches on, the only requirement being loyalty to the mob boss. In a rational world, someone not allowed to run a business, casino or charity in New York, would not only not be allowed to run the country, but could not get a security clearance.

When he finishes taking down as many good and beneficial programs as he can, I hope his cult sticks with putting another \$4 trillion tax cut

for millionaires on your credit card. Musk's hundreds of millions in influence purchasing, will likely make him world's first Trillionaire. When meals on wheels, and other federal funded benefits go away with negotiating drug pricing and caps on insulin, I feel bad for those of us who warned you and voted against him. For those who voted for him or did not vote, this is karma.

One promise he kept is getting ICE fired up to act, although the part about just targeting criminals, has not only expanded to almost all foreign looking people. That has even included rounding up southwestern Native Americans. We appear to have skipped over egg pricing and Ukraine peace, and jumped right into cutting funding for beneficial programs like ending polio and TB, feeding seniors and children of limited means, heat assistance, in the dead of winter, purging federal workers. Essentially, all these cuts, even if you fired every federal worker would only cover half the tax cuts. Since Trump came into Elon's life, his net worth expanded tenfold from \$50 billion to \$500 billion.

If this is your concept of making America great, enjoy.

KEN KIMBALL
 BROOKFIELD

Sliding down a steep hill - clues to the dangerous road ahead for our democracy

To the Editor:

The new Trump Administration began just two weeks ago. However, a number of directions appear quite clear.

Briefly, they include the following:

Throwing out our 250 years old Constitution, rule of law, separation of power between the Presidency, Congress and the Courts, elimination of government agencies, and our long held American government's way of doing things. Instead, we see promotion of the rule of one person obsessed with power and his followers.

An "America First" that means "America Alone" when you try to punish, attack, or impose taxes on your best friends and closest allies like Canada, Mexico, and Denmark.

The rise of the unelected Neo-Nazi billionaire Elon Musk and giving him massive power, including access our personal and government's secret information.

The appointment to key Cabinet and National Security positions of unqualified, personally loyal persons often of bad, bad, character.

Pardons for those who, on Jan. 6, tried, for the first time since the Civil War, to violently overthrow our government.

So no one notices, quietly doing some things like removing the Inspector Generals who police government departments and protect us from wrong doing and having discussions on how to reduce taxes on billionaires while reducing support for the rest of us.

Lying again, again and again - for example that Americans won't pay extra for food and gas because of tariffs, and

To me, the worst of all — use of each and every opportunity not to unite, but trying to have we Americans hate one another.

KEVIN KANE
 SPENCER

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Put your tax refund to work



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TREVOR NIELSEN

Most of us probably don't enjoy preparing our taxes, but there's often a reward at the end — a tax refund. If you get a refund this year, how can you make the best use of it?

Of course, the answer depends somewhat on the size of your refund. Last year, the average tax refund was \$3,050, according to the Internal Revenue Service.

Whatever the size of your refund, though, you'll want to maximize its benefit. Here are a few suggestions:

Contribute to your IRA. If you were to receive about \$3,000, it would go a long way toward funding your IRA for the year — but any amount would help. You still have until April 15, 2025, to contribute to your IRA for the 2024 tax year, but if you've already "maxed out" on it, you could use your refund for 2025. The annual contribution limit for a traditional and Roth IRA remains \$7,000, or \$8,000 if you're age 50 or older. And by getting an early start toward fully funding your IRA, you can reduce the pressure of having to come up with large amounts later in the year.

Build an emergency fund. Your tax refund could help you start or expand an emergency fund. It's a good idea to keep up to six months' worth of living expenses in such a fund, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account, separate from the funds you use for your daily expenses. You might need to draw on this fund for unexpected expenses, such as a major home or car repair or a medical bill that's not fully covered by your health insurance. Without such an emergency fund in place, you might be forced to dip into your IRA or other retirement accounts to pay for these types of costs, and such a move could be expensive, resulting in taxes, penalties and lost opportunities for growth.

Contribute to a 529 plan. If you have children or grandchildren and you'd like to help them further their education someday, you might consider investing in a 529 education savings plan. With a 529 plan, earnings and withdrawals are federally tax free, provided the money is used for qualified education expenses. Based on where you live, your 529 plan may provide state tax benefits, too. (It is possible, though, that 529 withdrawals could affect financial aid packages, depending on who owns the account.) A 529 plan can be used to help pay for college, accredited trade school programs, some K-12 expenses and even to help repay some student loans.

Pay down debts. Your tax refund may give you a chance to reduce your debt load. But which debts should you tackle first? You could follow the "snowball" method by paying off the smallest of your loans or debts as quickly as possible. Or you could choose the "avalanche" route by making minimum payments on all debts and using extra funds — such as your tax refund — to pay off the debts that carry the highest interest rates. Either method could help you save money in the long term.

It's not often that you receive a financial windfall such as a tax refund — so think carefully about how you can maximize its benefits.

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.

Annual Cold/Flu (& More) Guide

This time of year seasonal cold and flu outbreaks are common. In fact, up to one in five Americans are expected to experience the flu this season. While most recover within a week, some symptoms linger on. With this in mind, this column's Annual Cold and Flu guide is offered – along with timely updates, additions, and natural and proactive methods you can employ to increase your odds of staying healthy this season.

Note: This information is offered as a guide only, NOT medical advice. Seek out a health professional to treat any respiratory illness.

**

Cold, Flu, Covid, RSV? The common cold, the flu, Covid-19, and RSV are all respiratory illnesses caused by different viruses. Symptoms of these maladies can be similar at the start of the illness, they are often treated differently, so it's important to identify them.

**

Most common this time of year are colds and flu: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a cold is a milder respiratory ailment that has symptoms that last a few days; the flu can last weeks and result in such serious health problems as pneumonia. While a stuffy nose and aches and pains are symptoms typically present in both colds and flu, a temperature reading can often differentiate the two. A common cold rarely causes a temperature to reach over 101 degrees. Also, body aches are much more common with the flu virus.

**

Cold Symptoms: Symptoms usually begin with sore throat, runny

nose followed by congestion and cough. Mucus may become thicker and darker. A slight fever is possible. Cold symptoms usually last for about a week. During the first three days that you have cold symptoms, you are contagious.

**

Flu Symptoms: Flu symptoms usually come on quicker than cold symptoms are typically more severe. They can include a sore throat, (sometimes hacking) cough, congestion, accompanied by headache, fatigue, chills and fever 102 to 104 degrees. Most symptoms improve in about five days, but fatigue can linger on for a week or more. The flu virus can be contagious from the day before the onset of the virus up to a week after.

**

Covid-19 Symptoms (subject to change as new strains are discovered): According to the CDC, as of January 2025, the dominant variant nationwide is XEC, with 47% of cases, followed by LP8.1, with 15% of cases, and KP3.1.1, with 14% of cases. Experts claim while the original omicron variant is gone, sub-variants of omicron are circulating, including MC.1, KP3, and LF7.

The most common symptoms of the dominant XEC and KP3.1.1 variants are similar to those of previous variants. Symptoms include fever, chills, sore throat, body aches, new loss of taste or smell, cough, runny nose, headache, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting. Depending on the variant, symptoms develop 2-14 days after exposure and can last from several days to weeks.



TAKE
THE
HINT

KAREN
TRAINOR

Emergency treatment should be sought for the following symptoms:

Inability to wake or stay awake; Lips, skin, and nail beds that appear pale, blue, or gray; New confusion; Persistent pain or pressure in the chest; Trouble breathing.

Free rapid COVID tests (four per household) are still available at COVIDtests.gov

**

RSV: Symptoms of RSV mimic the common cold but may become more severe over time. Symptoms can last over a couple of weeks. Typical RSV symptoms are a runny nose, cough, wheezing, sneezing, and reduced appetite. In more serious cases RSV infections can lead to bronchitis or pneumonia.

According to the CDC, People infected with RSV are usually contagious for 3 to 8 days and may become contagious a day or two before they start showing signs of illness. However, some infants, and people with weakened immune systems, can continue to spread the virus even after they stop showing symptoms, for as long as four weeks.

**

How viruses are spread: Respiratory viruses are spread when an infected person releases germs in the air via coughing, sneezing and close contact. Such viruses can live for hours on surfaces such as desks, door knobs, handrails, phones, etc.

**

Home Remedies: The following remedies are effective "first step" treatments for respiratory illnesses. Symptoms that last more than a few days or become severe should be checked by a physician.

*According to several Japanese studies, gargling with black tea twice a day from October to March, significantly improved participants' abilities to fend off the flu bug.

*Feel a case of the sniffles coming on? The fiery spice cayenne is a hot commodity in home remedies.

*Have a head cold? A dash or two of cayenne powder in a cup of hot tea relieves congestion.

*Touted as a natural antibiotic, a few shakes of Tabasco sauce into tomato juice is said to boost the immunity and fight flu. But never give cayenne to kids!

*A hot bath can be a powerful cold chaser and in Chinese medicine very hot baths are used to "sweat" out a cold at its earliest stages. To kick up the detox power of a bath, add a few drops of eucalyptus, rosemary or thyme essential oils to the water.

Note: Check with your doctor before taking a hot bath if you are pregnant, diabetic, have heart disease or other complications.

*Giving colds a two-step punch with a double dose of ginger and lemon can relieve cold and flu symptoms. Adding ginger and lemon to a hot cup of tea not only soothes the throat, but ginger's antimicrobial properties and lemon's vitamin C help fight the bug. To break up mucus, add a pinch of cayenne pepper to the hot tea.

*It's true that chicken broth can offer cold and flu sufferers relief, but did you know it's the bone broth from the

homemade brew that provides much of the healing power? Broth made from boiling bones (for about 12 hours for maximum benefit) offers magnesium, sulfur, phosphorus and other trace minerals that are easily absorbable not always readily available.

*Whether you like it hot or cold, a compress applied to sinuses can relieve congestion quickly. A freeze pack (or bag of frozen vegetables) works as a cold pack on the sinus area to decrease symptoms. Or, heat up a wet facecloth in the microwave (not to hot) and apply across the bridge of the nose for similar relief.

*While there's no cure for the common cold some foods appear to reduce susceptibility to catching colds, or at least reduce the severity of the symptoms. Foods containing beta-carotene, vitamin C, and zinc have shown to have immune repairing and boosting properties. Research suggests that zinc (which is in many over the counter products to prevent colds) can work to reduce the duration and severity of a cold. But it is only effective if it's started early, at the very first signs of illness.

*Did you know you can reach into the refrigerator to clear congestion? Apple juice and purple grape juice both have properties to help clear congestion and a runny nose. As a bonus dark grape juice is rich in tannins, which have been known to kill viruses.

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

*Coughs and congestion is uncomfortable, but relief can be as close as your water bottle. Keep hydrated by drinking at least 64 ounces of water a day. Water is the best expectorant, and will help thin the mucus and loosen the cough.

**

Did you know 3% hydrogen peroxide is a natural disinfectant that can help keep cold and flu germs at bay? Hydrogen peroxide is a thrifty alternative to pricey germ killer sprays. Use it full strength to kill germs on phones, keyboards, door handles or more.

**

Win a Three Course Dinner for Two at the Publick House

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

**

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

Control yourself

Life doesn't always give us the outcomes we hope for. In those moments, it's easy to let your emotions take control. But as history shows us, cooler heads prevail. Let these stories remind you of the power of keeping your composure, even in the most trying times.

Alexander Hamilton was a brilliant statesman and one of America's Founding Fathers, but he had a knack for making enemies. His sharp tongue and political writings made him no stranger to conflict, and one of his fiercest foes was Aaron Burr.

When Hamilton's private remarks about Burr being "despicable" were published, Burr demanded satisfaction through a duel. Instead of defusing the situation, Hamilton, bound by honor and societal expectations, reluctantly agreed to face Burr on the dueling grounds.

The duel, which took place in 1804, ended with Hamilton fatally shot. Burr, though victorious in the duel, saw his political career spiral into ruin due to public outrage. Hamilton's decision to defend his honor cost him everything, while Burr's inability to let go of his anger ensured his own downfall. Sometimes, swallowing your pride is better than risking everything to defend it.

"When anger rises, think of the consequences," wrote Confucius.

But pride isn't the only emotion that can cloud judgment—despair can be just as destructive.

Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, was known for her intelligence and cunning, but her love for Mark Antony led her to make a devastating mistake.

After Antony's forces were defeated at the Battle of Actium, he received false news that Cleopatra had died. Overcome with despair, Antony took his own life. Cleopatra, stricken with grief and unwilling to be paraded as a trophy in Rome, ended her life soon after.

Her death marked the end of Egypt's independence, as the kingdom was annexed by Rome under Octavian.

While Cleopatra's love and despair were deeply human, her fate also underscores the political stakes of her choices. Despair, unchecked, can lead even the most powerful to their knees.

"Do not let your emotions overpower your intelligence," wrote Marcus Aurelius.

Confidence is a valuable trait, but unchecked arrogance can lead to ruin.

General George Armstrong Custer, who famously led the 7th Cavalry, was known for his boldness but also for his tendency to overestimate his abilities.

POSITIVELY
SPEAKING

TOBY
MOORE

In 1876, tasked with confronting a coalition of Sioux and Cheyenne warriors led by Sitting Bull, Custer dismissed advice to exercise caution. Underestimating the size and coordination of the Native forces, he divided his already small command and advanced with only 200 men. Outnumbered nearly 10 to 1,

Custer and his men were overwhelmed at the Battle of the Little Bighorn, known as "Custer's Last Stand."

Had Custer listened to his subordinates and taken the time to assess the situation, the outcome might have been different. His arrogance turned a preventable defeat into a tragic cautionary tale of hubris.

He reportedly said, "There are not enough Indians in the world to defeat the Seventh Cavalry"—a chilling testament to his overconfidence.

Anne Boleyn, King Henry VIII's second wife, was known for her intelligence and charm, but her fiery nature often made her enemies.

After rising to power and captivating Henry, Anne's outspoken nature and unwillingness to defer to him created tension in their marriage. When she failed to produce a male heir, Henry's affections turned to Jane Seymour, and Anne's enemies at court seized the opportunity to act against her.

Charged with adultery, treason, and even witchcraft, Anne was arrested and executed in 1536.

Historians agree the charges were fabricated, but her sharp tongue and ambition made her an easy target in a court where enemies were always watching.

Her story shows that unchecked emotions, no matter how justified, can erode even the strongest positions. Tempered words and actions often yield far greater power than fiery outbursts.

"If you can't control your temper, how can you hope to control your fate?" – Anonymous

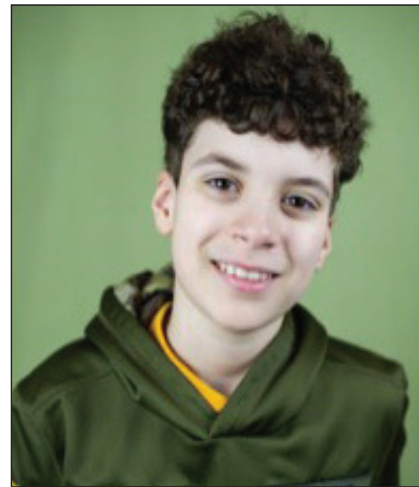
Each of these stories—from Hamilton's pride to Cleopatra's despair, Custer's arrogance, and Anne Boleyn's fiery temper—reminds us that emotions can be powerful, but unchecked, they're destructive.

Losing your cool doesn't just impact the moment—it can change the course of your life.

Cooler heads prevail because they see the bigger picture, weigh the consequences, and act with clarity instead of impulse.

Staying in control isn't about suppressing emotions—it's about mastering them.

Friday's Child



Victory
Age 12
Registration # 8682

Hi! My name is Victory and I like hugs and affection!

Victory is a joyful, adorable, and sweet little boy. Those who know him best describe him as gentle and loving and say that he almost always has a big smile on this face. When he gets excited, Victory will clap and jump up and down. His joy is contagious! Victory loves trains and playing with toys that have wheels. He can engage in imaginative play for lengthy periods of time. He also enjoys using his tablet. Victory is fascinated by bright lights and reflections and creatively uses items to reflect and observe light.

<https://adopt.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/child/8682>

Can I Adopt?

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

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

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



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9,536-SF HISTORIC OFFICE BUILDING FOR SALE

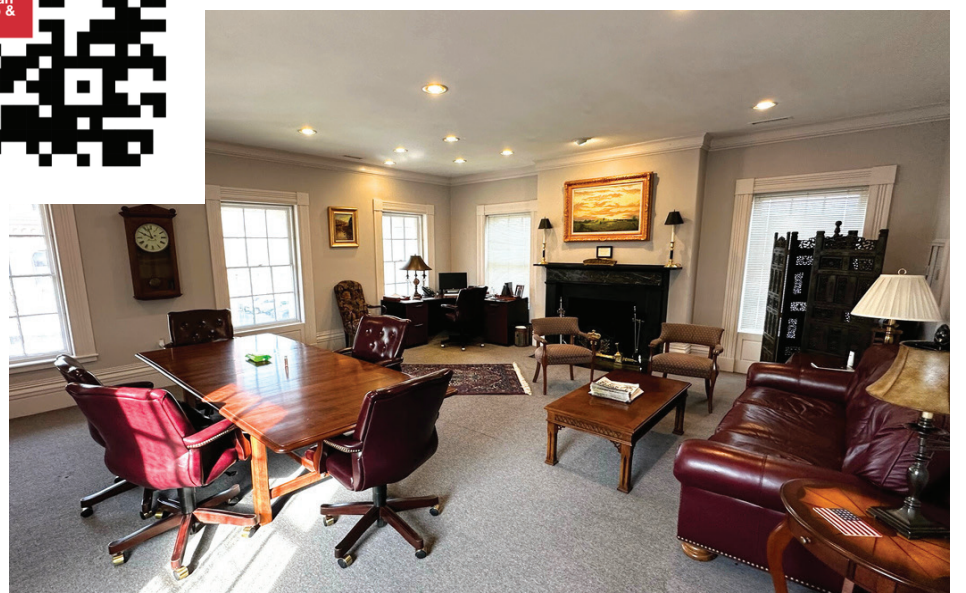


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- Loading docks: (1) tailgate height
- Basement: partial | Unfinished



MORE INFO:



JAMES GLICKMAN
Principal

508-769-5007

jglickman@glickmankovago.com



JONAH D. GLICKMAN
Vice President

508-868-3765

jdglickman@glickmankovago.com

LHS students help seniors improve technology skills



Leicester High School students visit the Leicester Senior Center

L E I C E S T E R — Students from Leicester High School recently visited the Senior Center to help area seniors improve their technology skills.

The Senior Center was awarded an EOAI Grant, a program which helps Councils on Aging across the state expand access to hybrid programming.

Leicester received \$99,400 in grant funding. Hybrid programming will continue to include classes and events that are run both in person and virtually. Participants can choose the setting that works best for them.

“Out of over 300 towns in the state, Leicester was one of only twenty-five senior centers and COAs that were awarded this grant,” read a statement released by Senior Center leadership. “One goal of this grant was to start programming that involves the Senior Center and the School District, working together, to develop an intergenerational relationship.”

As part of the program, local students have been working one-on-one with seniors, helping them learn and navigate various technologies.

Future sessions are already being planned, and seniors are looking forward to continued interactions with students.

“This program allows area seniors to come into the Senior Center and borrow an iPad to use. It can be used at the Senior Center, and there are plans in place to make these iPads available on a check-out basis.”

To learn more about Senior Center programs, call 508-892-7016. The center is located at 40 Winslow Avenue.



Courtesy

Creating teachable moments at Bay Path



CHARLTON — Nurse educators identify teachable moments in practice as an effective way to increase learning. Teachable moments are linked directly to optimal patient care. A positive learning culture both in didactic and clinical settings are key considerations at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy. Everyone plays a role, faculty, staff, students, nurse educators, and especially alumni.

Effective teaching is important in healthcare. The faculty and staff at Bay Path recognize the richness of clinical practice as a learning environment as well as the importance of development and creation of capacities for teaching.

The possibilities for identifying and creating teachable

moments extend to former students and now alumni, Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs). Nursing roles at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, such as executive assistant to the Academy Director and Financial Aid Administrator (FAA) are held by alumni Donna Pope, LPN and Heidi Bedard, BSBS, AACJ, LPN, respectively.

Pictured above, from left, are Executive Assistant to the Academy Director Donna Pope, LPN, Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, Academy Director, and Ruth “DeeDee” Betz, AS, LPN, of the PN Class of 2015 was the former Practical Nursing Secretary.

Pope, of Southbridge, is the first to hold the position of Executive Assistant to the Academy Director. Pope brings a wealth of experience and a proven record of success. Pope is from the PN Class of 2017. She was a speaker for the PN Class of 2021 with a message of hope in the journey of becoming an LPN. She encouraged graduates to be alert to opportunities – something at which she has excelled. Pope was with the STDH Program at Center of Hope Foundation in Southbridge. She briefly worked as a Flu Clinic Nurse at Maxim Healthcare in Worcester. While a student at Bay Path, Pope was inducted to the National Technical Honor Society. She represented Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy at SkillsUSA District competition earning a Gold Medal and at State competition earning a Bronze Medal both for Health Knowledge Bowl. Pope is Mental Health First Aid Certified.

Bolandrina believes that engaging LPN graduates at the Academy drives substantial growth and significantly enhances the practical nursing operations. Globally, healthcare is faced with the challenge of educating the workforce of tomorrow while caring for the patients of today. Every nurse is an educator and learning opportunities abound. Embedding education and learning, teaching and alumni engagement is a winning combination at the Academy. Teachable moments or brief opportunities for learning align care delivery and education.

Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy names SkillsUSA district competitors

CHARLTON — The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy named the 2025 SkillsUSA district competitors for First Aid/CPR, Loise Ngigi of South Grafton, and Grant Peterson of Millbury and for Medical Terminology Natasha Rovani of Worcester and Ashley Rincon of Southbridge.

Dr. Adelina Healy, adjunct faculty at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy who served as the Team Lead for the Volunteer judges in the skills competition for secondary students is delighted. Dr. Healy was the team lead for the past four years. She wishes the practical nursing competitors the absolute best.

Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy Director Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, stated, “I am excited for our 2025 district competitors! My own mother highly supported healthy competition and emphasized winning builds confidence and not winning builds character. The SkillsUSA experience is beneficial for both the student competitors and faculty.”

SkillsUSA’s mission is geared to empower members to become world-class workers, leaders, and responsible American citizens and serves as the blueprint for workplace readiness.



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Auction news 375

I'll get back to my top 10 antiques and collectibles list in my next column as there's been some interesting news that I'd like to share this week. Two thrift store finds, and an estate sale purchase have been making headlines.

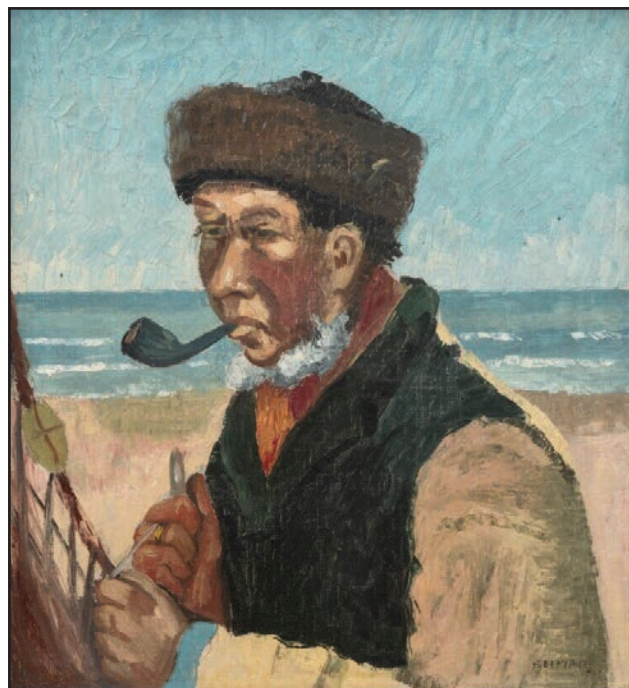


ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES & ESTATES
 •••••
 WAYNE TUISKULA

A Goodwill store in Cincinnati, Ohio, sold some donated collectibles online last year that turned out to bring more than they expected. The shop manager of the Ohio Valley Goodwill listed two Star Wars Jawa figures with another figure on the chari-

ty's website. The shop's Public Information Officer said that they went up around \$5,000 in the first week and "we knew it was more than just a couple Star Wars characters." Someone knowledgeable about the figures informed the staff that they were unpunched, meaning the tab was still intact where they would have hung on racks in the store, increasing the value. The figures sold for over \$19,000. The store manager said that it will change a lot of lives "whether it be a person with a disability or a homeless veteran we're

able to get in off the streets." The figures were shipped to a winning bidder in Florida. There is debate as to whether a Minnesota garage sale purchase is an original work by Vincent Van Gogh or just worth the \$50 the buyer paid for it. After purchasing the painting, the buyer submitted information to the Van Gogh Museum asking them to verify the authenticity, according to ArtNet. The portrait of a man smoking a pipe with the sea in the background titled "Elimar" is said to be Van Gogh's version of a painting originally done by Michael Ancher. However, the Van Gogh Museum couldn't confirm that it was Van Gogh's work "based on stylistic features." The estate sale buyer sold the painting to a New York based science company called the LMI Group for an undisclosed figure. LMI claims that their new analysis proves that it was painted by Van Gogh in 1889 while he was at the Saint-Paul asylum in the south of France. LMI's approach is described as one "which considers formal analysis, provenance, and historical context—with newer scientific methods." If real, it's estimated value is around \$15 million. The Van Gogh Museum remains unconvinced and stands by their original decision. It will now be up to potential buyers to make



their own determination. Purchasing the painting will be like buying a very expensive scratch ticket.

of estate jewelry, sterling silver, art, coins, and other items in our top 10 list. Please visit our website <https://centralmassauctions.com> for links to upcoming events.

Our single estate Civil War auction is expected to be over 1,000 lots as we continue to catalog. We are also working on a sports cards, comic book and collectibles auction, a Beacon Hill online estate auction and are beginning to catalog a collection of Laurel and Hardy memorabilia this month. We are always accepting consignments

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

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LEGALS

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
 Worcester Probate & Family Court
 WO25E0004P**

**Petition to Partition Citation
 (A.C. 92A)**

To **Brian E. Fritze** and to all other interested persons.

A petition has been presented to said Court by Dianne E. Lincoln of Fiskdale in the County of Worcester representing that he hold as tenant in common undivided part or share of certain land lying in North Brookfield in said County Worcester and briefly described as follows:

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 157 School Street, North Brookfield, Massachusetts

The land and the buildings thereon situated on the northerly side of School Street in North Brookfield, Worcester County, Massachusetts, and being shown as Lot #7 on a Plan of Land Owned by Brian K. Marvelle, dated November 3, 2000, by Donald A. Para Land Surveyor, Inc. and recorded in the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Plan Book 762, Plan 41, and bounded and described as follows:

BEGINNING at drill hole in a stone wall at the southeasterly corner of the lot to be described on the northerly side of School Street, also being a corner of Parcel B shown on Plan Book 555, Plan 15 no or formerly owned by Christi Cournoyer;

THENCE South 65° 41' 29" West along a stone wall on the northerly side of School Street, eighty-seven and ninety-four hundredths (87.94) feet to drill hole;

THENCE South 63° 53' 18" West along a stone wall on the northerly side of School Street, ninety-four and sixty one hundredths (94.61) feet to drill hole;

THENCE South 48° 04' 18" West along a stone wall on the northerly side of School Street, sixty-eight and three hundredths (68.03) feet to a point;

THENCE North 16° 08' 13" West along Lot #2, two hundred fifty(250.00) feet;

THENCE North 65° 17' 27" East along Lot #2, three hundred eighteen and forty-five hundredths (318.45) feet to a point at land of said Cournoyer.

THENCE South 0° 56' 23" West along Parcel B said Cournoyer land, two hundred fifty (250.00) feet to the point of beginning.

Containing an area of 1.473 acres according to said plan.

BEING the same premises as conveyed to the Gilbert Bailie by deed of Richard E. Kennan and Karen Kennan dated June 29, 2004 and recorded with Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Book 34039, Page 51.

setting forth that he/she desires that all the aforesaid described part of said land may be sold at private sale for not less than Four Hundred Thirty Thousand (\$430,000) dollars, and praying that partition may be made of all the land aforesaid according to law, and to that end that a commissioner be appointed to make such partition and be ordered to make sale and conveyance of all, or any part of said land which the

Court finds cannot be advantageously divided either at private sale or public auction, and be ordered to distribute the net proceeds thereof.

If you desire to object thereto you or your attorney should file a written appearance in said Court at Worcester before ten o'clock in the forenoon on the Eleventh day of February, the return date of this citation.

Witness, LEILAH A. KEAMY, Esquire, First Judge of said Court, this fifteenth day of January.

Stephanie K. Fattman
 Register of Probate
 January 31, 2025
 February 7, 2025
 February 14, 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. WO25P0225EA
 CITATION ON PETITION FOR
 FORMAL ADJUDICATION**

Estate Of:
Ann M. Hudson
Date of Death: 08/06/2024

To all interested persons:
 A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by

FAIR HAVENS, Inc. d/b/a Quaboag of West Brookfield 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:
Laura McDonnell of West Brookfield MA

be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/18/2025.**

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 ad-

ministration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

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

Date: January 24, 2025
 Stephanie K. Fattman,
 Register of Probate
 February 7, 2025

The North Brookfield Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing meeting on Thursday March 6, 2025, at 6:00pm at the Senior Center, 29 Forest St., North Brookfield, MA. Clifton Safford, 97 Old East Brookfield Rd. requesting a variance for a farmers porch which does not meet the setbacks by Towns Zoning Section V, Table 1 for the R30 zone. Nicholas Lewis of 49 Smith Hanson Rd is requesting a special permit as prescribed in section VI, B 4 of zoning bylaws for expansion of a nonconforming already existing deck. A copy of the application is available at the Town Clerk's Office at 215 North Main St, North Brookfield, MA. February 6, 2025
 February 13, 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. WO25P0239EA
 CITATION ON PETITION FOR
 FORMAL ADJUDICATION**

Estate Of:
Carmelita Huard
**Also known as:
 Carmelita Miguel Huard**
Date of Death: 12/03/2023

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by

Barbara Balducci of West Brookfield 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:
Barbara Balducci of West Brookfield MA

be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/25/2025.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections

within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

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

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

Date: January 24, 2025
 Stephanie K. Fattman,
 Register of Probate
 February 7, 2025

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
 LAND COURT
 DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT
 DOCKET NO. 25 SM 000278
 ORDER OF NOTICE**

TO: Cynthia Maginnis; Albert Maginnis a/k/a Albert Maginnis Jr.

and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. C. 50 §3901 (et seq): Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.

claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Spencer, numbered 80 Clark Road, given by Scott A. Davis to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Gateway Funding Diversified Mortgage Services L.P., its successors and assigns, dated February 26, 2010, and recorded in Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 45508, Page 227, as affected by a Loan Modification Agreement dated January 27, 2016, and recorded at said Registry of Deeds in Book 55073, Page 362, and now held by the Plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/ Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108 on or before 3/17/2025 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act. Witness, GORDON H. PIPER Chief Justice of this Court on 1/30/2025.

Attest: Deborah J. Patterson, Recorder
 February 7, 2025

Dahlia combinations for gardens and bouquets

Dahlias come in various colors, shapes, and sizes making them easy to include in any garden, container, and bouquet. Grow them in their own dedicated space, mix them with other flowers, or plant a few at the end of the vegetable garden.



GARDEN MOMENTS
.....
MELINDA MYERS

lived in arrangements. Their size makes them excellent additions to mixed bouquets helping to connect the various flowers for an impressive display.

The unique blossoms of waterlily dahlias have made it one of the most popular for cutting. The relatively flat flowers have tightly closed centers surrounded by several rows of flat or slightly curved petals.

Grow a few single dahlias for you and the pollinators to enjoy. The daisy-like flowers have a prominent center surrounded by a single row of petals. Their airy appearance complements a variety of late-season perennials in the garden and bouquets. Mix in a few peony-flowered varieties for a showier display. These also have a prominent center but are surrounded by two or more layers of petals.

Add a bit of excitement to any arrangement with cactus and semi-cactus varieties. Their tightly curled petals make them a standout in the garden and bouquets.

You'll only need one or

a few dinnerplate dahlia blooms to make a statement in a vase or arrangement. The large flowers can grow up to 10 inches across on four- to five-foot-tall plants. Tag team a pair of dinnerplate dahlias for the back of the border: Labyrinth and Tyrell have apricot flowers with pink and yellow accents that blend nicely with a wide range of colors in the garden.

If you feel overwhelmed by all the choices or can't decide on the best combination, let the experts lend a hand. Consider purchasing one or more ready-to-plant dahlia combinations selected to look great in the garden and arrangements. The bumblebee collection includes pollinator-favorite Kelsey Sunshine collarette and the coral pink decorative Great Silence. Or for a big splash of purple try the Berry Spritz dinnerplate collection (longfield-gardens.com) with lavender-pink, lilac, and eggplant purple blooms.

Take pictures of your favorite combinations and notes of what you want to try next year, and most importantly, enjoy the fan-



Courtesy — Longfield-Gardens.com

Dinnerplate dahlias, like this Berry Spritz collection, can grow up to 10 inches across on four- to five-foot-tall plants.

tastic blooms. Fortunately, any flower combination is sure to brighten your day.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the recently released *Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition* and *Small Space Gardening*. She hosts *The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything"* DVD instant video

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

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POLICE REPORTS

Leicester Police Log

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23

1:06 a.m.: accident (River Street), name and address redacted from police log, OUI liquor, open container of alcohol in mv, marked lanes violation, criminal application issued; 3:28 a.m.: residential alarm (Atwood Terrace), false alarm; 6:28 a.m.: accident (Stafford Street), report taken; 8:38 a.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), false alarm; 9:14 a.m.: animal complaint (South Main Street), referred; 9:19 a.m.: suspicious mv (Stafford Street), report taken; 10:18 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 10:26 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 12:32 p.m.: mv stop (Blueberry Lane), verbal warning; 12:42 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 12:58 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 1:19 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 1:26 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 1:32 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), name and address redacted from police log, op w/suspended license, criminal application issued; 3:38 p.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), false alarm; 5:22 p.m.: assist other PD (Main Street), unable to locate; 5:50 p.m.: harassment (Baldwin Street), report taken; 6:09 p.m.: ambulance (Charlotte Street, Worcester), transported; 6:37 p.m.: ambulance (Rawson Street), transported; 11:04 p.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), gone on arrival.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 24

12:14 a.m.: disturbance (Pleasant Street), name and address redacted from police log, disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, unlawful possession/use of fireworks, criminal application issued; 1:21 a.m.: assist other agency (Stafford Street), services rendered; 8:21 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 8:22 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 8:48 a.m.: ambulance (Stafford Street), transported; 8:53 a.m.: mv stop (Mill Street), verbal warning; 8:57 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 9:10 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 9:22 a.m.: ambulance (Edward Street), transported; 9:23 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), verbal warning; 9:28 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), written warning; 9:42 a.m.: notification (Marshall Street), services rendered; 9:59 a.m.: welfare check (Hemlock Street), Karen L. Bergstrom, 61, 99 Hemlock Street, Leicester, OUI liquor/3rd offense, negligent operation, unlicensed operation, speeding, arrest; 11:12 a.m.: hit/run accident (Soojians Drive), name and address redacted from police log, false report of a crime, conspiracy to make false report of a crime, criminal application issued; name and address redacted from police log, conspiracy to make false report of a crime, criminal application issued; 1:50 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 4:43 p.m.: animal complaint (Paxton Street), referred; 6:26 p.m.: accident (South Main Street), report taken; 8:02 p.m.: assist other PD (South Main Street), call canceled; 9:30 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 9:48 p.m.: disabled mv (Main Street), assisted; 10:40 p.m.: disabled mv (Main Street), assisted; 10:47 p.m.: ambulance (South Main Street), transported; 11:40 p.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), message delivered.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25

12:08 a.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), verbal warning; 12:26 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 12:57 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 2:01 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 5:26 a.m.: disabled mv (Main Street), unable to locate; 6:27 a.m.: ambulance (Carleton Road), transported; 7:56 a.m.: commercial alarm (Chapel Street), false alarm; 8:53 a.m.: ambulance (Leon Drive, Spencer), transported; 10:47 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 11:12 a.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), verbal warning; 11:40 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 11:48 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), written warning; 12:05 p.m.: ambulance (Sargent Street), transported; 12:29 p.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), written warning; 2:03 p.m.: mv stop (Rawson Street), spoken to; 5:20 p.m.: ambulance (Victoria Drive), transported; 5:40 p.m.: welfare check (Baldwin Street), unable to locate; 6:12 p.m.: assist other PD (Town Beach Road), services rendered; 8:37 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 8:47 p.m.: disturbance (Soojians Drive), gone on arrival; 9:18 p.m.: suspicious mv (Stafford Street), services rendered; 10:06 p.m.: ambulance (Fairview Drive), transported; 10:37 p.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), call canceled.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26

2:08 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), citation issued; 4:45 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 5:57 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), verbal warning; 7:55 a.m.: ambulance (Main Street, Worcester), transported; 10:23 a.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 11:10 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 11:48 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), name and address redacted from police log, op w/suspended registration, crimi-

nal application issued; 12:51 p.m.: accident (Bond Street), report taken; 1:46 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), name and address redacted from police log, op w/suspended registration, no inspection sticker, criminal application issued; 4:24 p.m.: ambulance (Arlington Street, Auburn), transported; 5:19 p.m.: ambulance (Green Street), transported; 6:00 p.m.: welfare check (Henshaw Street), services rendered; 7:03 p.m.: larceny (Soojians Drive), report taken; 9:25 p.m.: ambulance (Carleton Road), transported.

MONDAY, JANUARY 27

5:14 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), citation issued; 5:31 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), citation issued; 5:58 a.m.: mv stop (Mill Street), citation issued; 7:35 a.m.: ambulance (Cricklewood Drive), transported; 8:33 a.m.: animal complaint (Marshall Street), unable to locate; 9:06 a.m.: assist citizen (Ferncroft Road), report taken; 10:02 a.m.: disabled mv (Huntoon Memorial Highway), resolved; 10:21 a.m.: assist citizen (South Main Street); 10:49 a.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 12:20 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 12:24 p.m.: animal complaint (Watson Street), referred; 12:40 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 3:49 p.m.: mv stop (Mulberry Street), verbal warning; 4:13 p.m.: shoplifting (Soojians Drive), name and address redacted from police log, shoplifting by asportation/2nd offense, criminal application issued; 6:26 p.m.: investigation (Soojians Drive), report taken; 6:48 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 7:03 p.m.: animal complaint (Charlton Street), referred; 10:52 p.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), call canceled.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28

12:01 a.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), spoken to; 12:10 a.m.: ambulance (Ingram Road), transported; 12:17 a.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 4:31 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 7:28 a.m.: ambulance (Stafford Street, Worcester), transported; 7:43 a.m.: ambulance (Pleasant Street), transported; 8:27 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), spoken to; 9:40 a.m.; mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 10:15 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 10:20 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), written warning; 10:29 a.m.: residential alarm (River Street), resolved; 10:40 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 10:53 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 11:16 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), written warning; 11:32 a.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), verbal warning; 12:19 p.m.: suspicious mv (Main Street), no action required; 1:04 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), written warning; 1:30 p.m.: mv stop (Peter Salem Road), verbal warning; 1:39 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), name and address redacted from police log, unlicensed operation, criminal application issued; 2:20 p.m.: welfare check (Sterling Street), resolved; 3:12 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 5:09 p.m.: family problem (Stafford Street), spoken to; 7:41 p.m.: suspicious person (Pine Avenue), resolved; 8:06 p.m.: animal complaint (Mannville Street), referred; 9:37 p.m.: ambulance (Pleasant Street), transported; 9:58 p.m.: suspicious person (Henshaw Street), unable to locate; 11:58 p.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), false alarm.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29

7:00 a.m.: disturbance (Washburn Square), report taken; 8:25 a.m.: ambulance (Winslow Avenue), transported; 9:24 a.m.: investigation (Marshall Street), report taken; 10:35 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), spoken to; 10:38 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 10:40 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 10:47 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), verbal warning; 10:54 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), verbal warning; 11:05 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 11:06 a.m.; mv stop (Huntoon Memorial Highway), verbal warning; 11:15 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), written warning; 11:24 a.m.: suspicious mv (South Main Street), assisted; 12:48 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 12:54 p.m.: debris in road (Main Street), resolved; 12:55 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), citation issued; 1:07 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 1:28 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 1:58 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), spoken to; 2:24 p.m.: welfare check (Sterling Street), services rendered; 2:31 p.m.: summons service (Main Street), unable to serve; 2:45 p.m.: ambulance (Cambridge Street, Worcester), transported; 2:50 p.m.: ambulance (Rawson Street), transported; 3:38 p.m.: welfare check (Main Street), services rendered; 5:01 p.m.: keep the peace (Woodland Road), peace restored; 6:03 p.m.: residential alarm (Leela Lane), call canceled; 6:47 p.m.: welfare check (Sterling Street), report taken; 7:26 p.m.: ambulance (Sterling Street), transported; 9:12 p.m.: debris in road (Stafford Street), no action required; 9:43 p.m.: welfare check (Stafford Street), unfounded; 11:43 p.m.: assist other PD (South Main Street), services rendered.

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Spencer Police Log

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22

12:03-2:16 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 12:54 a.m.: officer wanted (Pleasant Street), courtesy transport; 2:00 a.m.: parking violation (Church Street), ticket issued; 4:42 a.m.: fire (Meadow Road), referred; 5:07 a.m.: parking violation (Elm Street), ticket issued; 7:06 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 8:07 a.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Auburn PD bolo/arrest; 8:22 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 9:36 a.m.: accident (North Spencer Road), report taken; 10:01 a.m.: fire alarm (Williams Drive), referred; 11:01 a.m.: medical/general (Bixby Road); 11:38 a.m.: disturbance (R. Jones Road), c/o drone overflying yard; 12:20 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), spoken to; 2:36 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), LTC change of address; 3:20 p.m.: suspicious mv (Maple Street), investigated; 3:30 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 4:42 p.m.: residential fire (Jolicoeur Avenue), referred; 7:09 p.m.: odor of gas (West Main Street), referred; 7:15 p.m.: medical/general (Chestnut Street); 10:44 p.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 11:17 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), assist Auburn PD; 11:22 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operator; 11:32 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), assist Chicopee PD; (total daily mv stops - 0).

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23

1:35-1:51 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 4:14 a.m.: medical/general (Pleasant Street); 8:39 a.m.: medical/general (Lincoln Street); 8:42 a.m.: disabled mv (Hastings Road), assisted; 10:41 a.m.: abandoned 911 call (West Main Street), no contact; 1:43 p.m.: mv lockout (Main Street), assisted; 3:19 p.m.: restraining order service (Bixby Road); 3:54 p.m.: officer wanted (Crown Street), wants to retrieve phone; 4:10 p.m.: restraining order service (Bixby Road); 4:18 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 4:29 p.m.: fraud (West Main Street), report taken; 4:32 p.m.: arrest warrant service (Bixby Road), Shawn J. Jackson, 39, 19 Bixby Road, Spencer, warrant, arrest; 5:34 p.m.: 911 call (Cherry Street), accidental; 6:28 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 8:56 p.m.: suspicious mv (West Main Street), investigated; 11:07 p.m.: disabled mv (Pond Street), assisted; (total daily mv stops - 0).

FRIDAY, JANUARY 24

12:18 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:55 a.m.: mv lockout (South Spencer Road), assisted; 3:38 a.m.: medical/general (Spinnaker Drive); 6:58 a.m.: fire/woods/grass (Cherry Street), referred; 7:23 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 7:50 a.m.: residential fire (Meadow Road), referred; 8:49 a.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), TT door open/swinging; 9:33 a.m.: medical/general (Cherry Street); 9:47 a.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street); 9:59 a.m.: fire alarm (Sout Spencer Road), referred; 10:16 a.m.: harassment prevention order service (West Main Street); 11:29 a.m.: officer wanted (Charlton Road), Verizon req. officer; 12:28 p.m.: restraining order service (West Main Street); 2:31 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), re: custody issue; 3:46 p.m.: suspicious persons (Main Street), services rendered; 4:31 p.m.: DPW call (West Main Street), rep. potholes/Route 9; 4:45 p.m.: suspicious persons (West Main Street), investigated; 6:03 p.m.: disturbance (Grove Street), 911 hang-up; 7:02 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 7:49 p.m.: medical/general (Cherry Street); 7:55 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), Barre PD bolo; 8:16 p.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), services rendered; 9:18 p.m.: officer wanted (Salem Street), req. welfare check; 11:19 p.m.: officer wanted (Howe Village), req. welfare check; 11:57 p.m.: suspicious mv (Howe Road), investigated; (total daily mv stops - 1).

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25

12:13-2:30 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:20 a.m.: parking violation (Adams Street), ticket issued; 1:40 a.m.: medical/general (Westland Drive); 1:44 a.m.: residential alarm (Adams Street), services rendered; 4:08 a.m.: medical/general (Westland Drive), lift assist; 7:57 a.m.: abandoned 911 call (Brown Street), misdial; 8:20 a.m.: medical/general (Treadwell Drive); 8:40 a.m.: medical/general (Leon Drive), lift assist; 9:03 a.m.: Kingsbury Road (Kingsbury Road), c/o no internet on phone; 9:05 a.m.: medical/general (Oakland Drive); 9:33 a.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 9:54 a.m.: animal complaint (School Street), loose dogs; 10:51 a.m.: mutual aid (Main Street), Leicester PD bolo/stolen mv; 10:53 a.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 11:14 a.m.: lost/found (Kittredge Road), wallet lost; 11:54 a.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), spoken to; 1:50 p.m.: disabled mv (Pine Acres), assisted; 2:49 p.m.: fraud (G.H. Wilson Road), report taken; 3:33 p.m.: animal complaint (Sunset Lane), re: dog tied outside; 4:56 p.m.: medical/sudden death (Howe Village); 5:01 p.m.: RV complaint (Briarcliff Lane), c/o RVs on ice; 5:41 p.m.: 911 call (Crestview Drive), accidental; 5:44 p.m.: lost/found (Main Street), wallet lost; 5:52 p.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), rep. son missing; 5:56 p.m.: medical/overdose

(Ash Street); 6:10 p.m.: DPW call (Main Street), traffic light out; 7:01 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 8:58 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), disturbance/Walmart; 9:18 p.m.: building checked, secure; 10:03 p.m.: officer wanted (North Street), c/o aggression toward females; (total daily mv stops - 3).

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26

12:06-2:06 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:00 a.m.: disturbance (Grove Street), domestic dispute; 8:54 a.m.: animal complaint (South Spencer Road), found dog/no tags; 9:35 a.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), North Brookfield PD bolo; 9:53 a.m.: medical/general (Fourth Avenue); 10:42 a.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 11:04 a.m.: animal complaint (Kingsbury Road), man/unleashed dogs on property; 11:46 a.m.: RV complaint (Briarcliff Lane), RVs on ice/noise complaint; 1:10 p.m.: animal complaint (Paxton Road), bird in mv grill; 2:04 p.m.: hit/run accident (West Main Street), services rendered; 2:57 p.m.: medical/general (Charlton Road); 3:15 p.m.: accident (South Spencer Road), mv vs deer; 4:08 p.m.: officer wanted (Gold Nugget Road), req. escort/retrieve belongings; 4:49 p.m.: lost/found (West Main Street), wallet found; 8:20 p.m.: officer wanted (Lincoln Street), req. welfare check; 8:38 p.m.: officer wanted (Grove Street), spoken to; 11:53-11:56 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; (total daily mv stops - 1).

MONDAY, JANUARY 27

12:10-12:56 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 5:16 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 6:21 a.m.: medical/general (Old East Charlton Road); 7:23 a.m.: fire alarm (Pleasant Street), referred; 7:59 a.m.: parking complaint (Maple Street), c/o unhooked TT unit; 8:55 a.m.: citizen complaint (Lloyd Dyer Drive), re: previous incident; 11:25 a.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operator; 11:46 a.m.: accident (West Main Street), report taken; 12:56 p.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 1:17 p.m.: animal complaint (Bacon Hill Road), re: cat in back yard; 1:45 p.m.: officer wanted (Howe Village), req. extra patrols/tires deflated; 2:56 p.m.: 911 call (Mechanic Street), hang-up; 3:38 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operator/taxi; 3:48 p.m.: medical/general (West Main Street); 3:54 p.m.: suspicious persons (South Spencer Road), investigated; 4:18 p.m.: restraining order service (Bixby Road); 4:45 p.m.: prop. check/door ajar (Lake Street), bldg. secured; 6:15 p.m.: accident (Clark Road), report taken; 7:23 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), UMass CT/cautionary status; 8:26 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), unwanted party; 10:34 p.m.: officer wanted (Smithville Road), daugh. not answering phone; (total daily mv stops - 1).

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28

12:21-2:27 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:18 a.m.: parking violation (Grove Street), ticket issued; 1:54 a.m.: parking violation (Mechanic Street), ticket issued; 6:06 a.m.: mv lockout (South Spencer Road), assisted; 6:43 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 7:42 a.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), North Brookfield PD bolo; 9:21 a.m.: medical/general (West Main Street); 9:27 a.m.: accident (Greenville Street), report taken; 1:19 p.m.: restraining order service (West Main Street); 4:43 p.m.: fraud (Valley Street), report taken; 5:20 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 5:21 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), tenant/landlord issue; 5:24 p.m.: mv complaint (Maple Street), erratic operator; 5:39 p.m.: mv stop (I. Capen Road), Shane R.H. King, 52, 6 I. Capen Road, Spencer, OUI liquor, negligent operation, arrest; 7:48 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 8:36 p.m.: suspicious persons (Greenville Street), investigated; 9:25 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 9:27 p.m.: officer wanted (Mechanic Street), c/o harassment; 10:32 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), re: mv stolen from Southbridge, GA; 11:11 p.m.: lost/found (West Main Street), wallet lost; 11:13 p.m.: 911 call (Pearl Street), accidental; (total daily mv stops - 5).

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SUPPORT

continued from page A1

“Our mission is the raising and development of funds and necessary goods and services through donations and fundraising events in order to benefit orphaned children in the United States, as well as internationally,” read a statement released by the organization.

To learn more about S.O.N.G. and its efforts to support children around the world, visit www.supportingorphans.org. The Web site also features a page highlighting current projects.

Donations to the organization can be made by sending a check to: S.O.N.G., Inc., c/o North Brookfield Savings Bank, 9 Gilbert St., North Brookfield, MA 01535.

FUNDING

continued from page A1

tect life and property.

Statewide, an average of 15 wildland fires are reported each October. Last year, the month's total surged to 200 blazes, and state officials want to ensure that municipal fire departments have the equipment they need to prepare for unpredictable conditions.

The Leicester Fire Department received \$18,673 in grant funding, which will cover the costs of fire hoses, nozzles, and Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) equipment.

To learn more about grant funds awarded to fire departments across the state, visit www.mass.gov.

ICE-OUT

continued from page A1

choosing a “Golden Ticket” for a specific date, entrants will use a dropdown menu to pick a 15-minute interval, provide their contact information, and finalize their entry through the online shopping cart.

Will you be the one to predict when Norpondapus takes the plunge? Get your entry in before the Feb. 13 deadline and join in on the fun. For additional information and full contest rules, visit the Quaboag Quacumquasit Lake Association Web site at qqla.org or email event chair, Bill Seabourne at billcborn@gmail.com.

100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

The month of February has been home to many historical events over the years. Here's a look at some that helped to shape the world in February 1925.

- After a severe depletion of his country's potato crop due to heavy rainfall the previous summer and fall, Irish President W.T. Cosgrave appeals to the United States for food aid on February 1.

- The small town of Nome, Alaska, is saved from a developing diphtheria epidemic on February 2 upon conclusion of The Serum Run. The run was a transport of diphtheria antitoxin in via dog sled that involved 20 mushers and roughly 150 sled dogs. The final leg of the run is led by Gunnar Kaasen and his lead sled dog, Balto, who becomes a canine celebrity as a result of the undertaking.

- Sears, Roebuck, & Co. opens its first department store at its headquarters in Chicago on February 2. The retailer had previously been a catalog-only operation.

- William Burke Miller interviews trapped cave explorer Floyd Collins on February 3. Collins was trapped in a cave in Kentucky on January 30, and Miller was small enough to climb into an opening in the cave and conduct an interview while hanging upside down. Miller ultimately won a Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of the incident, which unfortunately ended with Collins' death on February 13.

- Ten people are arrested in Russia on February 5 as part of a plot to assassinate revolutionary and Soviet politician Grigory Zinoviev.

- World heavyweight boxing champion Jack Dempsey marries actress Estelle Taylor on February 7 in San Diego. The two starred alongside one another on screen and on stage, but ultimately divorced in 1931.

- The film “The Lost World” premieres at the Astor Theatre

in New York City on February 8. The film is the first production to include special effects.

- Turkish politician Halit Karsialan is shot by fellow politico Ali Çetinkaya during a fight at the Grand National Assembly of Turkey on February 9. Karsialan dies from injuries sustained during the skirmish on February 14.

- Ellen Wilkinson, an MP from the Labour Party, defies protocol when she addresses the British House of Commons without wearing a hat on February 11. Conservative MP Reginald Applin asks the Speaker of the House to determine if Wilkinson's non-compliance with the dress code was in order, but the speaker ultimately rules in Wilkinson's favor.

- Nikolai Golitsyn, the last Prime Minister of Imperial Russia, is arrested by the Russian secret police on February 12. Golitsyn, who was arrested on suspicion of association with counterrevolutionaries, is convicted and executed five months after his arrest.

- Paavo Nurmi runs a record-breaking two-mile race in Madison Square Garden on February 14. The Finnish runner, nicknamed the “Flying Finn,” completes the race in eight minutes and 58.2 seconds.

- On February 15, the London Zoo announces it will install lights to lift the spirits of the animals during the city's famed spells of fog.

- Bavaria lifts the ban on the Nazi Party on February 16. The ban was initially implemented after the Beer Hall Putsch, a failed coup d'état orchestrated by Adolf Hitler and others in 1923.

- The Mayflower Hotel opens its doors on February 18. The hotel, located at 1127 Connecticut Avenue NW in Washington, D.C., earns the nickname the “Hotel of Presidents” and remains open

today.

- Fifty-one miners are killed in a coal mine explosion in Sullivan, Indiana, on February 20. An additional 70 employees escape or are rescued from the blast.

- American actor Gary Cooper appears in his first film on February 22. Cooper would go on to stardom, even though his appearance in “The Trail Rider” was as an uncredited stunt rider.

- The last emperor of China, Puyi, accepts an offer of protection from the Japanese Empire on February 23. Puyi had been stripped of all of his imperial titles and privileges months ear-

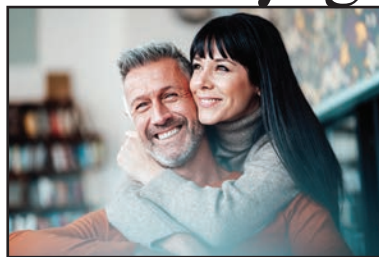
lier.

- The first electrical recording of a phonographic record is made by Art Gillham on February 25. Gillham and his orchestra use microphones to perform “You May Be Lonesome” and “Hesitation Blues.”

- Norwegian carpenter and inventor Thor Bjørklund receives a patent for the cheese slicer on February 27.

- A 6.2 magnitude earthquake strikes in the Canadian province of Quebec on February 28. The epicenter of the earthquake is in the St. Lawrence River near La Malbaie, and no major casualties are reported.

8 unique Valentine's Day gift ideas



Gift-giving is a key component of Valentine's Day celebrations every February 14. Valentine's Day is a mere month-and-a-half after the holiday season, so ideas for more thoughtful gifts may be in short supply. Let these Valentine's day gift ideas serve as inspiration.

1. Custom painted portrait: Many local artists paint beautiful portraits from photographs. Find an image you like and have it made into an even more impressive work of art.

2. Doll likeness: The well known Funko POP! brand known for its pop culture figurines enables customers to create likenesses of themselves or loved ones. You can have custom dolls made in your sweetheart's likeness.

3. Preserved roses: While fresh roses may only last a few days to a week, preserved or “eternity” roses are treated and specially packaged so they can endure

and serve as lasting, welcome reminders of Valentine's Day love.

4. Journal or scrapbook: A decorative scrapbook or journal enables your special someone to keep track of moments spent together and key milestones.

5. First date map: Gift a framed picture of a map marked with the specific location of your first date, whether it was a restaurant, park or museum.

6. Birthstone jewelry: Jewelry is a popular gift on Valentine's Day. Make gifts even more special by finding pieces that include your special someone's birthstone. The American Gem Society offers a handy chart at www.americangemsociety.org/birthstones/.

7. Experiential gifts: Experiential gifts may be just what is needed this Valentine's Day. Some options include a couple's cooking class, tickets to a sports game or concert, a vacation to a romantic locale, or a day or night out on the town.

8. Prepare a favorite recipe: Learn what your loved one enjoys eating the most and then recreate the recipe as a thoughtful gift and dinner at home.

This Valentine's Day, people can consider these unique thoughtful gift ideas.

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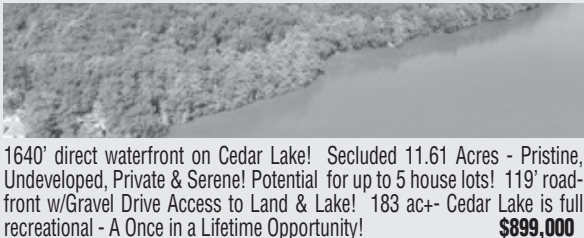
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Autumn Powers, of Leicester: Summer Game Studio was a fun, digestible creative outlet

WORCESTER — Cats wearing lemons and limes as helmets, pitted against one another on a quest for collectibles. It's a goofy idea, but one that makes for a fun game.

This silly concept is what Skyler Barron '22, MFA '23, a current Becker School of Design & Technology professor, made into a video game back in 2017 when she was a high school stu-

dent participating in the Summer Game Studio.

"We decided we wanted to work on something ridiculous," Barron recalls. "My team and I saw pictures of cats with lemon and lime hats on, so we made a game where the 'lime cats' and 'lemon cats' are on different teams trying to gather collectibles."

Summer Game Studio is a two-week

game design program that immerses students in the Becker School of Design & Technology. This pre-college program teaches all aspects of game design and development - from concept art to coding; from sound design to playtesting - and empowers students with the skills to create their own video games from scratch. Students learn from the

same faculty who have made the BSDT's undergraduate program earn the No. 3 ranking in the world by The Princeton Review. During her time at Summer Game Studio, Barron and her peers conceptualized, built, and launched "Lemon Cat."

Players, operating as the lemon cat, must navigate around the lime cats in search of the collectibles. Everything from brainstorming the light-hearted concept to animation to programming was an enjoyable team effort.

"I'm passionate about art, and I got to let that shine while working on our project," says Barron, who studied interactive media at Clark. "It was so much fun to work with people with similar interests."

Participating in Summer Game Studio made Barron decide to enroll in the BSDT program.

"At the end of high school, I wasn't sure if game design was going to be my major and didn't feel confident about where I would go if it was my major," she says. "Summer Game Studio let me see that I love game design and helped me make that big decision."

Robert Matzkin '26, a computer science major and interactive media minor, participated in Summer Game Studio in 2022, just weeks before starting his first semester at Clark. He recalls learning about programming with the guidance of BSDT Professor Nevin Flanagan as he made his video game "Rot," an infinite runner game that required players to exterminate vicious plants that had overrun a kingdom.

"It was a lot of debugging, a lot of back-and-forth," Matzkin recalls. "It sounds like tedious work, but it was my creative outlet. I felt inspired every day to wake up, go to class, and code into the night."

Distributing and delegating tasks to make a game gave the students a real sense of professional teamwork, Matzkin says. "Getting a taste of game design before actually starting my education here gave me the confidence that I picked the right school."

The program is a crash course in what it's like to be a college student. Participants live in a Clark residence hall and dine on campus as part of the full experience.

"Summer Game Studio prepared me to live in a social environment with lots of people and gave me a good idea of how a college class would feel," says Autumn Powers '27, an interactive media major and participant in Summer Game Studio 2022, who worked on "Rot" with Matzkin. The program was also invaluable in helping Powers hone a love of 3D art.

"It was a whole lot of information, but it was fun and digestible," Powers says. "I created art for my game with a lot of tools and learned how to be efficient with what I made."

The fast pace of Summer Game Studio teaches students to analyze problems and find quick solutions. It's a process Barron experienced herself as a student and now oversees as a professor.

"Any struggles you face making a game, you need to overcome within two weeks," Barron says. "Students pull them-

selves together and focus on what they need to do to complete their task. You see them end up really proud of their project."

Summer Game Studio 2025 registration is now open

Kickstart your design journey, learn new skills, and make your own game. There are two Summer Game Studio sessions in 2025 - attend one or both. Register now; complete your registration by March 1 and take advantage of preferred pricing, with a \$500 discount off full tuition. Use discount code SPEEDRUN at checkout.

Game Studio: July 6-19
Geared toward any high school student or recent grad who wants to build on their experience and become a game-maker.

Game Studio, Next Level: July 20-August 2

Designed for motivated students who have completed a session of the BSDT Game Studio or those with foundational game design knowledge who want to take their skills to the next level.

Founded in 1887, Clark University is a liberal arts-based research university that prepares its students to meet tomorrow's most daunting challenges and embrace its greatest opportunities. Through 33 undergraduate majors, more than 30 advanced degree programs, and nationally recognized community partnerships, Clark fuses rigorous scholarship with authentic world and workplace experiences that empower our students to pursue lives and careers of meaning and consequence.



Courtesy

Local youngsters and their families enjoyed a recent ice fishing derby held on Quaboag Pond.

Local families take to the ice for Lions Club ice fishing derby

BROOKFIELD — Local families recently enjoyed a fun day on the ice during the Brookfields' Lions Club's 36th annual ice fishing derby.

Held on Quaboag Pond, the Jan. 25 event saw prizes awarded across several divisions.

Receiving first place in the Children's Category for Yellow Perch was August Moulton, of Plymouth. Second place honors went to J.T. Brooks, of West Brookfield.

The Brookfields' Lions Club holds several events throughout the year to raise funds for community causes. These include supporting scholarships for students; assisting local food pantries; and donating to organizations like Hearts for Heat.

To learn more about the organization and how you can support programs that give back to the community, visit www.brookfieldslionsclub.org.

Local author prepares for release of new book



Courtesy

Spencer author and educator Wendy O'Leary is eager for the release of her next book.

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

SPENCER — Local author Wendy O'Leary is looking forward to the launch of her next book, which will provide helpful tools for parents and families.

Set for release on March 11, the book is titled, "Growing Self-Compassionate Children: A Family Guide for Nurturing Resiliency and Kindness." Co-authored by O'Leary and fellow educator Louise Shanagher, the book includes games, crafts, and other activities that can be enjoyed by the whole family.

"I am passionate about the benefits of self-compassion for children and adults, and I believe that this book can be helpful to many parents," said O'Leary, a longtime educator who lives in Spencer.

O'Leary got the idea for her new book shortly after the release of her previous book, "It's OK: Being Kind to Yourself When Things Feel Hard."

"It's OK is a picture book that teaches children about self-compassion. As I began using that book in more of my teaching, and as the book made its way

into more hands, I started to hear from families asking for additional tools to share this essential skill for resiliency and well-being with their children," O'Leary told the New Leader. "I knew I could spread these teachings more widely through a book focusing on practical skills and activities, supporting the development of self-compassion."

As families nationwide increasingly struggle with mental health concerns, parents have told O'Leary that an emphasis on self-compassion is making a major difference in their children's lives. The positive feedback helped inspire her next project.

Working with Ireland-based education colleague Louise Shanagher, who founded a program called Creative Mindfulness, O'Leary was excited about the opportunity to reach even more parents and families. After dedicating roughly two years to the publishing process, O'Leary and Shanagher are eager for their book release next month.

"We both saw the importance of offering these skills to families and decided to collaborate on this book. It has been such a pleasure to work with Louise on this meaningful project to spread more love, care, and well-being in the world," O'Leary said. "We are honored to have the opportunity to offer a book that shares concrete ways for parents and children to learn to be kinder to their hearts and to be better friends to themselves."

Added O'Leary, "We know personally and from our work experience that self-compassion can positively impact our children, families, and communities. We hope this book helps make that happen."

Looking ahead, O'Leary will run a two-part series in collaboration with the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District, Community Connections Wachusett CFCE, and Kennedy Donovan Early Intervention Program.

The first session will take place on Tuesday, March 18, at 6 p.m. at East Brookfield Elementary School (snow date is March 20). This program will include a presentation for parents. The first 50 families that register and attend this event will receive a free copy of the book.

The second session is set for Tuesday, April 15, at 6 p.m. at EBES. This program will feature an activity designed for parents to enjoy with their children.

O'Leary is thrilled for the opportunity to convey the book's messages to parents in person and provide helpful tools.

"I wanted to ensure the book supported parents in developing kindness for themselves. Like so many of us, parents can be extremely self-critical, and they could greatly benefit from learning how to offer themselves kindness and care during challenges," O'Leary said. "Raising children is wonderful and also challenging for everyone at times, and I wanted this book to gently offer some tips, advice, and tools to support parents as well as their children."

With early registration for the upcoming programs, childcare will be provided by student representatives of the David Prouty High School early education and care program.

Pizza will be provided at the sessions by Uncle Sam's Pizza.

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