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Thursday-Friday, December 11-12, 2025

Southbridge Lions Club hosts annual pre-game dinner for SHS Football team

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Lions Club continued a cherished community tradition on Tuesday, Nov. 25 as it hosted the Southbridge High School football team and cheerleaders for the annual pre-game dinner preceding the 105th Thanksgiving Day matchup between Southbridge and Bartlett.

Players, cheerleaders, coaches, and school administrators gathered for an evening that highlighted teamwork, school pride, and the long-standing history of the Thanksgiving rivalry. Throughout the program, several speakers reflected on the significance of the upcoming game, the spirit of the school, and the traditions that unite the Southbridge community each year.

Lions Club members once again dedicated their time and effort to preparing and serving the meal—a commitment that has helped sustain this event for more than seven decades. Their volunteer work remains at the heart of the dinner's continued success.

This year's guest speaker was Chief Raymond Gonzales, U.S. Navy, a 2007 graduate of Southbridge High School and former Pioneers football player. Now a 16-year Navy veteran, Chief Gonzales shared how his experiences in Southbridge football shaped his character both on and off the field. His message resonated strongly with the students, emphasizing resilience, teamwork, and pride in one's community.

The evening also included the presentation of two annual honors:

- Yadier Colon Martinez, recipient of the Joe Capillo 12th Man Award
- Gino Pointdujor, recipient of the Anthony Santilli Sr. Outstanding Player Award

This year marked the 71st time the Southbridge Lions Club has hosted the pre-game dinner, a tradition that remains a highlight of the season and a testament to the Club's ongoing support of local youth.

It was a memorable night celebrating students, school spirit, and the strong sense of community that continues to define Southbridge.



Courtesy
Guest speaker Chief Raymond Gonzales.



Courtesy
Anthony Santilli Sr. Outstanding Player Award recipient Gino Pointdujor and Yadier Colon Martinez, recipient of the Joe Capillo 12th Man Award.

Friends of Charlton Library team up with Sturbridge Coffee Roasters

CHARLTON — The Friends of Charlton Public Library, a 501(c)3 organization, has partnered with Sturbridge Coffee Roasters for a special holiday offer. While Christmas shopping is currently underway, the Friends are looking ahead to Valentine's Day!

Place your order throughout the month of December and your coffee will be available in time for Valentine's Day gift-giving.

The coffee sale features seven different blends from Sturbridge Coffee Roasters. Flavors include a special Library Friends Blend, Black Gold Blend, Mexican Organic Swiss Water Process Decaf, Colombian Supremo Medium, Sumatra Mandheling Organic Dark, Winter Wonderland, and Chocolate Raspberry; all flavors are available in ground and whole bean form. The cost is \$17 per 12-ounce bag. Proceeds from the sale allow the Friends to support the mission of the Charlton Public Library.

Order forms are available at the circulation desk at the Charlton Public Library, 40 Main St., Charlton, and also on the

Friends' Facebook page (facebook.com/charltonlibraryfriends).

Completed forms and payment must be returned to the Library's Circulation Desk by Jan. 2, 2026. Cash, check, and payment through Venmo (@FriendsofCharltonLib) or Zeffy accepted. Coffee orders will be available the week of Feb. 9 for pick-up at the library.

For every bag of coffee purchased, you'll receive an entry to win a basket filled with a variety of Valentine-related goodies. Stock up and increase your chances to win!

For questions or more information, please email charltonfriends@gmail.com or call 774-230-1410.

Proceeds from fundraisers enable the non-profit Friends to further the mission of the Library by sponsoring a variety of programs, projects, and events, including discounted museum passes, the summer reading program, author talks, music concerts and performances, and other cultural and educational experiences. The Friends of Charlton Public Library appreciate your continued support.

Cops N Kids N Lions Steve Ide Memorial Toy Drive nears final deadlines

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Lions Club and the Southbridge Police Department are reminding residents that the annual Cops N Kids N Lions Steve Ide Memorial Toy Drive is entering its final days. The program, established in honor of longtime Lion Steve Ide, continues his commitment to supporting local children and fostering strong community partnerships.

Application deadline approaching

Families seeking assistance may still obtain toy drive applications at the Southbridge Police Station through Dec. 10. The program serves children up to age 12 and youth up to age 16.

Toy donations still needed

The drive continues to accept donations of new, unwrapped, non-violent toys through Dec. 15. Organizers note a particular need for gifts suitable for older children ages eight to 15. All donated items stay within the Southbridge community, ensuring that local families benefit directly.

Multiple drop-off locations

Toys may be donated at the following sites:

- Southbridge and Sturbridge Police Departments
- Southbridge Fire Department
- Harrington Hospital
- Southbridge Town Hall
- Cornerstone Bank
- Big Bunny Market
- Dave's Pest Control
- Savers Bank (Southbridge and Sturbridge branches)
- All Southbridge Credit Union branches

Monetary contributions welcome

Financial donations are accepted at all Southbridge Credit Union branches or through any Lions Club member. Checks should be made payable to the Southbridge Lions Toys Program.

Residents or businesses interested in sponsoring or contributing in other ways may contact the program at copsnkids@southbridgemass.org.

Organizers extend their appreciation to everyone who has contributed so far and encourage community members to participate

as the deadlines approach. The continued support helps ensure a brighter holiday season for local children and honors the spirit of giving embodied by Steve Ide.

Free holiday fun for everyone at Hitchcock

Live music, cookie decorating & crafting, games, and more for all ages



BRIMFIELD — Christmas at Hitchcock returns on Saturday, Dec. 13 from 1 to 5 p.m. The popular all ages event will include live music, cookie decorating & crafting, games, face painting, and more. The event is free of charge and there is no registration required. Attendees should dress warmly as the event is held both indoors and outdoors.

Live music will be performed from the building's balcony by The Voice's Noah Lis and seasoned musician and Hitchcock's new guitar and piano instructor Jim Perry. Listeners can keep warm sipping from free pours of delicious hot chocolate and coffee. Chestnuts and marshmallows will also be roasted to share with attendees.

Ice carver Mike Rondeau will be doing a live ice carving during the event. 4-H will be bringing Phoenix the pony for attendees to greet and pet. There will be a station set up for making holiday swags with local greens donated by the newly reopened Hollow Brook Farm.

Inside, attendees can decorate cookies, make Christmas crafts, play "reindeer games," and visit with Santa (photos are welcome).

"Christmas at Hitchcock feels like a family Christmas party combined with a larger scale holiday event," says Executive Director Cindy Skowrya. "Our space is so much like a home, yet we have all the festivities of an event — it's the best of both."

Attendees can also bring a donation to a toy collection through the Brimfield Police Stuff-the-Cruiser initiative supporting local children in need. For information on how to donate, contact Brimfieldpoliceassociation@gmail.com. Donations to Hitchcock's 2025 Friends Campaign, which aims to raise \$15,000 toward operating expenses through individual donations, are also warmly welcomed.

For complete details and schedule, visit www.hitchcockacademy.org.

The event is generously sponsored by Hitchcock Pool Water. Additional sponsors include Superior Plus Propane, Hollow Brook Farm, and Dave Loos KW Pioneer Valley.

Hitchcock Academy is a community center located at 2 Brookfield Road in Brimfield serving the community with educational, recreational, and cultural programming. More information can be found at www.hitchcockacademy.org.

Holiday makes for early deadlines

The submission deadlines for our Dec. 26 and Jan. 2 editions will fall a bit earlier than usual in order to ensure that the paper arrives in subscribers' mail boxes prior to the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

Any press releases or letters to the Editor intended for publication the week of Dec. 26 should be submitted no later than 4 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 18.

For the week of Jan. 2, the submission deadline will be Friday, Dec. 26 at 4 p.m.

Submissions can be e-mailed to news@stonebridgepress.news.

DA urges participation in 24th Annual Worcester County Gun Buyback Program

WORCESTER — Worcester County District Attorney Joseph D. Early, Jr. is urging participation in the 24th annual Guns to Gardens program, an opportunity for members of the community to turn in unwanted firearms at participating police departments on Saturday, Dec. 13.

Since the program’s start in the City of Worcester in 2002, more than 4,000 guns have been voluntarily turned in across the county. This annual program encourages participants from all of Worcester County to turn in firearms at participating police department headquarters stations in Charlton, Fitchburg, Northborough, Milford, Worcester, or City Welding & Fabrication, 10 Arant St., Worcester.

Anyone who turns in an operable firearm will receive a gift card in exchange (\$50 for a rifle, \$100 for a pistol, and \$150 for an automatic or semi-automatic weapon). Free gun locks are also available, even if you are not turning in a firearm.

“By getting unwanted and unsecured firearms out of the house and safely disposed of, we can help prevent accidental tragedies, theft or misuse. This not only helps reduce gun-related tragedies and save lives, but also avoid the high costs of medically treating gunshot victims,” said District Attorney Early. “I commend Worcester Division of Public Health Medical Director

Dr. Michael Hirsh, who started this program, and all our local police departments for their continued efforts to advocate for gun safety and protect our communities.”

“Every gun that we can get out of homes that are not safely secured or not in an environment where it is safe to keep them at home is a win for a peaceful holiday season in the Woo,” said Dr. Hirsh.

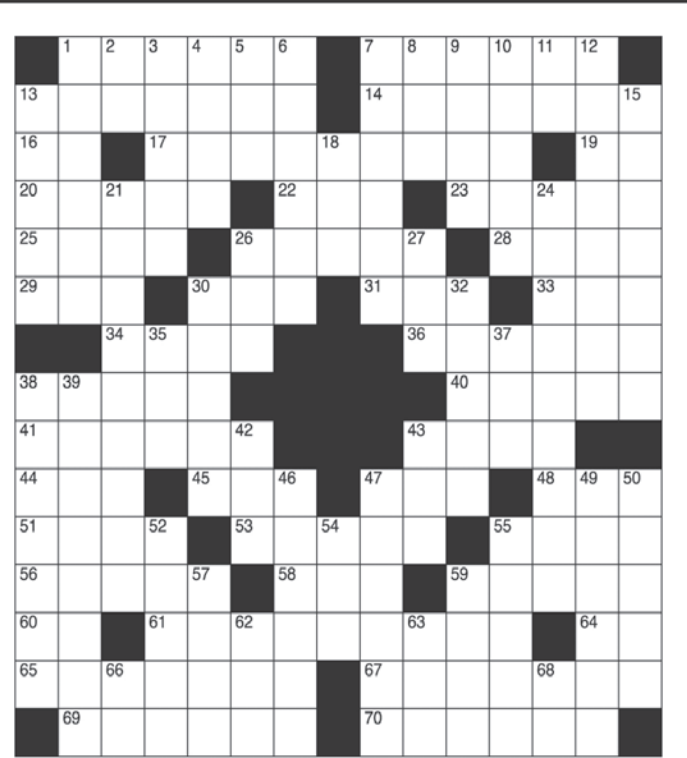
As in the past, Mr. Early will relax law enforcement of the law prohibiting the carrying of firearms for those participating in the program. Participants may bring firearms without any registration requirement, and anonymity is guaranteed for everyone. All weapons should be brought unloaded and wrapped up or in a bag. Replica guns and ammunition will also be accepted. Ammunition should be separately bagged. Residents are reminded to treat all firearms as though they are loaded and dangerous.

Participants can watch their weapons be destroyed at the City Welding & Fabrication location. In recent years, these destroyed firearms have been turned into garden tools to be used in the UMass community garden, which is maintained by members of the UMass community and produces fresh produce that is donated to those in need.

Guns to Gardens is sponsored by the Worcester County District Attorney’s Office, UMass Memorial Medical Group, the City of Worcester, the Worcester Police Department, and the Worcester Department of Public Health.

Firearms can be turned in at the following locations during the specific hours:

- Charlton Police Department from 10 a.m. to noon
- Fitchburg Police Department from 10 a.m. to noon
- Milford Police Department from 10 a.m. to noon
- Northborough Police Department from 10 a.m. to noon
- Worcester Police Department from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Worcester City Welding & Fabrication (10 Arant St., Worcester) from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Spiritual leaders

7. A type of solution

13. Fortified wine

14. Edible mollusk

16. They precede C

17. A way to compare

19. Government lawyer

20. “Game of Thrones” actor Ciaran

22. The eighth month (abbr.)

23. Very willing

25. ___ ex Machina

26. Makes happy

28. Type of berry

29. A doctrine

30. Popular Dodge truck model

31. Dekagram

33. Naturally occurring solid

34. Company officer

36. Villains

38. Cricket frogs
40. Influential German psychologist

41. Endured

43. A female domestic

44. You can get stuck in one

45. Cigarette (slang)

47. Fiber optics network

48. Group of blood disorders (abbr.)

51. Employee stock ownership plan

53. Belonging to the bottom layer

55. Sound

56. MLB legend Hank

58. Very attractive person

59. Late beloved sportscaster Craig

60. South Dakota

61. Mocking

64. Symbol for gold

65. Longtime Braves pitcher Julio

67. Humor

69. Shawl

70. Preliminary patient assessment

CLUES DOWN

1. Animal disease

2. Commercial

3. Necklace material

4. Containers

5. A way to save for your future

6. Colorado Heisman winner Rashaan

7. Dipped down

8. Head injury (abbr.)

9. Lay about

10. Intestinal

11. Opposite of yes

12. Caused to be loved

13. Spiritual leader of Islam

15. Businesslike

18. Not in

21. Number above the line in a fraction

24. An animal with its own day

26. Pouch

27. Swedish krona

30. Start over

32. Field flowers
35. Fourteen

37. A visual way to interact with a computer

38. Up-to-date

39. Campaigns

42. Touch lightly

43. “Boardwalk Empire” actress Gretchen

46. Violent seizure of property

47. Supporter of the Pope

49. Anxiety

50. Body fluid

52. One who’s faking it

54. Title of respect

55. Chilean city

57. City in central Japan

59. Silk garment

62. A form of dance

63. Automobile

66. The man

68. Justice Dept. head honcho

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Winter Coat Closet offers free coats

SOUTHBRIDGE — Free winter coats will be available every Saturday until Christmas (the 13th and 20th) through the Winter Coat Closet, an ecumenical mission of local churches located at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 446 Hamilton St., Southbridge.

We received so many beautiful donations over the past few weeks. No one in our community should go without a coat! We have men’s women’s and children’s winter coats, gloves and other winter items available. One coat per person, please.

For more information, call (508) 765-9559 or e-mail holytrinitysouthbridge@gmail.com.

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CHURCH LISTINGS

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

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

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

• **Charlton City United Methodist**, 74 Stafford St. 248-7379, web site: CharltonCityUMC.org
Sunday worship and Children’s church 10am

• **St. Anne St. Patrick Church**, 16 Church St., Fiskdale (508) 347-7338
www.stannestpatparish.com
Saturday Vigil Mass at 4 pm, Sunday 8 am, 10 am, 12 noon, Youth Mass (September to May) 5 pm. Daily Mass Mon - Thurs 7:30 and 10 am, Fri and Sat 7:30 am

• **Elm Street Congregational Church**, 61 Elm Street, Southbridge, Ma 01550
Phone: 508-764-8085 • Sunday service 10:00 am
Pastor Kathryn Light

• **Faith Baptist Church**, 515 Dennison Drive, Southbridge
Phone number 508-764-6132,
Worship Service: Sunday 10:00 a.m.

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

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

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

• **Living Word Church of Charlton**, 10 Main Street - Grange building 1st Floor, Charlton, Ma 01507, Pastor Craig Bellisario, (508) 233-8349
Sunday Service 10:00am.
www.livingwordcharlton.com
info@livingwordcharlton.com

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

• **Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale-** 8 Maple St. Sturbridge, 774-304-1021
www.sturfd.org
Sunday Service 9:30 a.m.

• **Bethlehem Lutheran Church-** 345 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566
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• **Holland Congregation Church**
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Pastor Dan Maketansky

• **Holy Trinity Episcopal Church**
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Web: www.holytrinitysouthbridge.org
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Pastor Dan Purtell

• **St. John Paul II Parish**
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Giving thanks, giving back

A Thanksgiving tradition at Saint Joseph School

WEBSTER — As Saint Joseph School students, faculty, and staff began the holiday week, they gathered in prayer for the school’s annual Thanksgiving Prayer Service—an opportunity to thank God for the many blessings of the past year while also remembering neighbors in need. Organized by Religion Instructor, Sr. Mary Ann Papiez and the Grade 6 students, the service reminded everyone that gratitude is more than a feeling; it is an invitation to respond with generosity, compassion, and love.

A cherished part of this tradition is Saint Joseph School’s ongoing support of the Webster-Dudley Food Share. Each year, the school community unites around the belief that no family should face the holidays without the basic necessities—

and that even the smallest contributions, offered with great love, can make a meaningful difference.

In the days leading up to the prayer service, students participated in the Spare Change, Big Hearts! Thanksgiving Coin Drive. Families were invited to send in spare change from home, and students were encouraged to “do good to give good” by completing kind deeds and helpful chores—serving siblings, assisting parents/guardians, and finding simple ways to bring joy to others. Through this effort, students learned that generosity begins in the heart and grows through everyday acts of service.

During the Prayer Service offertory, representatives from each class—from PreK-3 through Grade 8—pro-



Saint Joseph School Kindergarten teacher Mrs. Alicia Maurer assists student Sadie Dejordy as she carries the kindergarten class’s jar of “spare change” to the offertory during the Annual Thanksgiving Prayer Service. The donations were collected during the school’s “Spare Change, Big Hearts!” Thanksgiving Coin Drive supporting the Webster-Dudley Food Share.

cessed forward to present containers filled with the spare change they had collected throughout the week. The sight of students of all ages bringing forward their gifts was both moving and joyful, a powerful reminder that everyone has something to give and that they are strongest when they act together as one school family.

Adding to the excitement was the class challenge: the class that collected the most spare change earned a fun celebration of ice cream sundaes

and extra recess with Assistant Principal, Mr. Richard Skrocki. Congratulations to the Saint Joseph School Kindergarten class for collecting the most “spare” change – contributing \$399.84 to the overall school total of \$1,937.96. While the students certainly enjoyed the friendly competition, the lasting message was clear—their gifts are most meaningful when they offer to help others.

Saint Joseph School is grateful to every family that supported this initiative and helped make this tradition possible. Through the leadership of Sr. Mary Ann Papiez and the Grade 6 students, this year’s Thanksgiving Prayer Service beautifully reflected the mission of Saint Joseph School, and the Gospel values the students strive to live each day. It is a reminder that as they enter the holiday season and prepare their hearts for Advent, they do so with renewed gratitude for God’s blessings—and a deeper commitment to share His love with others, especially those most in need.

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Bartlett Class of 2026 hosting first-ever Craft & Vendor Fair

WEBSTER — The Bartlett High School Class of 2026 is thrilled to host our first-ever Craft & Vendor Fair on Saturday, Dec. 13 in the BHS Gymnasium!

Everyone knows the best holiday gifts are the ones made with love. So, come join us for a magical day of Christmas shopping! Browse handmade treasures from talented local crafters! It’s the perfect chance to find unique gifts you won’t see anywhere else! But wait... there’s more!

While you shop, the PBIS Team will be hosting Breakfast with Santa from 8 AM–11 AM in the BHS Cafeteria! For just \$5 per person, enjoy a tasty Pancake breakfast (with eggs, bacon, and sausage) and get a photo with Santa and The Grinch themselves!

Mark your calendars, bring your

Bethlehem Lutheran, Holy Trinity announce holiday services

friends and family, and don’t miss out on this festive community event! We can’t wait to see you there! Here is a list of our amazing vendors: Lily Ryan Studio, Red Thread Leather Dodger’s Journey Designs, Seven Legends Family Books, Knotty Woman Macrame & Crochet, 3D printed Keepsakes, Bartlett School Store/Pathways, Slow Your Roll, April’s Diamond Paintings, Let’s Get Hook’d, KBH Designs, Paparazzi Accessories , Creative Customs by Stacy, Crafty Creations, Astral House Aromas, Richard’s Paintings, The New Buzz In Town, Giftable Words, French Marigolds, Deb’s Diamond Creation, Wendell’s Colorful Creations, JW’s Woodshed, Susan Rohr, The Gift Basket Boutique/The Peaceful Place Day Spa, Wood ’n Wear, Grandpa’s Hobby, Made from the Hearth, Hazel Bloom Creations, Carol’s and Mandy’s Sewing Items, Honeybee Crafts, Blueberry Cottage Creations, Doris’ Sewing Items, Enchanted Rose Crafts and Gifts, Christine’s Books, DCF Foster Care Recruitment Non Profit, Rita’s Sewing Items and Holiday Items from Hidden Hollow Artistry.

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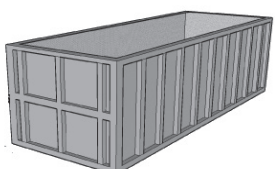
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EDITOR

Winter roads and the quiet work behind safe travel

When winter settles over our community, we tend to notice the season in familiar ways: the early dusk, the sharp cold, the steady hum of furnaces working through the night. What we do not always notice is the quiet, essential work that keeps our region moving despite the weather.

Long before most residents step outside in the morning, highway department crews in each town are already on the road. Their preparation begins well before the first snowflake falls. Public works staff track storm forecasts, ready their equipment, and load sand and salt mixtures designed for different temperature ranges. Plow routes are reviewed and adjusted each season to reflect new developments, road repairs, and shifting traffic patterns. These are not small tasks. They are the foundation of safe winter travel.

A winter storm today is not the same as a winter storm a generation ago. Weather has become less predictable, and storms often move quickly from rain to ice to snow, forcing crews to make real-time decisions about treatment. Each town must balance the safety of its roads with rising material costs, limited staffing, and aging equipment. The work is technical, time-sensitive, and often thankless.

It is easy to forget what goes into a road being clear by sunrise. It is even easier to assume that such service is automatic. But nothing about it is automatic. These are conscious choices made by local departments committed to public safety. That commitment is seen in early-season planning sessions, investment in infrastructure through the Department of Public Works, and the ongoing work to adapt routes and staffing to the changing needs of a growing town.

Residents also play a role in maintaining safe roads. Clearing driveway entrances, avoiding parking on roadways during posted snow emergencies, and giving plow trucks the space they need to do their work all make a measurable difference. A plow driver navigating a narrow secondary road at 3 a.m. cannot perform the job safely if vehicles are left in the way. Cooperation shortens routes, speeds cleanup, and prevents accidents.

The winter ahead will bring its share of challenges. There will be mornings when the commute takes longer, when an unexpected freeze catches everyone off guard, or when crews must regroup after back-to-back storms. But the strength of a community often shows in its routine responses, not only in its emergencies. Our towns have weathered harsh seasons before, not because winter was easy, but because the work was shared.

As the first significant storms approach, it is worth pausing to recognize the people who help thousands of residents reach their destinations every day of the season. Their work is rarely visible, but their impact is. This winter, a little patience, a little preparation, and a little appreciation can go a long way toward keeping our roads — and our communities — safe.

The first real snow of winter always seems to arrive with a lesson attached. It is rarely the deep, postcard snow that shows up on calendars and greeting cards. More often, it is the practical kind. The kind that needs shoveling. The kind that turns a five-minute errand into a twenty-minute production. The kind that reminds us, gently but firmly, that winter is no longer theoretical.

In small Massachusetts towns, that first snowfall sets off a familiar chain reaction. Plow trucks rumble through neighborhoods

Letter submission policy

Letters to the Editor must include the author's name, address, and a daytime phone number for purposes of verification in order to be considered for publication. Only the author's name and the town in which they reside will be published. Letters submitted without all of the required information will not be accepted.

It is the sole prerogative of the Editor to determine whether a submission satisfies our requirements and decency standards, and any submission may be rejected at any time for any reason he or she might deem appropriate.

OPINION

Christmas – the magic of making a difference

BY DR. RB MCFEE
DRMCFEE2020@GMAIL.COM



BEYOND THE PEWS

BY DR. RB MCFEE
CHARLTON CITY UMC

Christmas is a time when need is keenly felt, to paraphrase a line from Dickens' A Christmas Carol, and a time for miracles, too.

Recognizing this, how often have we looked at the magnitude of needs in our community – homeless veterans, lonely people, elderly folks who can't afford heat, hungry families, sick children, kids who might not get toys or a family for Christmas – the list is long. What can one person, what can we do?

I think about the story of the little boy and his grandfather who walk the beach after a dramatic storm; lots of starfish have been stranded beyond the waterline and will without getting into the water. The little boy picks one up and tosses it back into the ocean. His grandfather turns to his grandson and asks how does it matter to toss one in when there are so many others? The boy replies "it mattered to that starfish."

We can't save everyone, but we can help someone, and for that person, it matters a lot! Put differently never underestimate the strength of a committed few who see a need and try to fill it!

The other day I was listening to the radio; a Marine was talking about Toys for Tots, inviting the audience to share new, unwrapped toys for children this Christmas.

Very likely you, like me, are familiar with this venerable charitable endeavor, and I intend to purchase a toy or two to donate.

Here's where it gets interesting. The Marine shared a brief

accounting of how many toys have been collected over the years and children helped over the years.

Did you know how Toys for Tots got started? It was a story I didn't know. Let me share it.

In 1947, the wife of Marine Reserve Major Bill Hendricks was making dolls and wanted to give them to a charity. They couldn't find any to give the dolls to, so after some rolling up the sleeves and brainstorming, the Major got his unit together on a 'mission' to do some good; they ended up collecting and distributing 5,000 toys that Christmas!

In the next year, the Commandant of the Marine Corps directed Reserve units nationwide to do this. Soon thereafter Walt Disney got involved, including designing the Toys for Tots highly recognizable logo.

Since 1947, Toys for Tots has given over 700 million toys to over 300 million children. It started with a doll and a heart to give.

You and I can make a difference even if it doesn't grow into a nationwide toy campaign.

Consider a few women in our congregation thought the community could benefit from another food pantry – they started with a few bags of food, and now the congregation supports it and it shows...many more people are now helped with food.

Any idea how the Red Ket-

les of the Salvation Army we see at Christmas were started?

Well, let's go back in time to San Francisco, 1891. At the time there were around 1000 destitute people in the area, and Salvation Army Captain Joseph McFee was looking for a way to fund a community Christmas dinner for these poor people. Not having the money, he remembered the Simpson's Pot - an old, iron pot in Liverpool, England, where people would drop coins into it. So Captain McFee placed a similar kettle at the Oakland Ferry Landing with a sign saying "Keep the Pot Boiling," and raised enough money to feed the 1000 people. By 1895 there were 30 kettle locations on the West Coast.

Today, it is estimated that the Christmas Red Kettles support the annual efforts of Salvation Army to help roughly 30 million people.

I could go on and on with examples how the vision of one or a few people to do some good grew and grew. Remember the child who started a lemonade stand to help a sick kid and raise awareness and lots of money, too?

If we lead with the heart, and let faith power the vision, we can make a difference in someone's life, and if each one of us reached one or a few people and helped make their day a bit brighter, together we can change the world.

What can you and I and a dedicated community of friends and the faithful create – to help a few, to help many? I've been involved in starting programs and projects. It is exhilarating, challenging, and most of all joyous when you look into the eyes of someone being blessed by the endeavor.

Speaking of blessing others... Blue Christmas is a reality. While many are celebrating and making merry, others are mourning a loss, dealing with health challenges, facing job loss and financial insecurity, or other painful experiences impose hurt during a season meant to be happy.

If you or someone you know is hurting this Christmas, consider the ecumenical Blue Christmas service Saturday, Dec. 20, starting 6:30 p.m., hosted by Charlton City United Methodist Church, 74 Stafford St., Charlton.

Christmas is a time for blessings. Being blessed by Christ as God's Gift to us, and blessing others through the gifts we have been given – time, talent, treasure. Whether a simple smile and cup of coffee to a homeless beggar, or taking the time to help tutor or help a shut in or caroling at a nursing home or starting something that may one day grow nationwide.... The possibilities to make a difference at Christmas are as many as the angels who welcomed our Savior 2000 years ago in Bethlehem.

Together, we can make a difference.

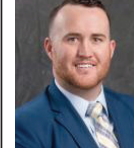
May you be blessed with the opportunity to make a difference, at Christmas, and beyond...

Managing risk at different stages of life

As an investor, you will always need to deal with risk of some kind. How can you manage the risk that accompanies the volatility of the financial markets? The answer depends somewhat on where you are in life.

When you're starting out... If you're early in your career, with perhaps four or five decades until you retire, you can likely afford to invest primarily for growth, which also means you'll be taking on a higher level of risk – because risk and reward are positively correlated. But, given your age, you will have time to overcome the market downturns that are both inevitable and a normal part of investing. Still, even at this stage, being over-aggressive can be costly.

When you're in the "middle stages"... At this time of your life, you're possibly well along in your career and working on at least a couple of financial goals, such as saving for retirement and your children's college education. You'll want to begin adjusting the balance in your portfolio between assets with higher growth and those with lower growth since there will be progressively less time to rebuild losses. You'll need to decide on the balance between risk and growth that's right for you.



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When you're a few years from retirement... You may have already achieved some key goals – perhaps your children have finished college, and you've paid off your mortgage. As a result, you may have more money available to put away for retirement. Growth still matters because your retirement could be 25 or 30 years long, and you'll need investments that can keep up with inflation. But you'll also need investments designed to help provide for your income needs in retirement and provide more stability. Also consider reducing your exposure to higher-risk investments and instead consider investing more in stable dividend-paying stocks, government and investment-grade bonds, and cash.

When you're retired... Once you're retired, you might think you should take no risks at all with substantial assets held in cash. However, you could spend two or three decades in retirement, so you may need some growth potential in your portfolio to stay ahead of inflation. A more balanced mix be-

tween equities and fixed income is generally appropriate. Establishing a withdrawal rate that's appropriate for your lifestyle and projected longevity can help reduce the risk of outliving your money. Of course, if there's an extended market downturn during any time of your retirement, you may want to temporarily lower your withdrawal rate.

Managing investment risk is a lifelong process that evolves with your goals, responsibilities, and time horizon. While you'll look for balance among your investments based on your life stage, having a balanced and diversified portfolio doesn't fully protect against a loss. Still, aligning your strategy with your stage of life can help navigate market volatility and stay on track toward long-term success while avoiding emotional investment decisions. The key is staying informed and making intelligent choices that reflect your current income needs and future aspirations.

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 trevornielson@edwardjones.com.

Lanterns Along Main Street

long before dawn, their orange lights blinking patiently as they inch along narrow streets. Driveways develop neat piles at the ends just after you finish clearing them. Sidewalks become unofficial obstacle courses, with patches of careful walking between the salt.

It is easy to grumble about all of this. Most of us do, at least once. But alongside the annoyance, there is a quieter awareness that kicks in this time of year. A sense that things are happening as they are supposed to.

Snow brings out the unspoken systems that keep a town functioning. Someone is already awake, clearing roads before most people have hit the snooze button. Someone else is scraping the town hall steps. Somewhere, a contractor is answering a call about a furnace that chose the wrong night to quit. None of these tasks come with applause, but they matter more than most of what we talk about on a regular basis.

I've noticed that winter has a way of slowing conversations down, too. People linger a little longer at the post office counter. A neighbor checks in across the driveway, shovel paused mid-task. Even brief exchanges seem more intentional when the cold presses everyone closer to shared routines. We are reminded that help is often

nearby, even if we do not always need it.

There is also something clarifying about snow. It erases the clutter temporarily, covering lawns, curbs, and roadside distractions in the same clean layer. Familiar places look different, not because they have changed, but because we are seeing them stripped down. A simple line of houses. A quiet town common. A road leading somewhere familiar, just softened at the edges.

For children, the first snowfall still carries a certain magic. Even now, you can feel it in the air. Will school be canceled? Will there be enough for sledding? Can snowmen be built before the sun dulls the edges? For adults, the magic may be quieter, but it has not disappeared. It shows up in the first footprints across an untouched yard, or in the sound of snow falling late at night when the world feels temporarily hushed.

Winter also sharpens our awareness of the margins. We notice which steps are icy. Which homes have lights on late. Which businesses stay open even when foot traffic slows. The season quietly reminds us that not everyone experiences it the same way. That awareness does not always translate into action, but it should at least translate

into attention.

Massachusetts towns have lived with winter for a long time. The older houses were built to face it. Main streets developed ways of adapting to it long before anyone used the phrase "winter preparedness." There is no drama in how communities respond. Just repetition, experience, and a steady sense of responsibility.

As the season settles in, snow will become less novel. The complaints will get louder. The novelty will wear thin. But beneath all of that is a structure that works because people make it work, day after cold day. The plow driver. The public works crew. The neighbor with an extra shovel. The shop owner who keeps the lights on even when the street is quiet.

Winter does not ask us to be heroic. It asks us to be steady. To show up. To do what needs doing. Our towns manage that reasonably well most years, not because of grand gestures, but because of ordinary ones repeated often.

When you hear the plow go by tonight, or step carefully across a salted sidewalk tomorrow morning, you are seeing that quiet agreement in action. It is not celebrated, but it is dependable. And in winter, dependability counts for a great deal.

Reliant Foundation awards more than \$1 million in community grants to area nonprofits

WORCESTER — Reliant Foundation has announced that it is awarding \$1,065,000 in Community Grants to 59 nonprofits across Central and Metro West Massachusetts. This brings the Foundation’s 2025 grant total to \$1,125,000, marking the second consecutive year the Foundation has awarded more than \$1 million in Community Grants.

Reliant Foundation’s mission-driven grants program is focused on strengthening mental health and behavioral health resources for children and youth; helping individuals of all ages reach recovery from substance use; building the pipeline of professionals to provide mental health, behavioral health, and recovery services; and supporting initiatives to reduce stigma around mental health and substance use. Over the past eight years, the Foundation has provided nearly \$6.6 million in funding to area nonprofits.

“Last year marked the first time in our history that we granted more than \$1 million; to be able to do it for a second consecutive year gives us an immense sense of pride and impact,” said Reliant Foundation president Kelsa Zereski. “As nonprofits everywhere are having to make difficult programming decisions, driven largely by funding constraints, we feel an even greater obligation to support their missions. Fortunately, our donors and volunteers continue to step up year-after-year to help us fundraise so we can provide this level of funding, and our Board of Trustees has remained steadfast in their commitment to expanding our impact.”

“Our grantees are doing extraordinary work under increasingly precarious circumstances - facing rising community needs with fewer resources than ever before. Their resilience inspires us, but it also underscores just how essential sustained donor support is to the health of our non-profit ecosystem,” said Kristine Bostek, Reliant Foundation Board Chair. “Every contribution—large or small—helps ensure that vital services remain available to those who rely on them. On behalf of our entire board, I want to express our deepest gratitude to all who stand with us. Your generosity enables our mission, strengthens our partners, and brings hope to the communities we collectively serve.”

The following non-profits, located throughout Central, North Central, South Central and MetroWest Massachusetts, are receiving grants from the Foundation this fall:

- 508 Cheers – Teen Trauma Tuesdays programming
- Abby's House - Evidence-Based Support: Women's Services Program
- African Community Education – Think/Give learning activities at Saturday Program
- Addiction Referral Center - Project B.R.A.V.E. (Building Recovery Accessibility through Validation)
- Adolescent Consultation Services - Youth Mental Health Services at Framingham Juvenile Court
- Advocates – Clinical mental and behavioral health care to uninsured and underinsured youth
- Anna Maria College – JOBS Initiative (pathway for training and student support)
- Bancroft School Worcester Partnership – Worcester Partnership Program with Elm Park School
- Behavioral Health Partners of MetroWest - MetroWest Care Connection Program
- Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Central MA and Metro West – Rise Together Mentoring Program at Girls Inc.
- Boston Bulldogs Running Club – Weekly Run program in Worcester to help individuals reach recovery from substance use disorder and reduce stigma around addiction
- Boys & Girls Club of MetroWest – Licensed social worker position at Framingham Clubhouse
- Boys & Girls Club of Webster-Dudley - Mental health and behavioral health programs
- Boys & Girls Club of Worcester – Mental health and behavioral health programs
- CASA Project Worcester - Shine the Light Initiative
- Center for Health Impact – Multilingual Recovery Coach training
- Community Harvest Project – Nutritious foods for Worcester’s residential recovery programs
- Community Healthlink – Programming at residential recovery homes, substance use disorder programs
- Dismas House - Substance use prevention Initiative
- Doc Wayne - Community Clinic for youth and families in the Metrowest region
- Edward Street – Master Teacher Coaching Program
- GAAMHA, Inc. – R.O.O.T.S. Therapeutic Farm Program at Evergreen Grove
- Genesis Club - Zero Stigma Project
- Girls Inc. of Worcester – Wellness Institute Program for Teen Girls

- Girls on the Run Worcester County - Mind & Motion: Building Resilience in Girls across Central MA
- Jeff’s Place – Children’s Bereavement Center
- Jeremiah’s Inn – Renovations for the new Edward Street Residential Recovery Program
- Latin American Health Alliance - Bilingual Recovery Coach Training
- Legendary Legacies – Legacy transport program
- MA Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children – Survivor services program for children and youth
- MARE (MA Adoption Resource Exchange) - Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) Caregiver Training Series and a TBRI Family Support Group
- Open Sky Community Services - Inner Voice Outer Change self-empowerment model at THE PLACE for Empowerment
- Our Bright Future - Our Bright Future SEL Coordinator
- Pernet Family Health Services - Pernet Youth Program
- Rainbow Child Development Center - Mental Health Program for Underserved Children
- Regional Environmental Council - YouthGROW Program
- Recovery Collaboration Project - Program support services including sober housing scholarships and outreach supplies
- Revive of the USA - Sustaining programs and services at Recovery homes in Leominster and Worcester for women and men
- RFK Community Alliance - Behavioral health services for children
- Ready Inspire Act – Sisters Leading Sisters Peer Support
- RISE Above - Pro-social opportunities that improve mental and physical health and build resiliency for children in foster care
- Riverside Community Care - Pediatric Behavioral Health Urgent Care (PBHUC) Program
- Safe Exit Initiative – Harbor Drop-in Center support
- Senior Connection Inc. - Carelink: Mobile Mental Health for Grandfamilies
- Seven Hills - Expansion and full implementation of a Social Disconnection Specialty Practice within the Seven Hills Behavioral Health system of care
- Spark Kindness - Addressing the Emotional Health and Resilience of Children, Youth and Families Project

- Spoonfuls - Food recovery and hunger relief work in MetroWest to Recovery homes
- Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services - Reducing barriers to clinical help for vulnerable populations
- Spoonfuls - MetroWest food rescue and distribution to recovery homes
- The Club: Lunenburg Teen Center - GROW SMART Initiative-gaining resilience and overall wellness through skills mastery and resilience training
- Veterans Inc. – Recovery Coach and Mobile Case Management Position
- Westborough Connects - Together We Thrive: connecting community to strengthen mental and behavioral health
- Whitin Community Center - WCC Youth Outreach and Social Skills Program
- Worcester Addresses Childhood Trauma - Trauma Training Tuesday Series
- Worcester RISE for Health - Ubuntu: RISE’s behavioral health program
- Worcester State University - Peer to Peer Healthy Minds Initiative for WSU Students
- YMCA of Central MA – Behavioral Health Clinician at the Montachusett YMCA
- Youth Villages Massachusetts - LifeSet program for young people aging out of foster care
- YWCA of Worcester - Social emotional health support in the early education and care center

For more information about Reliant Foundation, or about how you can make a difference in the lives and health of our community, visit reliantfoundation.org.

About Reliant Foundation

Established in 1988, Reliant Foundation is an independent public charity whose mission is to advance community health priorities through strategic philanthropy and collaboration. As a 501(c)3 charity, the Foundation offers grants to non-profit organizations within its service area for the purpose of supporting programs that battle critical community health issues like children’s and adolescent mental health, behavioral health, and substance use disorder. Our charity partners work with thousands of individuals in our community to provide life-saving mental health and behavioral health services, recovery coaching, and impactful education and initiatives to reduce the stigma around these issues. For more information, please visit www.reliantfoundation.org.



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Worcester County Sheriff’s Office warms communities with annual winter coat distribution

REGION — Throughout November, Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis and staff from the Worcester County Sheriff’s Office visited Webster Dudley Food Share (Webster), Reconciliation House (Webster), Tradewinds Clubhouse (Southbridge), House of Destiny (Southbridge), the Milford Police Department (Milford), and several other local nonprofits to deliver hundreds of brand-new winter coats for community members in need.

These Southern Worcester County visits were part of the Sheriff’s Office Annual Winter Coat Drive, which included more than thirty stops countywide. The Sheriff’s

Office distributed 4,000 winter jackets during November. All jackets were purchased by the Worcester County Reserve Deputy Sheriff’s Association, a nonprofit that raises funds year-round to support the coat drive and other community-focused programs.

“Many of our residents have little social support and are working to regain stability. The Sheriff’s winter coat drive not only meets a practical need for warm coats but also shows them community support they often don’t expect, and it is deeply appreciated,” commented Jose Vazquez, House Director at Reconciliation House, Inc.



Courtesy

Sheriff Lew Evangelidis and Staff from the WCSO Webster Regional Resource Center pose for a photo with AJ Alkire, Webster Dudley Food Share Director.

“We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the Sheriff’s Department for their generous donation of winter coats to the Tradewinds Clubhouse,” commented Christine Regan, Clubhouse Director. “This act of kindness made a meaningful impact on our members, many of whom expressed relief and gratitude knowing they will be warm and prepared for the colder months ahead. Moments like this strengthen the sense of belonging and dignity that is central to the Clubhouse model.”

“Handing out these coats each year is truly a joy,” said Sheriff Evangelidis. “They represent far more than a warm layer for winter. They reflect a community and law enforcement organization that cares. The individuals who receive these jackets are always grateful, and this drive gives our department a special opportunity to connect with the communities we serve.”

This year’s initiative was made possible thanks to the generosity of many community partners, including Saint Francis

Community Health Care, The Gun Parlor, Mercadante Funeral Home, Cliff & Susan Rucker Foundation, The Krock Family & Commerce Associates, CareOne at Millbury, The Overlook, Diamond Auto Group, KAL Construction & Remodeling, Chop Chop Convenience, Falcone Enterprises, NEPBA Local 550 Worcester County Correction Officers, Pat’s Service Center, Quality Companies, Rockland Trust Bank, and Pam Massad in memory of ‘Duddie’ and Bette Massad, along with numerous additional supporters.

“The level of support we receive each year is remarkable,” added Sheriff Evangelidis. “Every contribution directly helps make our communities stronger and safer.”

Beyond their stops in South County, Sheriff Evangelidis and his team delivered coats to nonprofits in the greater Worcester area and Northern Worcester County, ensuring residents across the region have access to warm winter apparel as the cold weather approaches.



Courtesy

TCA IS PROUD!

Trinity Catholic Academy is incredibly proud of our fifth grade and NJHS students for making the needs of others a priority. At the recent Vendor Fair, our fifth graders sold handmade jewelry, cards, and birdhouses, raising over \$400. Just a few days later, our NJHS members collected much needed personal care items to fill backpacks for the homeless. All donations were delivered to St. Luke’s Guesthouse in Southbridge. At TCA, we strive to teach our students not only strong academics but also the importance of compassion, service, and caring for those who are less fortunate. Their efforts are a beautiful example of faith in action.

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Juniors named to Bay Path honor roll

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical School congratulates the following students in grade 11 on being named to the honor roll for the first quarter of the 2025-2026 school year.

High Honors

Anais Annette Alamo-Abad, Boden Richard Barrell, Kayleigh Rose Bissell, Sagesse Mpolo Budimbu, Olivia Raychal Burgos, Clara Mae Burlingame, Jenna Lynne Ciani, Naomi Natania Cooper, Brianna Nyarkoa Dwomoah, Adrian Dariusz Golemo, Liam Reed Greenwood, Emma Grace Harrington, Owen John Kennedy, Owen David Lemansky, Jared Thomas Magnusson, Julie-Anna Marie Marchetti, Ava June McKellick, Jayden Anthony Minardi, Miles Joseph Moriarty, Johnny Ly Nhan, Anastasia Marie Nieuwenhoff, Devin Matthew Robinson, Autumn-Rayne Rondeau, Owen Wajer Sanford, Kayla Lynn Schroeder, Isabella Christina Sepulveda, Travis Jacob Tong, Payton Cailee Ziemski

Honors

Monica Jelis Alvarez-Rivera, Lacie Rose Andrews, Lillian Lauren Araujo, Winifred Donna Aucoin, Collin William Bachand, Kennadie Taylor Balcunas, Vincent Louis Balducci, Nolan Scott Barton, Benjamin Whitman Bassett, Samantha Mackenzie Belanger, Brett Julius Belzer, Alexandria Helene Blanchard, Alyssa Rose Brown, Dominic Francis Carofaniello, Michaela Sarah Carter, Evalynn Rose Cedillo, Dominic William Cincotta, Leiana Marie Collins, Liam Zachary Colon, Madelyn Lily Creelman, Trinity Chevelle Crompton, Benjamin Jackson Cryan, Liam Michael Cuniff, Destiny Love Fortunata Daviau, Eric Murphy Day, Hunter William Defosse, Livia Cassandra Deluca, Nathan Stephan Donnelly, Molly Elizabeth Dwyer, Jackson Christopher Edwards, Ava Lila Erkoc, Elias Noah Erraihani, Samantha Lynn Fleck, Aria Faith Fournier, Brooke Nicole Fuller, Aliyah Marie Gauvin, Julia Abigail Holton, Dominik Ignatovich, Vkrum Kanchan Jha, Kelsey Rose Karlowicz, Finnian John Keefe, Jayme Douglas Kenney, Alexander James Kowalski, Filip Tadeusz Kulma, Benjamin Mitchell Labbe, Sangey Dawa Lama, Maximilian Thomas Lapriore, Evan Anthony Latuga, Ethan Michael Lemire, Bret Robert Leonardi, Damon James Libby, Perry Khai Lima, Emily Arlene Maliua, Christopher Warren Martin, Aaron Robert Mazur, Finn McDaniel, Colin Archak McIlvaine, Nicholas Isaac Meneguzzo, Alexis Kayla Moore, Saman-

tha Jean Morley, Miguel Angel Mosqueda, Nathaniel Thomas Munson, Kaiya Rowan Murphy, Thomas Andrew Nault, Daniel Anthony Nowlan, Corey Amoako Ntim, Jacey Okyere-Tawiah, Izabella Grace Paquin, Matthew Dean Parmenter, Kiley Marie Paronto, Mayli Ann Pedersen, Iban Alexander Pelaez, Jacob Jan Perry, Kylah Carmen Farai Pierre, Katie Ann Putnam, Sophia Morrihan Ramirez-Murphy, Ava Marie Rennie, Jayliana Rivera, Evan Mitchell Roberts, Dani Roemer, Jake Albert Roemer, Leilani Marie Rohena Torres, Trevor Anthony Rose, Jordyn Alexandra Sabotka, Eziajah Gianni Santiago, Isaiah Omar Santiago, Logan James Schoff, Ella Lanmei Schofield, Michael Ryan Scott, Zachary Stephen Sirard, Addisyn Theresa Skeates, Allison Marie Smith, Brady Patrick Smith, Duane Caden Stephens, Sean Michael Francis Sullivan, Marley Ray Talbot, Eskil John Tranes, Nicholas Aiden Tremblay, Kara Marie Trevarthan, Timothy Nicholas Tripp, Brady Matthew Weeks, Dashiel Robert Williams, Jazzelle Gia Wolverson, Nico Anthony Yacavace, Lucy Vivian Zaleski

Principal’s List

Trevor Riley Amaral, Benjamin Russell Boulmetis, Braiden Corey Chumsae, Aidan Connor Clynne, Madison Clara Drewry, Nicholas George Erickson, Tobias Michael Falco-Foreman, Jacob Paul Ferguson, Hailey Savannah Ferrara, Michael Conner Fitzpatrick, Luciana Isabel Flores, Corbin Vance Fredette, Ely Eric Gemboski, Jinnette Lynn Goguen, Jadyln Marie Goodwin, Emma Lynn Grensavitch, Kaebrielle Amberleigh Hammond, Brady Nicholas Johnson, Cameron Joseph-Michael Kittredge, Abena Kwartemaa Kwarteng, Jaxon David Kevin Leoanrd, Andrew Tadeusz Levitzky, Winters Aleksei Levitzky, Apollo Ridge Logan, Michael Joseph Loverro, Jack Moriarty Maroney, Kiya Isabella McCart, Shaun Kenneth McGrath, Joshua Daniel McLaughlin, Johannys Marie Melendez, Alexander Joseph Morales, Melany Tuyet Ngo, Kiera Ashley Pederson, Isabella Lynn Richard, Gianna Kaylee Rosario, Jaelynn Elizabeth Royea, Benjamin Michael Rucho, Anthony Mark Savasta, Jannessa Ellie Sepuka, Lucas Clement Silva, Julia Rose Simpson, Tiano Joseph Caole Sousa, Hadleigh Anne Splaine, Alexander Gregory St. Jacques, Logan Frederick Stake, Nicholas Ryan Thebeau, Ryan James Ugrinow, Annabelle Lilly Ustinovich, Isabella Anna Vangel, Bryce Joseph Vautour, Sophia Ann Vigeant

Saint Joseph School celebrates annual Thanksgiving feast, honors retired Fire Chief



Courtesy

Saint Joseph School Student Council President Mycheal Jones and Vice President Tenleigh Dowd present a commemorative plaque to Retired Webster Fire Chief Brian Hickey, honoring his 43 years of dedicated service and steadfast commitment to the safety of the Saint Joseph School community.

WEBSTER — On Tuesday, Nov. 25, Saint Joseph School gathered as one faith-filled family for its annual Thanksgiving Feast—one of the most cherished traditions of the school year. For the occasion, the school gymnasium was transformed into a warm and welcoming dining area, complete with two buffet lines to serve more than 300 students, faculty, staff, and guests.

Principal Mrs. Beth Boudreau opened the celebration by welcoming students, guests, and the many parent volunteers whose generosity and teamwork made the day possible. Mrs. Boudreau also offered heartfelt thanks to school chef Mr. Keith Lukasek, who spent hours preparing a delicious turkey dinner for the entire community.

The feast was made even more special by the presence of honored guests, including benefactors John and Jane Gogolinski, Dr. John Kalinowski, and Mrs. Marilyn Fels. Members of the Saint Joseph School Consultative Board were also in attendance, including Chairwoman Mrs. Catherine Kabala and her husband Stanley, and Vice Chairperson Mr. Donald Cushing. The Parish Council was represented by Mrs. Nancy Dowgiewicz and her husband Mark, and Mrs. Gosia Kicilinski and Robert Wojcik. Co-Chairperson Krystal Kolesnik represented the SJS Home and School Association. Saint Joseph School also welcomed community safety partners from the Webster Fire Department including Chief Brian Hickey, Chief Jeffrey Saad, and

several firefighters.

Following introductions, Pastor and Headmaster Fr. Richard Polek led the community in a meaningful Thanksgiving Prayer, encouraging gratitude for God’s gifts and awareness of those in need. Afterward, parent volunteers served a traditional meal of turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, stuffing, and butternut squash, with 8th graders delivering plates to guests and students, exemplifying leadership and service.

After dinner, the assembly continued with a heartfelt presentation honoring retired Fire Chief Brian Hickey for his 43 years of dedicated service to the Town of Webster. Student Council President Mychael Jones and Vice President Tenleigh Dowd expressed

gratitude on behalf of the entire community, recognizing Chief Hickey’s steadfast commitment to protecting and caring for their school family.

They presented a plaque to Chief Hickey, inscribed with the following: “In grateful recognition of 43 years of dedicated service and steadfast commitment to the safety of the Saint Joseph School community. With heartfelt thanks from the students, faculty, and staff of Saint Joseph School. May God richly bless you in your retirement and always.”

The celebration concluded on a joyful note, as the Saint Joseph School Choir led the community in song with “Trading My Sorrows”—a spirited reminder of faith, gratitude, and the strength found in togetherness.

Merry Christmas

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Wales Community Pantry needs help to meet increasing need



Courtesy

On pizza day with Villa Sofia of Brimfield, Pantry Manager Julie Burnell enjoys a hug with a member of our neighborhood.

BRIMFIELD — Neighbors are helping neighbors at the Wales Community Pantry.

Our End-of-Year campaign is in full swing, and our community is stepping up as our needs grow. We have had amazing support from local businesses, individuals, and grant funding this year. We are fortunate to be able to meet the needs of our community but the increased need for food for our neighbors requires fundraising to make it all happen. Can you join them?

Over the last year, the distribution has exploded. In the month of October 2024, we served 179 households 13,102 pounds of food. In October 2025, we saw an increase to 251

households, and we provided 17,563 pounds of food.

Our neighborhood volunteers have stepped up with food drives, weekly distributions, and restocking our shelves with food brought by our van from the Food Bank of Western MA, Stop & Shop, Big Y and many other places.

If you’d like to help your neighbors by donating, please visit www.walescommunitypantry.org or checks may be mailed Wales Community Pantry P.O. Box 185, Wales, MA 01081

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OBITUARIES

Emery L. Fitts, Jr., 77



Southbridge/Holland: Emery L. ‘Sonny’ Fitts, Jr., 77, of Southbridge and formerly of Holland, passed away on Monday, Dec. 1st, in his home after a long illness.

He leaves his wife of 54 years, M. Jeanne (Renaud) Fitts; his sister, Grace Lavallee of Southbridge; his brother-in-law, James Renaud and his wife Jean of Arizona; his sister-in-law, Denise (Renaud) Groharing of California; his two Godsons, Drew Ryder and Roger Lavallee; and many nieces and nephews. He also leaves a great nephew with whom he was very close, Jason Lavallee and his wife Colleen of Thompson, CT and their children, Devyn, Dallas, Dylan and Lauria. Sonny was predeceased by two sisters, Sylvia Stevens and Ruth Lavallee and a niece, Lauria White. He was born in Southbridge the son of the late Emery L. Fitts, Sr. and Alice E. (Farrows) Fitts. He was a US Army Veteran of the Vietnam War and was very proud of his service to his country.

Sonny worked and retired from FlexCon in Spencer after 31 years of service. During that time he was an equipment maintenance person and later supervisor of that department where he earned

the Miles McDonough Award, given by his peers for excellence in service to the company.

Sonny was an avid golfer, enjoying many years on the Monday and Wednesday Leagues at Hemlock Golf Course in Sturbridge. He was one of the founding fathers of the traveling FlexCon BOTOMISO Golf Group over 25 years ago and continues to have over 20 members.

He was a huge Patriots and Red Sox Fan and enjoyed going to and watching games with his great, great nephew, Dylan.

A funeral Mass for Emery will be held on Friday, Dec. 12th, at 11:00am in St. Mary’s Church of St. John Paul II Parish, 263 Hamilton St., Southbridge. Burial in West Ridge Cemetery, Charlton, will be held at the convenience of the family. There are no calling hours.

Sonny loved all his pets through the years and donations may be made to the Second Chance Animal Shelter, 111 Young Rd., East Brookfield, MA 01515.

The Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge, is directing arrangements. www.morrillfuneralhome.com



Emile L Pelletier, 99



Emile L. Pelletier of Webster died at age 99 on Sunday, November 30, 2025 at Overlook Masonic Health Center in Charlton, MA. Emile was born December 26, 1925 in Webster, MA. He is the son of the late Alexander and the late Gracia (Guilmette) Pelletier.

Predeceased by brothers Herve Pelletier, Alfred Pelletier, Ernest Pelletier, Gerald Pelletier and Leon Pelletier, and sisters Yvonne Ayotte, Grace Pelletier, and Sr. Anita Pelletier S.S.A.

He is survived by one son, Ronald Pelletier and his wife Suzanne of Charlton, MA; one daughter, Jeanne Pelletier and her husband Andres Diaz of Mountain View, CA and two grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

He served in the Navy during World War II from 1944 to 1946. He was employed by Wright Line and Worcester Press Steel as a machinist.

He enjoyed camping, hiking, and photography.

A Mass of Christian burial will be held at 11:00 AM on Thursday, December 11 at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 16 East Main St., Webster, MA. Burial will follow in Sacred Heart Cemetery with Military Honors provided by the Webster/Dudley Veterans Council Honor Guard.

Calling hours will be Thursday, December 11 from 9:30-10:30 at Bartel Funeral Home, 33 Schofield Avenue, Dudley, MA.

The Pelletier family is grateful to the caregivers at Overlook Manor who cared for Emile so well.

Because Emile loved the outdoors and hiking the family asks to consider a donation to the Appalachian Mountain Club (<https://www.outdoors.org/donate/donate-form/>) in lieu of flowers.

online guest book at www.bartelfuneralhome.com

All Saints Academy announces Honor Roll

WEBSTER — All Saints Academy has released its honor roll for the first quarter of the 2025-2026 school year.

Grade 8
High Honors: Noah Beaudette, Samantha Gardner, Sophia Martocci, Gianna Monticelli, Connor Shelburne
First Honors: Kallie Fales, Maggie Keegan, Dominic Kistner, Alana Yelu-Attigah
Recognition: Caleb Latino, Benjamin Mukuha

Grade 7
Head of School: Cristian Cruz
High Honors: Lydia Burke, Raegan Duquette, Lucy Messenger, Fiona Radcliffe, Keon Yelu-Attigah
First Honors: Jackson Dunkley,

Emma Healy, Nathan Ruiz, Charlotte Wentworth

Grade 6
Head of School: Norah Healy, Graceanne Troiano
High Honors: Mia Beaudette, Rozlyn Rekowski, Felicity Sweetland, Francesca Zicaro
First Honors: Angelo Bageris, Bennett Drew, Aleena Peterson, Camden Trainor, Lila Turner, Olive Wilson
Recognition: Julia Hansen

Grade 5
High Honors: Aryianna Botelho, Sydney Duquette
First Honors: Nayvalee Ruiz, Isabella Wester
Recognition: Landon McGrail, Brayden Shelburne, Lydia Vienneau

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(Reference Job Code: TC1024).

The Spencer Housing Authority has an opening for a Full-Time Maintenance Laborer

The Spencer Housing Authority is seeking a qualified full-time Maintenance Laborer. The individual hired for this position must have general knowledge of property maintenance, carpentry, floor repairs, minor plumbing, and electrical repairs. Applicant should also have experience with painting, cleaning, plowing, shoveling, and snow removal. Individuals must be available for rotating on-call shifts as well as being available for any weather-related emergencies. Must be able to lift 50 pounds or more. General knowledge of maintenance systems, building equipment and small tools a plus. This is a full time (40 hours) benefited position. Retirement is through the Worcester County Retirement Office. Must possess a valid driver's license and be insurable under Housing Authority insurance. The selected applicant must be able to pass a criminal background check (CORI), and pre-employment physical. Base wage rate is determined by the current Department of Labor (DOL) wage rates in effect at the time of hire. Additional compensation is paid for on-call and after-hours' service. Incumbents will be required to obtain a valid Pesticide Certification/License within one year of hire. The Spencer Housing Authority offers a generous benefits package including health, dental and vision insurance.

Applicants should submit a cover letter and resume to: Spencer Housing Authority 13 McDonald Street Spencer, MA 01562 Attn: Kimberly Hurlbrink You may also email cover letter and resumes to Kimberly Hurlbrink: kim.hurlbrink@spencerhousing.org Resumes will be accepted until 2:00PM on December 19, 2025. Spencer Housing Authority is an equal Opportunity Employer

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<https://www.mareinc.org/child/22536707877>

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.

Cornerstone Bank donates \$20,000 to Worcester County Food Bank to support families facing ongoing food insecurity

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank has reaffirmed its commitment to addressing hunger in Central Massachusetts with a \$20,000 donation to the Worcester County Food Bank. The contribution continues Cornerstone’s annual tradition of redirecting funds typically spent on holiday cards. The bank contributed \$10,000 in both 2022 and 2023, and increased its support this year to meet rising community need.

While the recent federal government shutdown has concluded, many families continue to feel the ripple effects of temporary delays in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. With food costs still elevated and demand for assistance remaining high, Cornerstone Bank prioritized support for local hunger relief efforts. “As a community bank, we believe our resources should create meaningful, measurable impact for our neighbors,” said Cornerstone Bank CEO Todd Tallman. “Redirecting holiday card spending allows us to invest directly in helping families access healthy meals during a season that can be especially difficult for many.”

The Worcester County Food Bank, a Feeding America member, distributes nutritious food through a network of local pantries and meal programs while working to reduce hunger through advocacy and equitable access. The Bank’s funds will be allocated directly to distribution efforts to support residents in immediate need.

“We want our community to feel supported, not just during the holidays, but throughout the year,” Tallman added. “This donation reflects our ongoing commitment to strengthening the well-being of the neighbors we serve.”

About Cornerstone Bank

Cornerstone Bank was formed in 2017, born of a long history of supporting the community, and providing a strong foundation to help people and businesses thrive. Serving Worcester County, Massachusetts, Cornerstone Bank’s local presence and community-based banking model enables a unique ability to deliver outstanding service, with a personal touch. Cornerstone, which is a subsidiary of PeoplesBankCorp, MHC, operating independently under its own name and brand, provides the highest level of service and expertise for individuals, businesses, and community organizations with branch locations throughout Central Massachusetts. Cornerstone works to connect customers with opportunities through a broad range of deposit and loan products and services. Built on Trust is not just a tagline, but also one of our guiding corporate values. Whether a business or personal partnership, Cornerstone stands on the foundation that relationships are built on trust. To learn about Cornerstone Bank’s personal and business banking offerings, please visit cornerstonebank.com or call 800-939-9103.



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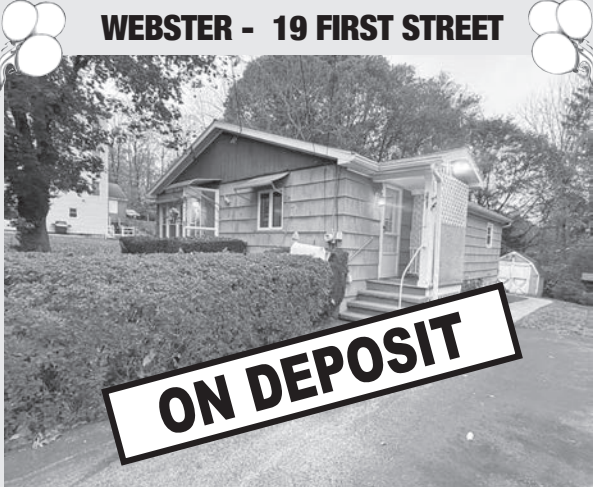
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Webster Lake - 53 Colonial Rd



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LEGALS

The Brimfield ZBA will hold a public hearing on Monday, December 29, 2025, at 5:00 pm in the Town Annex Clerk’s Office, 23 Main St. This hearing is on behalf of Anthony Soto for the property at 94 Holland Rd Brimfield, Assessor’s parcel 17-C-3. The applicant is appealing against a denial from the Building Inspector in connection with his permitted agricultural use of the property. The use is allowed by right in the AR Zoning district. Abutters and members of the public are encouraged to attend and share feedback. The Brimfield ZBA will hold a public hearing on Monday, December 29, 2025, at 5:15pm in the Town Annex Clerk’s Office, 23 Main St. This hearing is on behalf of Stephen Cook for the property at 15 Oakwood Rd, Assessor’s parcel 6-E-47. The applicant is asking for relief of Brimfield Zoning Bylaws s.4, setback for front yard for a garage. Abutters and members of the public are encouraged to attend and share feedback.
December 12, 2025
December 19, 2025

(SEAL)
THE COMMONWEALTH OF
MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL
COURT
Docket Number: 25 SM 003753
ORDER OF NOTICE
To:
Daniel DeStefano Sr.;
Daniel DeStefano Jr.
and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq):
Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC
claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Sturbridge, numbered 170 Shepard Road, given by Daniel DeStefano Sr., Daniel DeStefano Jr. to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Rocket Mortgage, LLC, dated December 5, 2024, and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 71397, Page 180, 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 January 12, 2026, or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of non-compliance with the Act.
Witness, Gordon H. Piper, Chief Justice of this Court on December 1, 2025.
Attest:
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
28591
December 11, 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. WO25P3893EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION**
Estate Of:
**Steven S Choinski
Date of Death:10/07/2025**
To all interested persons:
A Petition for **S/A - Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Stanley R Choinski of Sturbridge 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:
Stanley R Choinski of Sturbridge 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 12/30/2025.**
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.

tice 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: November 26, 2025
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
December 11, 2025

**Town of Brimfield
Conservation Commission
Public Hearing Notice**
In accordance with the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Brimfield Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, January 14, 2025 at 6:00 PM to review a Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) submitted by Joseph Venezia. The RDA requests a proposed building of a barn.
Project Location: 29 East Hill Road (Assessor’s Map (6-B-9.2)
Meeting Location: Public Participation will be In-Person at Hitchcock Academy at 2 Brookfield Road, Brimfield, MA 01010 on January 14, 2025, at 6:00 PM.
Any person(s) interested or wishing to be heard on this request should appear at the time and place designated. A copy of the permit application and plan may be inspected at the Brimfield Town Annex in the Conservation Commission Office, Salisbury Annex Building, 2nd Floor, 23 Main Street, Brimfield, MA 01010 or contact the office at 413-245-4100 ext. 1101.
December 11, 2025

**Town of Sturbridge
Board of Selectmen
Public Hearing**
The Town of Sturbridge Board of Selectmen in accordance with M.G.L. Ch. 140, Sections 57, 58 & 59, hereby give notice that a meeting will be held on Monday, January 5, 2026 at 6:45 p.m., Sturbridge Town Hall, Veteran’s Memorial Hall located at 308 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566 to act on an application for Class II and Class III Used Vehicle license from Curboy Auto Inc., 71 Mashapaug, Road, Sturbridge, MA 01566.
December 11, 2025

**CHARLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**
In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Charlton Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on December 17, at 7PM on the application of Daniel & Justine Grady.
The applicant has filed a Notice of Intent for site improvements including a pool, pergola, fire pit, boulder retaining walls, patio, and walkway within the 100-ft buffer zone to a Bordering Vegetated Wetland. The project location is: 61 T Hall Road, Charlton, MA 01507. Parcel ID: 50-C-5.4.
Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Charlton Conservation Commission will be conducted in person and via remote means. Members of the public who wish to participate can access the meeting remotely by request.
Copies of the NOI may be examined at the Conservation Office by appointment during business hours.
Thomas O’Malley
Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission
December 11, 2025

**Town of Brimfield
Conservation Commission
Public Hearing Notice**
In accordance with the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Brimfield Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, January 14, 2025, at 6:00 PM to review a Notice of Intent submitted by McClure Engineering/co Brian LeClair. The NOI proposes to construct a single-family residence with a detached garage and solar panels on the roof.
Project Location: 241 East Hill Road (Assessor’s Map (3-C-12.1)
Meeting Location: Public Participation will be In-Person at Hitchcock Academy at 2 Brookfield Road, Brimfield, MA 01010 on January 14, 2025, at 6:00 PM.
Any person(s) interested or wishing to be heard on this request should appear at the time and place designated. A copy of the permit application and plan

may be inspected at the Brimfield Town Annex in the Conservation Commission Office, Salisbury Annex Building, 2nd Floor, 23 Main Street, Brimfield, MA 01010 or contact the office at 413-245-4100 ext. 1101.
Roger deBruyn & Joseph Venezia
Co-Chairs
December 4, 2025
December 11, 2025

**CHARLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**
In accordance with the Town of Charlton Stormwater Management Rules & Regulations, the Charlton Conservation Commission will be accepting comments on the following application: The applicant, PMZ Development LLC, has submitted four (4) Land Disturbance/Stormwater Management Permits on December 2, 2025, for land disturbance associated with the construction of a single-family home. The project sites are located at Lot 1-1, Lot 1-2, Lot 1-3, & Lot 1-4 N Sullivan Road, Charlton, MA 01507, and is also known as: Parcel 28-A-3, 28-A-3.1, 28-A-3.2, & 28-A-3.4
Copies of the Land Disturbance Application are available at the Charlton Conservation Commission office during business hours.
Thomas O’Malley
Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission
December 11, 2025

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE’S SALE OF REAL ESTATE
Premises: 173 Pleasant Street, Southbridge, MA 01550
By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Ronald J Benvenuti Jr and Ronald J Benvenuti to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Mortgagee, as nominee for Guild Mortgage Company LLC, and now held by **Guild Mortgage Company LLC**, said mortgage dated October 7, 2022 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 68328, Page 320, said mortgage was assigned from Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Mortgagee, as nominee for Guild Mortgage Company LLC to Guild Mortgage Company LLC by assignment dated February 8, 2024 and recorded with said Registry of Deeds in Book 70191, Page 304; for breach of the conditions in said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at **Public Auction** on January 8, 2026 at 12:00 PM Local Time upon the premises, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

The land, together with the buildings thereon, in Southbridge, Worcester County, Massachusetts, property now known as Parcel B-1 of 173 Pleasant Street, Southbridge, MA, and is more formerly described as follows: BEGINNING at a point at the northeast corner of tract herein described on the westerly sideline of Pleasant Street at the southeast corner of Parcel B-2; Thence S. 37° 37’ 40” W., along the westerly sideline of said Pleasant Street, a distance of one hundred twenty and sixty-one hundredths (120.61) feet to a point; Thence N. 61° 29’ 20” W., along land of Marc A. and Janet M. Courmoyer, a distance of one hundred thirty-three and sixty-one hundredths (133.61) feet to a point; Thence N. 27° 15’ 00” E. along land of Felix Burda, now or formerly, a distance of sixty-eight and eighty-one hundredths (68.81) feet to a point; Thence N. 57° 57’ 00” W. along said Burda land, a distance of four and ten hundredths (4.10) feet to a point; Thence N. 24° 40’ 00” E. along land of Leo Desmarair, now or formerly, a distance of seventy- seven and forty-four hundredths (77.44) feet to a point; Thence S. 52° 02’ 00” E along said Parcel B-2, a distance of one hundred sixty-five and eighty- hundredths (165.80)feet to the point of BEGINNING. The above tract contains an area of 19,670 square feet. For title, see deed recorded herewith.

The description of the property contained in the mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.
For Mortgagor’s Title see deed dated October 6, 2022 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 68328, Page 317.
TERMS OF SALE: Said premises will be sold and conveyed subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens and assessments, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described.
FIVE THOUSAND (\$5,000.00)
Dollars of the purchase price must be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer’s or cashier’s check at the time and place of the sale by the purchaser.

The balance of the purchase price shall be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer’s or cashier’s check within thirty (30) days after the date of sale. Other terms to be announced at the sale.
Brock & Scott, PLLC
23 Messenger Street
2nd Floor
Plainville, MA 02762
Attorney for Guild Mortgage Company LLC
Present Holder of the Mortgage (401) 217-8701
December 11, 2025
December 18, 2025
December 25, 2025

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE’S SALE OF REAL ESTATE
By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Holly A. Moran to Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Inc., dated September 17, 2003, and recorded with the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 31726 at Page 52, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder by assignment from Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., S/B/M Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Inc., to U.S. Bank Trust National Association, as Trustee of the LB Igloo Series IV Trust, dated May 5, 2021, recorded in Book 65100, Page 244; by an assignment of mortgage from US Bank Trust National Association, as Trustee of the LB-Igloo Series IV Trust to U.S. Bank Trust National Association, as Trustee of the LB-Cabana Series IV Trust, dated July 23, 2021, recorded in Book 65813, Page 83. For breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction at 1:00 P.M. on the 7th day of January 2026, at 9 Cricket Drive, Sturbridge, MA 01566, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,
To wit:
The land in Sturbridge with the buildings thereon, situated on the westerly side of Cricket Drive extending from Grasshopper Lane, being lot 11 on a plan of Country Hill Estates by Wayne Morse and Donald Murray, dated February 19,1964 and filed with the Worcester District Deeds, Plan Book 280 Plan 45, bounded and described as follows:
EASTERLY by Cricket Drive 109 feet;
SOUTHERLY by lot 12 on said plan 103.25 feet;
WESTERLY by land of Gervais 109.02 feet; and
NORTHERLY by lot 10 on said plan 102.40 feet.

Subject to restrictive covenants covering the premises and other lots shown on said plan dated April 8, 1964 and recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Book 4462, Page 273.
Premises to be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed.
Terms of sale: A deposit of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by wire transfer to Demerle & Associates P.C., 10 City Square, 4th Floor, Boston, MA 02129 within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. In the event of an error in this publication, the description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control. Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.
U.S. Bank Trust National Association, as Trustee of the LB-Cabana Series IV Trust,
Present holder of said mortgage,
By its Attorneys,
Demerle & Associates P.C.
10 City Square, 4th Floor
Boston, MA 02129
(617) 337-4444

December 11, 2025
December 18, 2025
December 25, 2025

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LEGALS

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate
and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO25P4154EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate Of:
Abner E. Jordan Gonzalez
Also known as: Abner E. Jordan
Date of Death:08/23/2025

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Hilda Rosa Jordan of Southbridge 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:
Hilda Rosa Jordan of Southbridge MA be appointed as Personal Rep-

resentative(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 12/30/2025.**
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: November 28, 2025
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
December 11, 2025

CHARLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Charlton Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on December 17, at 7PM on the application of New England Power Company.
The applicant has filed a Notice of In-

tent for the replacement of structures that support conductor wires in the existing right-of-way and the refurbishment of existing overhead transmission lines within the 100-ft buffer zone of a Bordering Vegetated Wetland. The project location is: Existing Right-of-Ways between Carpenter Hill Road Substation in Charlton, MA, and Snow Street Substation in Southbridge, MA. Parcel ID: Various Parcels.
Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Charlton Conservation Commission will be conducted in person and via remote means. Members of the public who wish to participate can access the meeting remotely by request.
Copies of the NOI may be examined at the Conservation Office by appointment during business hours.
Thomas O'Malley
Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission
December 11, 2025



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All Saints Academy students answer the call

WEBSTER — Food insecurity does not have one face. Children, seniors, veterans, college students, and so many others may experience it at different points in their lives. Some individuals rely on assistance for long periods of time, while others only need temporary support to get through an unexpected challenge.

Many people who have always had food on their tables are surprised to learn that some fam-

ilies must choose between buying groceries and paying for essential expenses like housing, childcare, utilities, medical costs, and other basic needs. Lack of proper nourishment affects both mental and physical health, and for children it can weaken the immune system, hinder development, and make learning significantly more difficult.

So, what can be done to help local food banks?

At All Saints



Academy, the answer came from our families. The All Saints Academy National Junior Honor Society hosted a themed food and hygiene

drive during New England Catholic Schools Week—and our school community donated more than 1,100 items to support area food pantries (St. Vincent

de Paul, Buckey's Food Pantry, Thrive Food Pantry and some local families directly).

To make the week fun and engaging, NJHS in-

duced a daily theme and a special challenge to “hide the Knight,” our school mascot, under the mountain of donations: Munchie Monday kicked off the week with over 100 snack items such as granola bars, peanut butter crackers, and nuts; Two-Can Tuesday brought in more than 300 canned goods; Wellness Wednesday added over 250 hygiene items, including toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, and soap; Thankful Thursday focused on Thanksgiving staples, collecting 286 items; Family Favorite Friday revealed that our students love pasta, macaroni & cheese, and peanut butter (greater than 165 items).

By the end of the week, we had successfully covered the ASA Knight—and even more importantly, students gained a deeper understanding of food insecurity, the challenges many families face, and the power they have to help. They also walked away with a renewed sense of gratitude for the food they enjoy every day.

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— OF —

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• À la carte menu

• DANCING START AT 6PM

• DINNER 4PM - 10PM

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GUARANTEED RESERVATION REQUIRED

PROPER ATTIRE

508-755-6408

Santa pet photo shoot a success!

BY JIMMY FALZONE
FOCAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHARLTON — Saturday, Dec. 6 was a great day for the annual Santa Pet Photo Shoot sponsored by FOCAS (Friends of Charlton Animal Shelter) and the Cornerstone Bank Charlton branch. The parking lot of their Route 20 location in Charlton was busy with four legged friends, children, and adults alike. All were very anxious to have their picture taken with Santa. Friends of Charlton Animal Shelter (FOCAS) have been putting this event on for more than 14 years now. Cornerstone Bank's Charlton branch has partnered with FOCAS on this event for so

many years that customers now regularly ask manager Julia Westwell ahead of time for the date, which is typically the first Saturday in December each year, so they can put it on their calendars.

The lobby was filled with excitement of children waiting to see Santa. Parents and animal owners were all smiling as each took turns for a photo with Santa on his sled or his chair. All you can hear is the sound of squeaky toys trying to get the dogs' attention for the perfect photo. The photo shoot yielded 33 dogs, 1 cat and many children and adults. Focas is grateful for Cornerstone Banks continued dedica-



tion to the people of the community for helping in sponsoring this event. If you would like more information on what FOCAS does

for the community visits its website at www.focascharlton.org to read all the amazing things Focas has done and if you would like

to donate funds so we may continue to help the animals at the Charlton Animal Shelter from our community.

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