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Thursday-Friday, October 23-24, 2025

Southbridge Public Schools open Sensory Immersion Room

SOUTHBIDGE — Southbridge Public Schools, with its partners The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts and Clark University’s Mosakowski Institute for Public Enterprise, today celebrated the official launch of its Sensory Immersion Room (SIR) at Southbridge High School. The SIR integrates immersive technology, virtual reality, and sensory equipment to create customizable, calming, and therapeutic environments for all students, including those experiencing behavioral health challenges or sensory differences. This state-of-the-art



Courtesy

Amie Shei (pictured second from left), President and CEO of The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, and Nadia Ward, Executive Director of the Mosakowski Institute for Public Enterprise at Clark University (pictured far right), join William Metzger, Interim Receiver/Superintendent of Southbridge Public Schools, as he cuts the ribbon on the Sensory Immersion Room at Southbridge High School on Oct. 17.

multisensory space uses evidence-based clinical interventions known to help students manage anxiety, decompress, improve mindset, receive therapeutic intervention, and self-regulate while receiving support from trained counselors. It is the first such SIR to be launched in a public-school setting in Massachusetts.

Similar multisensory environments have been widely used in clinical and therapeutic contexts, for instance with individuals who have autism spectrum disorder, Alzheimer’s disease, and complex behavioral health needs.

The SIR is the third tier of intervention of the Southbridge CARES (Clark-Southbridge

Advancing Resilience in Education and Support) Project, a school-based Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) mental health initiative designed to reach up to 400 students across four grades (9th through 12th) and stimulate mental, personal, and academic growth and achievement. The number of adolescents facing mental health

challenges has greatly increased since the pandemic. The goal of the program is to improve students’ academic performance, strengthen social-emotional and behavioral health, increase school engagement, and better prepare high school students for college and career success.

“This partnership with Clark University and the Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts has been a home run for our students,” said William Metzger, Interim Receiver/Superintendent of Southbridge Public Schools. “The Southbridge Public Schools are committed to addressing the social emotional needs of our students as we continue to work to remove all barriers to academic success. We are honored to be the first public school in the Commonwealth to add this incredible tool to support our students’ well-being. We cannot thank our partners enough for the generous support.”

Project partners joined school leaders and community members for guided tours of the SIR and visited demonstration tables to learn about the other two tiers of

Turn To **ROOM** page **A8**

Charlton officials settle dispute over house renumbering request

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — Nearly a year after Charlton paved the way for changes to its house numbering bylaws, the first major debate over a requested renumbering dominated the Select Board’s meeting on Oct. 14.

Charlton voters approved a bylaw amendment during the fall town meeting last October granting the Select Board power to approve policies for number assignments on buildings and properties. It took a year before any major debate or disagreement emerged regarding requests to owners to change their existing house numbers.

Changes in the bylaws now reserve letters like “A” or “B” for duplexes that share a single driveway, and seeks to work with homeowners along certain routes to change their numbers to be in more numerical order. This has been deemed significant for public safety and emergency response to better locate and identify and locate homes. But for some the requests may seem too cumbersome.

That was the case for Brian Lafleche, owner of 77 E. Baylies Road which was recommended to change the number to 81. Lafleche met with the Select Board in a public hearing to denounce the requested change calling it an “unnecessary hardship” on his family.

The ensuing debate included input from several local officials, including Zoning Enforcement Officer Curtis Meskus and Fire Chief Rob Barton who acknowledged the safety and emergency response significance of the change while also recognizing the citizen’s concern. The Select Board was also initially divided on the matter, but Selectman David Singer made it clear he wouldn’t vote to force the change on Lafleche reminding everyone the change would also require the family to update legal documents like licenses and passports to reflect the new number.

“I think there are times where we hope that if it’s not too much on a resident that they would want to work with the town, but there are times where things do require a bit more work or effort on someone’s part and if a resident isn’t going to want to do that I loath to do things if there are, in my own mind, other options. With all due respect to the work that’s been done I just think there are other options,” said Singer.

Town officials and the Select Board eventually came to a compromise with the homeowner to take no action as Lafleche had indicated a possible negotiation with a neighbor to potentially renumber a different property and other neighboring lots are currently empty. With the potential for those properties to host new homes in the future, town officials decided to leave the situation as it is until there is a serious need to return to the table to further negotiate a resolution on the matter.

Rotary Club of Sturbridge presents Fifth Annual TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K, 1K & Fun Walk

STURBRIDGE — The Rotary Club of Sturbridge has announced that pre-registration is now open for its popular TREK Sturbridge Halloween 5K, 1K, and Fun Walk, which is slated to return on Sunday, Oct. 26, according to club president and race director Klaus Hachfeld.

“To pre-register for this year’s event, just go to getmeregistered.com, and type ‘Sturbridge’ in the search field in the upper right-hand corner,” says Hachfeld.

All activities begin at the OSV Education Center on Old Sturbridge

Village Road (not to be confused with Old Sturbridge Village Academy at the main entrance to the village). Parking will be available in the Education Center lot.

The family-friendly event offers two timed races, including a 5K Trail Run & Fun Walk, and a 1K Pre-Teen Run. In the spirit of the season, participants are encouraged to come in costume. The event also includes free children’s game starting at 9 a.m. at the Education Center.

The timed 1K Pre-Teen Run (\$20 registration)

starts at 9:15 a.m. This is for the 12 and under crowd, and the course is accessible for anyone with mobility challenges.

The timed 5K Trail Run (\$35 registration) & Fun Walk (\$30 registration) will start at 10 a.m. using Old Sturbridge Village Road and the Arbutus Park Trail in the Leadmine Mountain Wildlife Conservation Lands.

An awards ceremony will follow at 11:15 a.m. starting with a competition for best Halloween costume for all registered runners and walkers. Judging will be by pop-

ular choice.

On-site registration will also be available starting at 8:30 a.m. on the day of the race.

The Trek Sturbridge Halloween 5K and Fun Walk is a Sturbridge Rotary Club fundraiser, with all profits going to the organization’s community needs projects. For additional information, or to sign on as an event sponsor, email the race director at laserklaus@gmail.com. Or visit the Sturbridge Rotary Club Web site at <https://sturbridgerotary.com>.

Master Masons celebrate 250-year anniversary of “Knox Noble Train of Artillery”

BY BRO. JIMMY FALZONE
MAJOR GENERAL SALEM TOWNE LODGE

STURBRIDGE — On Sunday, Oct. 12, the Sturbridge common was packed with spectators to watch the Master Masons celebrate one of the most pivotal episodes in American military history, leading to the founding of this great nation 250 years ago. In the winter of 1775-1776 Colonel Henry Knox’s Noble Train of Artillery passed through

Courtesy

(Right) Members of the Sons of the American Revolution demonstrating and firing their muskets.



this area in Massachusetts on the way to Boston. Here is a little bit of history.

On Nov. 16, 1775, General George Washington sent Colonel Henry Knox to Fort Ticonderoga in upstate New York to retrieve cannons and munitions from the Green Mountain Boys led by Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnaold. Colonel Henry Knox was only 25 years old and traveled 300 miles in the dead of winter of 1775-1776 from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston. Knox selected 58 cannons that was transported by oxen-drawn carts in

what became the “Knox Noble Train of Artillery.” After 56 days of traveling, Knox and his troops erected fortifications over Dorchester Heights overlooking Boston. The British were driven out of Boston to a flotilla of ships heading for Nova Scotia. General George Washington claimed his first victory of the American Revolution, in a large part due to Colonel Henry Knox’s Noble Train of Artillery.

To commemorate Brother Knox’s achievement and contribution to American independence, a Turn To **MASONS** page **A10**

Community Calendar

October 24–31

Friday, Oct. 24
At dusk the air turns crisp and bright, as Brimfield Winery’s lights ignite. Music and cider from six to nine, with local food and harvest wine.

Saturday, Oct. 25
Pumpkins glow at Charlton’s Common Green, a family fair with a festive scene. Crafts from ten till three appear, then hayrides roll to end the year.

Sunday, Oct. 26
The Sturbridge Federated Church will sing, at morning worship welcoming spring—

or rather fall—with song and prayer, and homemade pies for all who care.

Monday, Oct. 27
At Jacob Edwards Library, seven sharp, a spooky tale to make hearts harp. Ghost stories old, by candlelight, will fill the shelves with friendly fright.

Tuesday, Oct. 28
The Southbridge Council convenes at eight, Town Hall doors swing—don’t be late. Hear voices raised in local say, deciding how we pave the way.
Wednesday, Oct. 29

The Hitchcock Academy hosts a class, on wreaths of pine and holiday glass. From six to eight, all ages meet, to craft a sign of winter’s greet.
Thursday, Oct. 30
At Bay Path Tech, young actors show, a Halloween play with a comic glow. Curtain at seven, tickets at door—laughter and chills, who could ask for more?

Friday, Oct. 31 – Halloween Night
The moon rides high above Charlton’s hills, while goblins prowl with candy thrill. Trick-or-treat from five to eight, mind the crosswalks—don’t tempt fate!

End your week with pumpkins bright, and neighbors smiling in candlelight.

VILLAGER ALMANAC

OPEN TO CLOSE

SOUTHBRIDGE TOWN HALL

Monday-Wednesday:
8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Thursday: 8 a.m.-8 p.m.
Friday: 8 a.m.-12 p.m.

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Tuesday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Wednesday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Thursday: 9 a.m.-8 p.m.
Friday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Saturday: 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (May 25 will be our last open Saturday until Labor Day) Sunday: Closed

CHARLTON TOWN HALL (508) 248-2200

Office Hours:

Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays
.....7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Tuesdays7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.
FridayClosed

visit www.townofcharlton.net or more information.

Individual offices may vary

PUBLIC LIBRARY (248-0452)

For library hours please check

www.charltonlibrary.org

POLICE DEPARTMENT (248-2250)

Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
For emergencies, dial **911**

FIRE DEPARTMENT (248-2299)

Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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Dudley-Charlton Regional School District
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Charlton Elementary School
..... (508) 248-7774 or (508) 248-7435
Heritage School (508) 248-4884
Charlton Middle School.....(508) 248-1423
Shepherd Hill Regional High School
.....(508) 943-6700
Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical
High School (508) 248-5971 or (508) 987-0326

HOLLAND: 413-245-7108

Mon – Thurs 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

FISKDALE: 508-347-6486

Weekdays 9:00-4:30 and Sat. 9:00 -12:00

STURBRIDGE 508-347-6463

Weekdays 8:30 – 5:00 and Sat. 9:00 -12:00

BRIMFIELD: 413-245-3451

Weekdays: 9:00 – 4:30 and Sat. 9:00 -12:00

WALES: 413-245-9808

Weekdays 8:30 – 12:30 and 2:00 – 4:30 and
Sat. 9:00 – 12:00

CHURCH LISTINGS

• Central Baptist Church

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

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

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

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

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

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

www.livingwordcharlton.com

info@livingwordcharlton.com

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

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

www.sturfed.org

Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.

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

Phone 508-347-7297

Web: www.bethlehemsturbridge.org

Services - Sunday 9:00 am

Pastor Dan Purtell

•Holland Congregation Church

“Where the Bible is preached”

11 Sturbridge Road, Holland, 413-245-9926

Hollandchurch.org

Sunday Service @ 10:00 am

Pastor Dan Maketansky

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church

446 Hamilton St., Southbridge, MA 01550

Phone: 508-765-9559

Web: www.holytrinitysouthbridge.org

Sunday Service 11:00 am

Pastor Dan Purtell

REAL ESTATE

Charlton
\$585,000, 9 T Hall Rd, Depierri, Dennis M, and Depierri, Stephanie R, to Flahive, Kevin.

\$570,000, 10 Dolge Ct, Belanger, Lois A, to Dowd, Eric, and Dowd, Karlee.

\$517,500, 73 Haggerty Rd, Raiche, Raymond, to Shaw, Christopher, and Shaw, Lauren.

\$125,000, Hiland Rd #5, Hansen, Christopher R, and Hansen, Krystal L, to Ib Developer LLC.

\$27,000, Carpenter Hill Rd, B D & M Rt, and Mann, Brett, to Forever Hopeful LLC.

\$10,000, 72 Leland Dr, Surprenant, Robert L, to Baker Ft, and Baker, Leland H.

\$10,000, Flint Rd, Surprenant, Robert L, to Baker Ft, and Baker, Leland H.

\$10,000, Partridge Hill Rd, Surprenant, Robert L, to Baker Ft, and Baker, Leland H.

Holland
\$20,000, 11 Chandler Rd, Miller Randy N Est, and Miller, Monica A, to Arenas Investments LLC.

SOUTHBRIDGE
\$520,000, 21 Coombs St,

Chamberland, Paul R, and Chamberland, Kathleen A, to Torres, Phillip.

\$435,000, 32 Roger St, Hudon, Paul R, to Riley, Cameron.

\$415,000, 41 Edwards St, Wentworth Timothy A Est, and Wentworth, Catherine T, to Miller, Louis A, and Miller, Sarah M.

\$365,000, 370 South St, Babine, Philip J, to Robitaille, Nicole.

\$295,000, 40 Dennison Ln, Patraw, Jason T, to Echevarria, Joel, and Maestra, Elizabeth.

STURBRIDGE

\$1,065,000, 33 Mountain Brook Rd, Audino, Robert L, and Audino, Michelle A, to Calo, Joseph, and Calo, Kathryn.

\$634,900, 74 Fiske Hill Rd, Goulet, Mchael D, and Goulet, Diane, to Drake, Dillon, and Julian, Vanessa.

\$540,000, 7 Birch St, Stockhaus, Matthew R, and Stockhaus, Michelle L, to Gay 3rd, Lawrence F.

\$410,000, 199 New Boston Rd, Drake, Dillon, and Julian, Vanessa, to Kozerski, Adam, and Boulanger, Padiorat.

PRIVATE CONTRACTORS SNOW PLOWING

The Town of Charlton Highway Department seeks Private Contractors for snow plowing operations throughout the 2025-2026 winter season. Applications, service agreement, and required documents can be obtained by visiting the Town of Charlton website: <https://townofcharlton.net/627/Snow-Ice>, calling (508) 248-2212, or email: dpwadmin@town-ofcharlton.net. These are open until filled positions. The Town of Charlton reserves the right to reject any and all applications in the best interest of the town.

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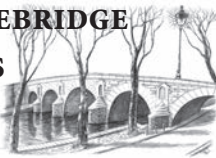
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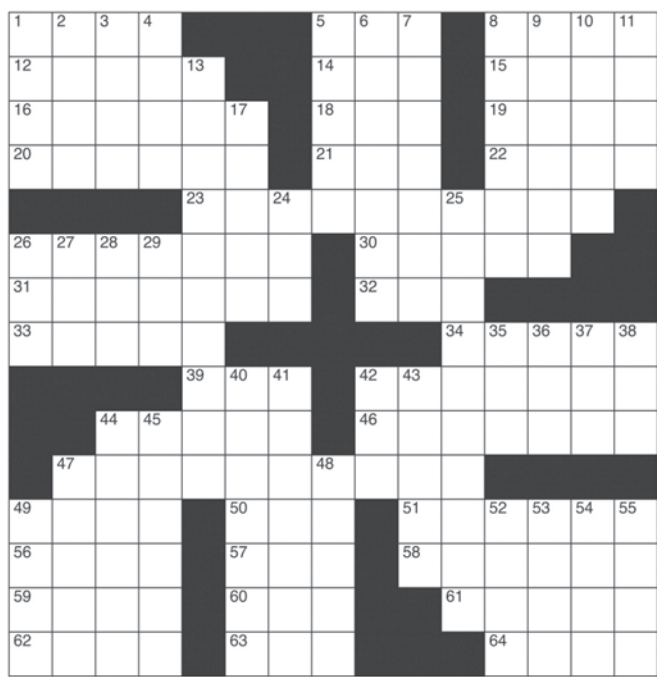
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CLUES ACROSS

- Remark
- Upper body part
- Expression of dismissiveness
- Alternate name
- Popular beverage
- Swiss river
- Step-shaped recess
- Rocker Stewart
- Bright shade of color
- Popular “street”
- Wrath
- Heat units
- Nocturnal omnivorous mammals
- Fall back into
- Remove from the record
- Sound a splash made
- Popular Dodge pickup model
- Jamaican river

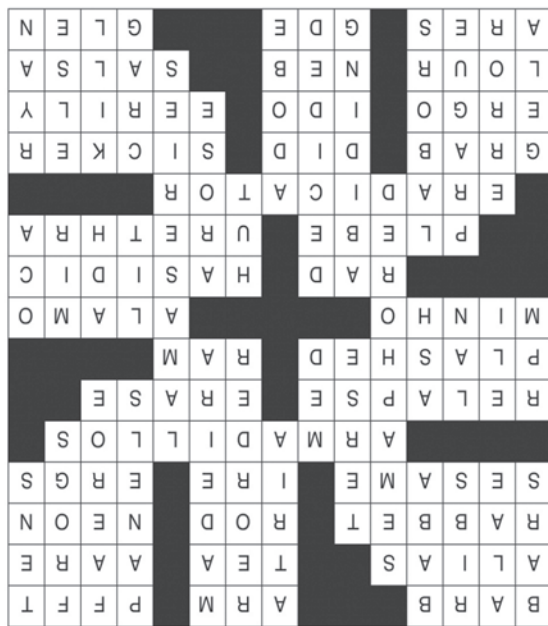
- Notable event in Texas history
- Cool!
- Subset of Judaism
- Newly entered cadet
- Duct in urinary system
- Exterminator
- Snatch quickly
- Have already done
- Less healthy
- Therefore
- What couples say on the altar
- Mysteriously
- Look angry or sullen
- Bird’s beak
- Taco ingredient
- Square measures
- Google certification (abbr.)
- Singer Hansard

CLUES DOWN

- Pubs
- Wings
- Popular BBQ dish
- Small sponge cake
- Open-roofed entrance halls
- Organize anew
- Type of wine
- Forums
- North Atlantic islands (alt. sp.)
- Pond dwellers
- Large integers
- Signaled
- Brief
- Type of student
- Tibetan monasteries
- Revolutions per minute
- NY Giants great Manning
- Local area network

- Residue from burning
- Illuminated
- Vasopressin
- Notable space station
- Wood sorrel
- Adhering to laws
- Chose
- Hovel
- Stood up
- European city
- Works ceaselessly
- Mistake
- Sun-dried brick
- Sicilian city
- A steep rugged rock or cliff
- Murder
- Other
- “Deadpool” actor Reynolds

PUZZLE SOLUTION



Safe boating certificate course scheduled at Milford High School

MILFORD — The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Tri-State Flotilla, Massachusetts will be instructing a boating safety class Saturday, Nov. 8 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. that meets current state mandated educational requirements.

The Boat America Course is offered in a one-day format developed to provide the skills and confidence needed to explore the coast and inland waters by boat. Basic knowledge and skills are needed to have safe and enjoyable boating experiences.

This course is perfect for families that have just purchased any type of boat or are planning to in the future, and for the boater keeping up with changes to boating regulations and laws. Basic marine-spike seamanship (knots etc.) will also be included. Successful completion of the course will certify any minor, from 12 to 16 years of age, to operate a powerboat, including a Personal Water Craft / Jet Ski (for 16 & 17-year-old operators), on all Massachusetts waters; in conjunction with the Mass. Environmental Police. Approved by National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) it will also cover the requirements to operate a vessel in most other states & many countries where boating safety education is mandatory including Rhode Island and Connecticut.

The Hanson-Milone Boater Safety Act, signed into Mass. Law January 8, will now require ALL Mass. motorboat operators to complete an approved Safe Boating Certificate course before April 1, 2026 for anyone born after Jan. 1, 1998, and by April 1, 2028 for boaters born before Jan. 1, 1998. Enforcement of the new law will begin on Sept. 1, 2026. This course meets the future Mass. requirement. Most boating insurance companies offer a discount on premiums for successful completion of this course.

Participants 16 years old and under must be accompanied, in person, by a registered parent/guardian. Space is limited, so register soon:

Milford High School courses offered at 31 West Fountain St., Milford.

Registration is managed through the Milford Community School Use Program, https://milford-communityprogram.activityreg.com/selectactivity_t2.wcs

Adult - Fall-2025 - Boat America Certificate Class or call Laura Farrell (508) 478-1119, email lfarrell@milfordma.com; The registration deadline is Oct. 25

For additional USCGAux. information: phil.uscgaux@verizon.net or (508) 478-3778.

To locate these and other USCG Auxiliary courses (BA and BS&S) that will meet certification requirements go to: https://www.cgau.org/boating/class_finder/index.php

The Coast Guard Auxiliary is the uniformed civilian component of the U.S. Coast Guard and supports the Coast Guard in nearly all mission areas. The Auxiliary was created by Congress in 1939. For more information, please visit www.cgau.org.

News Publications, Local Cable Access Channels, and Organizations: We would appreciate coverage in your next issues covering ALL locations or posting as soon as possible on your website, channel, or bulletin board!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Phil Kubat - Public Education Officer - USCGAux. 10-2

The following is for copy/paste use by Cable Access Channels to ensure the print is legible as posted in your system....

If posting the full press release body, please adjust font size or split on two pages/screens... also, the artwork could be used in posting... The following pages can also be printed and used for posting at your location to help us reach the local boating community.

BOAT AMERICA One - Day Boating Safety Course for State Certifications Milford High School

BOAT AMERICA One - Day Boating Safety Course for State Certifications Milford High School

Saturday November 8, 2025 31 West Fountain Street, Milford, MA....9 AM to 5 PM

The Hanson-Milone Boater Safety Act, signed into Mass. Law January 8, will now require ALL motorboat operators to complete an approved Safe Boating Certificate course before April 1, 2026 for anyone born after 1/1/1998, and by April 1, 2028 for boaters born before 1/1/1998. Enforcement of the new law will begin on September 1, 2026. This course meets requirement.

Course offered by your local U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Tri-State Flotilla, Massachusetts

Registration is managed through the Milford Community School Use Program, Adult Educational https://milford-communityprogram.activityreg.com/selectactivity_t2.wcs# or Laura Farrell (508) 478-1119 email lfarrell@milfordma.com; keeping in mind that availability is limited. The registration deadline is Oct. 25. Participants 16 years of age and under must be accompanied, in person, by a registered parent/guardian.

For additional USCGAux. information: phil.uscgaux@verizon.net or (508) 478-3778



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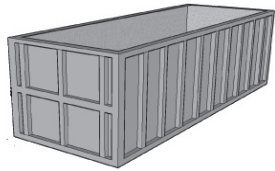


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BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

The quiet strength of small town volunteers

When the leaves begin to fall and the daylight fades early, it’s easy to forget how much life hums beneath the surface of a small town. Yet in places like Southbridge, Sturbridge, and Charlton, that hum is powered by volunteers—the folks who rake the common before the Harvest Festival, organize the senior center craft fairs, and somehow find time to coach youth soccer after work.

They don’t do it for headlines. They do it because community doesn’t sustain itself.

In recent years, every board, from zoning to library trustees, has sounded the same refrain: “We need help.” Volunteerism is the quiet scaffolding that holds up small-town life, and when that scaffolding starts to shake, everything from parades to public safety feels it.

These are not abstract problems. A vacant board seat means delayed decisions on housing and budgets. A thinning roster of scout leaders means fewer programs for kids. Even fire and EMS departments across the region rely on volunteers willing to wake at 2 a.m. when the alarm rings.

But there’s good news: the fix isn’t complicated. It takes time and a willingness to show up. Every person who attends a meeting, serves soup at a fundraiser, or reads to children at the library adds another brick to the civic foundation.

Volunteering isn’t about giving hours you can’t spare—it’s about weaving your life into the town’s ongoing story. If every adult in Southbridge, Sturbridge, Brimfield, Holland, Wales, and Charlton gave a single evening a month to public service, every board seat would be filled, every community event would thrive, and every child would see the living proof that local life still matters.

Autumn always reminds us that seasons change, and people move on. But a strong community endures when new hands are ready to carry the torch. If you’ve been thinking about getting involved, this is the season to do it. Your town is waiting.

OPINION

TO THE EDITOR

Consider becoming a ‘Friend’ of the Charlton Public Library

To the Editor:

The Charlton Public Library gets by with a lot of help from our friends!

Through the years, Friends of Charlton Public Library have raised significant funds that support children’s programming, including the Summer Reading Program and 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten; contribute to new and emerging technology; sponsor author talks, musical entertainment, health and gardening seminars, and much more.

But money isn’t the only thing the Friends contribute—last year, members dedicated their time supporting several programs and fundraising events. In addition, the Friends have rallied countless times to advocate for adequate library funding.

Oct. 19-25 is the 20th annual National Friends of Libraries Week, and it’s the perfect opportunity for the staff and trustees of the

Charlton Public Library to give our Friends a big shout out for all they do to make a positive impact on us every single day.

We know the Friends are always looking for new members and volunteers. They have so much fun while working to make our community better. Joining is just a click away—please visit <https://charltonlibrary.org/friends-of-charlton-library/> and click “Join.” Be sure to fill out the volunteer application while you’re there and you’ll get a quick response.

Joining the Friends of the Library is a terrific way to make new friends of your own, give back to our community, and make the library even better.

Sincerely,
Betsy Perry
Director
Charlton Public Library

Success?

Over the last few several weeks, the topic of “success” has been raised – from people I mentor, colleagues, even in conversations with friends, including ones who are people of faith.

Topics of career, church, and life in general involved the implication that if you achieve certain levels in life, obtain a specific job, increase attendance, or manage to accumulate certain benchmarks of success – car, house, vacations – or rack up a bunch of accomplishments, you’ve made it, whatever it is, as Vonnegut might inquire.

Not that these in and of themselves aren’t worthy objectives. They are. But earthly achievement does not fully define us in terms of success, and we need to avoid grading ourselves solely by these barometers, as if an instructor has less value than a professor, or a manager is a better person than a new hire, or a smaller church is less impactful than a larger one.

My late aunt and uncle co-founded a tiny church in New Jersey with a couple other families. Over the years people in the community came to call it “the giving church.” Even though it remained small, it became a significant resource for the community.

I’ve known people who have had lives of great fulfillment in purpose, who walked with the Lord, and reflected Him well, who have very little material wealth, and yet they have lived immensely successful lives in what lasts long after antiques break, cars get old, houses run

quality brownies. They chose to help others.

“There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow men. True nobility lies in being superior to your former self.” — Ernest Hemingway

As for people of faith – congregant or clergy, is success body count in the pews? Or how we reflect Jesus, help others see Him through us, how we live our life? Do we fulfill our mission with each person we meet? Do we share the Love of God with others.

If that is the definition of success, I know several churches in our area that have made it. Consider the Food Pantries of Charlton UMC and St. Josephs Parish. Consider their prayer ministries, the outreach efforts to shut ins, the thrift stores that provide new or carefully pre-owned items at great prices, often enabling people starting over, or starting out to have nice things at good prices, who sponsor church suppers at reasonable prices for the community to enjoy fellowship. Consider the hospitality and camaraderie, the sense of welcome when you attend church or mass at these places. Check them out.

Our Creator gives us a good idea how He thinks of us....

“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!” — I John 3:1

To be sure, life is complex. We must pay the bills. We work hard to better our situation and advance our careers. It is in so doing we can provide more guidance, opportunities – time, talent, treasure – to help others, whether that involves our church, other philanthropies, or individuals in need.

But when we don’t hit the goal we set for ourselves, is that failure? Is our benchmark even valid or worth the effort? And if we have not yet achieved it, does that mean the journey -in Christ, in faith, in fellowship, in work – was not worthwhile?

The trap is conflating mortal barometers of success with Heavenly objectives.

When we focus on our lives, and house of worship not just from a worldly context, but acknowledging the success of our life and church mission is in the magnitude of our engagement and caring – for each other, those who visit, and those around us in our community....that is very likely how God defines our success, and a good definition for us, too!

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.” – Colossians 3:12



BEYOND THE PEWS
BY DR. RB MCFEE
CHARLTON CITY UMC

The real meaning of diversification in investing

In the world of investing, we’ve all heard the phrase, “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket.” It’s solid advice that emphasizes the importance of diversifying your investments. Unfortunately, some people misinterpret this wisdom to mean they should avoid consolidating their investment accounts and keep their money spread across multiple financial institutions, often working with several different financial advisors.

However, when financial professionals talk about diversification, they’re referring to diversifying your investment assets, not your accounts. There’s a big difference between the two, and

confusing them could hurt your financial future.

Scattered accounts may affect costs, paperwork and advice. When your assets are spread among multiple financial institutions, you could face several drawbacks. First, you’re likely paying more in fees than necessary. Multiple providers often mean multiple account fees, transaction costs and mutual fund expenses that can add up quickly. Generally, the more assets you have with one financial provider, the more opportunities you have for reducing or eliminating these costs.

Managing scattered accounts also could create a paperwork nightmare. You’ll receive multiple monthly statements and numerous tax forms, making it much harder to see the big picture of your financial health. This complexity can lead to missed opportunities and poor decision-making.

Perhaps most important, working with multiple financial advisors may result in conflicting advice and duplicated investment strategies. Without a comprehensive view of your entire portfolio, each financial advisor may recommend investments that don’t work well together, poten-



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tially delaying your progress toward reaching financial goals.

There’s strength in consolidation. Consolidating your accounts with a single financial advisor offers numerous benefits. You’ll have opportunities to develop a closer, more comprehensive relationship with someone who understands your complete financial picture. This financial advisor can provide informed guidance and help eliminate the conflicting advice that may come from working with multiple professionals.

Consolidation also makes it easier to implement a well-diversified portfolio that fits your level of risk tolerance. When all your investments are in one place, you can see exactly how your assets are allocated and make strategic adjustments as needed. It becomes simpler to gauge aggregate investment returns, assess your portfolio assets and rebalance when necessary.

For retirement planning, consolidation can be especially valuable. IRAs at different providers can be consolidated at any time without tax consequences when assets are transferred directly between providers. When you retire, your 401(k) can

typically be rolled over into an IRA, streamlining your retirement income strategy.

True diversification still matters. While consolidating accounts makes sense, diversifying your actual investments remains crucial. A good financial advisor will help you carefully build a balanced mix of stocks and bonds appropriate for your age and goals. As you approach retirement, this typically means shifting toward a more balanced portfolio that still provides growth to combat inflation while offering stability and income.

Diversification goes beyond just stocks and bonds. Take bonds, for instance: You can diversify by bond type (municipal, corporate and government), bond maturity (through a strategy called “laddering”) and bond sector to spread risk across different parts of the economy.

How to get started. If your retirement savings and investment accounts are scattered among various financial institutions, consider consolidating everything with one trusted financial advisor. The streamlined record-keeping, potential for reduced fees and comprehensive financial guidance can help improve your wealth-building potential while making your financial life simpler to manage.

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

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.

Simulation Theory

During an interview years ago, Elon Musk famously claimed there’s a “one in billions” chance that this is base reality. In other words, he believes it’s far more likely that we’re living in some simulation than in the original, foundational universe.

But what kind of simulation? A digital computer program? A spiritual matrix? That idea may sound bizarre—after all, everything feels real, doesn’t it?

Yet this isn’t just late-night dorm room talk. Some of the world’s most respected thinkers are taking the idea seriously. It’s not about rejecting science—it’s about following it to its farthest, strangest conclusions.

Let’s start with String Theory. It’s a theoretical framework in physics proposing that the fundamental building blocks of the universe aren’t particles, but tiny vibrating strings. These strings, depending on how they vibrate, give rise to all particles and forces—even gravity.

The math checks out, even if we haven’t proven it experimentally yet. It’s one of the best candidates for a “Theory of Everything” that could unify quantum mechanics with general relativity.

At the 2011 Isaac Asimov Memorial Debate titled “The Theory of Everything,” theoretical physicist

Sylvester James Gates, Jr. dropped a bombshell. He revealed that he found something astonishing embedded in the equations of string theory: patterns of “error-correcting codes”—the same kind used in computer programming to detect and correct mistakes.

Sitting next to him, astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson reacted with stunned amazement: “You’re blowing my mind right now!”

Why would error-correcting codes appear in the fabric of the cosmos? Gates himself admitted he doesn’t know the implications yet. But the mere presence of such codes leads to a wild yet serious question: Could the universe itself be structured like a vast, intelligent computation?

That’s where the idea of the simulation arises.

On late-night television, when asked if he thought we were living in a simulation, Neil deGrasse Tyson replied, “I wish I had a good argument against it, but I don’t...”

And while the science doesn’t prove this, it pushes our imagination into territory that philosophers, mystics, and spiritual traditions have been exploring

for millennia: that reality is deeper than it appears.

It doesn’t mean we live in a video game controlled by aliens.

It might mean that the universe is information-rich, consciousness-infused, and governed by principles far beyond our current understanding.

My friend, physicist and laser pioneer Dr. Mani Bhaumik, wrote about this in his book “Code Name God.” He argues that modern physics, far from disproving a creator, points toward a transcendent source of intelligence.

That’s a powerful idea: that our minds are just beginning to awaken to truths already embedded in nature.

Dr. David Selbie, interpreting the implications of quantum physics, has emphasized: Our choices and behavior as conscious observers—not the accumulation of material goods—are what matter. Those things are transient illusions. True immortality lies in evolving consciousness beyond the physical hologram.

Similarly, Dr. Amit Goswami, a quantum physicist known for his explorations of consciousness, has stated: “Contrary to what they tell you,

you are not a limited material being.”

This idea echoes something timeless. Whether through the lens of physics or philosophy, the message is the same: You are more than you think you are.

Quantum physics shows us that particles don’t even exist in fixed states until observed. They remain in a state of possibility. In a strange and very real way, attention shapes outcome. This isn’t just a metaphor—it’s physics, though interpretations vary.

So what does this mean for us?

It means we live in a participatory universe. That our focus, our awareness, our very act of observation—matters. That we are not passive passengers in reality, but active participants.

No, quantum physics doesn’t promise we can manifest Lamborghinis with our thoughts. But it does suggest something far greater: that we are wired into the very structure of existence, and our consciousness has weight in the world.

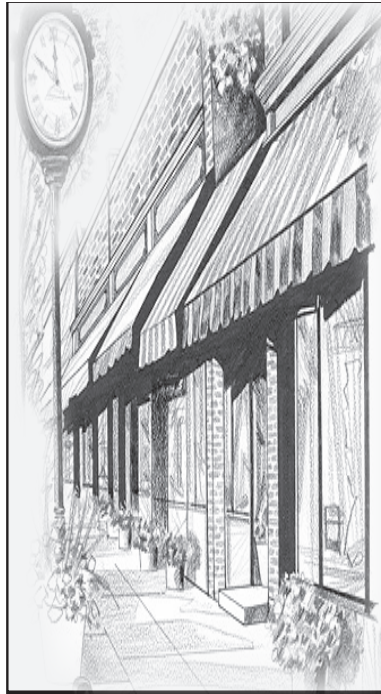
And that, perhaps, is the most hopeful message of all.

We are not powerless. We are not accidents. We are not limited.

We are participants in something vast, intelligent, and alive.

The universe is not outside us. We are part of it. And the deeper we look, the more we realize:

We are more than we think we are.



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Bay Path’s Bolandrina appointed to The Nurses Magazine Editorial Board

CHARLTON — Dr. Gretheline Ramos Bolandrina, DHA, MSN/Ed, RN, CRRN, has been appointed to the Editorial Board of The Nurses Magazine, a national publication dedicated to advancing nursing leadership, education, and professional excellence. In an official announcement, The Nurses Magazine welcomed Dr. Bolandrina to its distinguished board of nursing scholars, writers, and thought leaders who help shape the publication’s direction and uphold its commitment to high-quality, inspiring, and educational content for nurses worldwide. “We are honored to have Dr. Bolandrina join our Editorial Board,”

Courtesy Photo

Dr. Gretheline Bolandrina said Mehrab Hossain, IT Director of The Nurses Magazine. “Her depth of experience, academic leadership, and passion for the nursing profession will bring tremendous value to our readers and contributors.” Dr. Bolandrina served as Academy Director (2015-2025) of the Bay

Path Practical Nursing Academy in Charlton. With more than three decades of experience in nursing education and healthcare leadership, she is recognized for her commitment to developing compassionate and competent nurses who lead with integrity and skill. She holds a Doctor of Health Administration and a Master of Science in Nursing Education from the University of Phoenix, and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Santo Tomas in Manila, Philippines. Dr. Bolandrina is a member of several professional and civic organizations, including the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, Upsilon Phi Delta Society, Pan Mass Challenge, and P.E.O. International. In addition to her academic and administrative work, Dr. Bolandrina is a published author, journalist, and community advocate, known for her books Tenacious Nurse I, II, & III, and her editorial contributions to Planet Philippines New England and other health and lifestyle publications. Her appointment to The Nurses Magazine Editorial Board reflects her continued dedication to advancing the profession through scholarship, mentorship, and the power of storytelling. For more information, visit www.thenursesmagazine.com.

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2022 BEST OF CENTRAL MASS

Check out the new Fall/Winter menu

Mark the location of late emerging perennials

GARDEN MOMENTS
MELINDA MYERS

Melinda Myers

As you prepare your gardens for winter, consider marking the location of late emerging perennials to avoid accidentally weeding them out next spring. Use bulbs, commercial or DIY plant labels, stones or simply leave their stems intact to help guide your cleanup efforts next spring. These late emerging perennials may have you worried they died overwinter. Lingering winter weather and cooler than normal spring temperatures can further delay their appearance. Be patient and know this adaptation allows them to avoid damage from late spring frosts as they wait for the soil to warm and begin growing. Hardy hibiscus, balloon flower (Platycodon), leadwort (Ceratostigma), Crocosmia, Red-hot poker (Kniphofia), whirling butterflies (Gaura lindheimeri), Butterfly bush (Buddleia), Russian sage (Perovskia atriplicifolia), and blue spirea (Caryopteris x clandonensis) are a few you may have growing in your garden. Many native plants like butterfly weed (Asclepias tuberosa), swamp milkweed (Asclepias incarnata), black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia), Culver’s root (Veronicastrum), Indian pink (Spigelia marilandica), Joe-pye weed (Eutrochium spp. formerly Eupatorium), asters, liatris, and goldenrods can also be late to emerge. It’s easy to accidentally weed these out during spring clean-up. These plants are worth the wait since they add extra color to our mid and late season gardens. They extend the beauty, pollinator appeal and food source for

Butterfly weed (Asclepias tuberosa) has red, orange, or yellow flowers and can be late to emerge in spring. many insects, and songbirds visiting your gardens. Try leaving the stems or a portion of the stems of these plants intact until the new growth emerges. Unfortunately, many of us have accidentally removed these, too. Plant tags will identify the plant and mark their location but can be unsightly. Try placing a colorful dowel rod, golf tee or short bamboo stake at the base of these plants. Number each and mark them on your garden plans to help track the plant’s identity. Stones or shells, where they are abundant, can be placed next to or surrounding these plants to mark the location. These tend to stay put and may be less obtrusive than plant tags. Just be sure to alert anyone helping in the garden of their purpose and that they need to stay put. Or mark their spot with bulbs. Plant spring flowering bulbs like daffodils, hyacinths and alliums next to these plants to extend your garden’s bloom time and help prevent damage to the perennial plants. Avoid tulips, crocus and other bulbs that animals love. Squirrels, chipmunks, rabbits and deer may move or eat your marker. Consider using a mix of early, mid and late spring flowering bulbs to further extend the color in your garden. Or skirt these late emerging plants with early spring blooming perennials like woodland and creeping phlox, candytuft or rockcress. You’ll enjoy the added color as you wait for the other plants to make their appearance later in the spring. When spring arrives, exercise patience as you wait for the return of beautiful, late emerging perennials.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the “Midwest Gardener’s Handbook, 2nd Edition” and “Small Space Gardening.” She hosts The Great Courses “How to Grow Anything” streaming courses and the nationally syndicated Melinda’s Garden Moment radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and her Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

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St. John Paul II Parish hosting annual Bazaar

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Annual St John Paul II Parish Bazaar will take place Sunday, Nov. 2 in the La Salle Reception Hall, 444 Main St. The fun begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m.

In the upstairs hall, there will be a Huge Community Raffle of Gift Certificates, prizes. A Renewed Jewelry Boutique, Theme Basket Table, Village Bake Shop, Silent Auction, Religious

Table, a This and That table which has crafts and different items for sale and a Wine Ring Toss game (Adults only). Live Entertainment some of the acts will be: Sandy Allen, Cody Peck, Trinity Catholic Academy Choir, Lauria & Company, Trinity Catholic Academy Cheerleaders, Garrett Mandeville and the MacJammers. Cash Raffle (First Prize \$1,000), 50/50, and scratch ticket

raffle.

In the downstairs hall, Karol's Kafé opens for breakfast at 8:30 a.m. Later, there will be American and Hispanic food. Children's fun and games, face painting. ATM will be located on this level.

Flu Shots, RSV shots, Covid booster, Shingles will be offered from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. by Auburn Pharmacy (Please be

sure to bring your insurance/Medicare cards). Please call Ray Fournier 774-318-8928 to get more details and to pre-register and get a schedule time.

All are invited, rain or shine, ample parking (upper and lower parking lots). There is handicap access on the side facing church for upper and also the lower hall.



Courtesy

The Tantasqua Warrior varsity golf team secured the D2 West District golf title at Chicopee Country Club on Tuesday, Oct. 14. The final score was 323 for Tantasqua and a 326 for defending state champs Pope Francis. Senior Sam Pieczynski also secured the individual title with a 2-over par 73. Other Warriors counting for the winning score included junior Wyatt Fay with a 9th place 82, Drew Bardsley with an 83, and Lucas Tully with an 85. Tantasqua advanced to the State Championship at Foxborough Country Club this past Monday, the 20th.

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OBITUARIES

Wayne St. Clair, 66

Southbridge- Wayne St. Clair, 66, of Southbridge MA, died at home on September 28, 2025.

Born in Elmira NY, he was the son of John and Mary Ann St. Clair and came to Sturbridge 1968. After graduating from Tantasqua Regional H.S. in 1977, he traveled Europe and lived for a time in Germany.

Before he was disabled, he loved biking and finding new places to scuba dive. Over the years, he worked in manufacturing for both Incom, Inc. and Schott North America, Inc. He was a parishioner of St. Joseph's in Charlton, MA.

Wayne was predeceased by his



parents, John and Mary Ann St. Clair and his brother, Stephen. He is survived by two sisters and a brother: Susan DeFalco and her husband, Michael, Mick St. Clair and his wife, Ellen and Mary Beth Bryant and her husband, Fred. He is also survived by a niece and nephews, as well as a great-niece and nephews.

Calling hours will be 4 to 6PM at Sansoucy Funeral Home in Southbridge. The funeral Mass will be held on Thursday, October 23, 2025, at 10AM at St. Joseph's Church, (please meet directly at the church) 10 H. Putnam Road, Ext., Charlton. Burial will be private.

Cornerstone Bank launches annual can drive to support local families in need

REGION — Bank has kicked off its annual community can drive, inviting customers and members of the public to drop off non-perishable food donations at any Cornerstone Bank branch now through Nov. 3.

As temperatures drop and the holiday season approaches, many families experience increased financial strain due to higher heating costs, holiday expenses and food needs for family gatherings. Cornerstone Bank's can drive helps alleviate some of that burden by supporting local food pantries across Central Massachusetts.

"Every can and box donated makes a difference," said Cornerstone Bank CEO Todd Tallman. "As a community bank, we're proud to partner with local food pantries that directly support our neighbors in need during this especially challenging time of year."

Donations collected at the following branches will benefit these local food pantries:

- Leicester: Leicester Food Pantry
- Spencer: Mary Queen of the Rosary Food Pantry
- Holden: Wachusett Food Pantry
- Webster: Webster-Dudley Food Share
- Charlton: CHIP-IN Food Pantry
- Southbridge: St. John Paul II Food Pantry
- Park Ave. Branch, Worcester: Why Me & Sherry's House
- Tatnuck Branch, Worcester: Jeremiah's Food Bank
- West Boylston Street Branch, Worcester: Veterans Inc. Food Pantry
- Rutland: Rutland Food Pantry
- Shrewsbury: Shrewsbury Community Fridge

Cornerstone Bank's Can Drive is a long-standing community tradition that began under its predecessor banks, Southbridge Savings Bank and SpencerBANK, well before Cornerstone's formation in 2017. The drive has continued nearly every year since.

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.

ROOM
continued from page A1

the CARES Project. This includes the MAAX (Maximizing Adolescent Academic eXcellence) Program, an evidence-based social-emotional learning curriculum delivered by guidance counselors with support from Clark University mentors; and MI PEACE, a mental health mobile application designed by Clark University that provides students, counselors, teachers, and parents with real-time access to behavioral health resources and care coordination.

The Southbridge CARES Project is supported by a Synergy Initiative grant from The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts and implemented in partnership with Clark University's Mosakowski Institute for Public Enterprise. The Health Foundation has awarded \$675,000 to the project to date.

"The Synergy Initiative is designed to give communities the time and resources to develop ambitious solutions to complex problems," said Amie Shei, President and CEO of The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts. "This is the first time that we are seeing multisensory technology used in this way in Massachusetts, and it is exciting to watch Southbridge High School lead the way in helping its students reach their full potential in the classroom and beyond."

"Clark students who've served as MAAX mentors, and several of us at the Mosakowski Institute for Public Enterprise have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand how our social development curriculum and mobile application have transformed the school community at Southbridge High School," said Nadia Ward, executive director of the Mosakowski Institute for Public Enterprise. "We are excited about this new facility and are confident it will help provide the highest level of support to those students in the community who need it the most."

About Clark University

Founded in 1887, Clark University is a liberal arts-based research university that prepares its students to meet tomorrow's most daunting challenges

and embrace its greatest opportunities. Through 33 undergraduate majors, more than 30 advanced degree programs, and nationally recognized community partnerships, Clark fuses rigorous scholarship with authentic world and workplace experiences that empower our students to pursue lives and careers of meaning and consequence.

About The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts

The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts is dedicated to improving the health of those who live or work in Central Massachusetts, with particular emphasis on vulnerable populations and unmet needs. Through its unique and impactful approach to grantmaking, The Health Foundation supports community-identified health issues, with health defined broadly to include social determinants of health and with a focus on promoting health equity. As a health conversion foundation launched in 1999 following the sale of the not-for-profit HMO Central Massachusetts Health Care Inc., The Health Foundation's grants have totaled over \$60 million to more than 240 unique organizations over its history. For more information, visit www.thfcm.org.

About Southbridge High School

Southbridge High School serves students in grades 9–12 as part of the Southbridge Public Schools district in Southbridge, Massachusetts. The school is committed to providing a rigorous, inclusive, and engaging educational experience that prepares all students for success in college, career, and civic life. Southbridge High School offers a comprehensive curriculum that includes Advanced Placement and Early College opportunities, as well as a wide range of extracurricular programs in athletics, the arts, and student leadership. With a focus on continuous improvement, equity, and high expectations, Southbridge High School strives to ensure that every student graduates with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Sturbridge Town Republican Committee hosting Meet and Greet Tuesday

STURBRIDGE — The Sturbridge Republican Town Committee will be hosting a Republican Meet and Greet on Tuesday, Oct. 28 at 6:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Sturbridge Senior Center.

The keynote speaker will be Republican Candidate for Governor Mike Minogue. We will also hear from our Republican National Committeeman Brad Wyatt and our local State Committeewomen Elizabeth Groot.

Please attend to meet your neighbors and enjoy conversation with like minded folks in a relaxed atmosphere. Light refreshments will be served.

LEGALS

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
Docket No. WO25P3558GD
CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED PERSON PURSUANT TO G.L. c. 190B, §5-304
In the matter of:
Todd Willis
Of: Southbridge, MA
RESPONDENT
Alleged Incapacitated Person
To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by **Department Of Developmental Serv of Worcester, MA** in the above captioned matter alleging that **Todd Willis** is in need of a Guardian and requesting that **TLC Trust by Gayle Greene of Fitchburg, MA** (or some suitable person) be appointed as Gaurdian to serve **Without Surety** on the bond.
The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is disabled, that theprotextive order or appointment of Conservator is necessary, and that the proposed conservator is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.
You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **11/11/2025**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you.

In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: October 14, 2025
Stephanie K. Fattman
October 23, 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, 13 Gables Inc., has submitted a Land Disturbance/Stormwater Management Permit on October 15, 2025, for land disturbance associated with the construction of a single-family home.
The project site is located at Lot 8 Northside Road, Charlton, MA 01507, and is also known as: Parcel 25-A-2.13
Copies of the Land Disturbance Application are available at the Charlton Conservation Commission office during business hours.
Thomas O'Malley
Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission

October 23, 2025

Sturbridge Planning Board
Public Hearing
Application for Site Plan Review
STL8, LLC

In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 40A, §11, the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Monday, November 10, 2025 at 6:30 PM** in the **Center Office Building 2nd Floor, located at 301 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566** and/or by **virtual means** if circumstances warrant, in accordance with applicable law; on the application of STL8, LLC for the property located at 8 School Street. The applicant requests Site Plan Approval as required by the Sturbridge Zoning Bylaws Article XIX, Site Plan Review to construct a 1,152 square foot artist studio residential building containing two (2) units, with associated site improvements as shown in the plans and application submitted. The new building will be constructed on the South West of the property, the existing eight (8) unit residential apartment building will remain.
A copy of the site plan and application can be inspected on the Sturbridge Town Website at <https://www.sturbridge.gov/planning-board/pages/recent-filings> or arrangements can be made to view the application packet by contacting the Sturbridge Planning Department at (508) 347-2508 or by email at jlacy@sturbridge.gov. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted in person and may be conducted via remote means if circumstance warrant, in accordance with applicable law. This means that members of the public body as well as members of the public may access this meeting in person, or via virtual means.
<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/472675877>

Every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post of the Town's website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of the proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

Charles Blanchard
Chairperson
October 23, 2025
October 30, 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 October 22, 2025, at 7PM on the application of Thad Gumula.
The applicant has submitted a Request for Determination of Applicability for the construction of an addition to the existing home within the 100-ft buffer zone of a Resource Area. Address: 96 Old Spencer Road, Charlton, MA, 01507. Parcel ID: 4-A-1.3
Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Charlton Conservation Commission will be conducted in person and via remote means. Members of the public who wish to participate can access the meeting remotely by request.
Copies of the RDA may be examined at the Conservation Office by appointment during business hours.
Thomas O'Malley
Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission
October 23, 2025

Girls on the Run to host 5K celebration at Polar Park Nov. 16

WORCESTER — Girls on the Run Worcester County is excited to announce the return of its highly anticipated end-of-season 5K Celebration, scheduled for Nov. 16 at Polar Park in Worcester. This non-competitive, family-friendly 5K serves as the culminating end-of-season event for local Girls on the Run participants and as a community gathering focused on fun, connection, and empowerment.

Girls on the Run combines physical activity with engaging lessons to help participants build self-confidence, foster healthy relationships, and develop vital life skills. Over the course of the 8 week program, participants prepare to complete a 5K, while learning how to set goals, overcome challenges, and make a positive impact in their communities. At the 5K Celebration, girls have the opportunity to employ the skills they have learned and achieve the goals they've been working toward all season long.

"We are thrilled to host our 22nd 5K Celebration and witness the joy and pride of our participants as they cross the finish line," said Karen Spencer, Executive Director of Girls on the Run Worcester County. "Since the first practice, these girls have been working hard to fulfill this goal all while learning new skills, building confidence, and becoming a team. This fall season, we will have over 450 GOTR girl participants, plus their Running Buddies and our Community Runners at the starting line, and we can't wait to see the community unite again to celebrate the limitless potential of our GOTR girls."

Girls on the Run Worcester County is also looking for volunteers to help prepare, organize, and host the 5K Celebration. The council needs volunteers to serve at their check in, finish line, our Happy Hair Station, Greeters, etc. Throughout the 5K, Girls on the Run Worcester County requires every GOTR participant to have a 5K Buddy. 5K Buddies must be 16 years or older, pass background checks if they are paired in advance with participants and did not sign up to support a specific girl, and stay side-by-side with the participant from start to finish. 5K Buddies support GOTR team members at their own pace and motivate them throughout the event.

Registration for the 5K on Nov. 16 is open to the public and all proceeds from the event benefit Girls on the Run

of Worcester County. Registration is \$55 as a Community Runner through November 11. Same day registration is \$65 for Community Runners. Registrants can pick up their packets on race day at Polar Park. Doors open at 8:45 a.m., and the 5K will begin at 10:30 a.m. and early arrival is suggested. For more information about the event, how to register, and how to sign up for volunteer opportunities, please visit www.gotr-worc.org.

About Girls on the Run Worcester County

Girls on the Run (GOTR) Worcester County offers after-school empowerment programs designed for girls in third to eighth grades. The nonprofit helps girls in Worcester County build confidence, increase their level of physical activity, and learn essential life skills. Facilitated by trained volunteer coaches, the research-based curriculum explores core topics relevant to eight- to 13-year-olds, including managing emotions, expressing empathy, and standing up for ourselves and others. The program includes a Community Impact Project and culminates with a 5K Celebration. GOTR Worcester County is one of more than 160 councils a part of Girls on the Run International (GOTRI). Since GOTRI was founded in 1996, this national movement has served more than 2.5 million girls in all 50 states and Canada. Visit www.gotr-worc.org to learn more.

Southbridge police log

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of Oct. 6-13.

Joseph Thomas Garvey, age 42, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 6 for Improper Operation of a Motor Vehicle and Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of license.

Carlos Saez, age 23, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 8 in connection with a warrant.

Jesse Brendon Dunphy, age 22, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 10 for Domestic Assault and Battery.

Britany Ann Chapman, age 28, of Charlton was arrested

on Oct. 11 for Violation of a Harassment Prevention Order.

Jason Richard Douglas, age 49, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 12 for Violation of an Abuse Prevention Order (courtesy booking for Auburn).

A 45-year-old male from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 12 for Shoplifting By Concealing Merchandise.

Raymond U. Rivera Torres, age 22, of Southbridge was arrested on Oct. 12 for Domestic Assault and Battery, Intimidation of a Witness, Juror, Police Officer, or Court Official, and Larceny From a Person.

Vendors wanted for Holiday Craft Fair at BHS

WEBSTER — Calling all creative vendors! The Bartlett High School Class of 2026 will be hosting a Holiday Craft Fair Saturday, Dec. 13 from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. in the school gymnasium, 52 Lake Parkway, Webster.

Prospective vendors are encouraged to register at <https://forms.gle/dew9b7vm9gctdfq8>.



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- Auburn News
- Blackstone Valley Tribune

Submissions welcome for Jacob Edward Poetry Contest

STURBRIDGE — Submissions will close on Nov. 28 for the Jacob Edwards Library’s inaugural annual Jacob Edward Annual Poetry Contest. No poems will be considered with a postmark later than Nov. 28.

The Bill Tremblay Poetry Prize is open to all members, Worcester County current and former residents and students, and employees of Worcester County businesses. Winning poems and poets are honored with a winners’ reading, including a brief reading by Bill Tremblay, to be held on Jan. 29, 2026.

Who is eligible?

To enter the Jacob Edward Library annual poetry contest, you must be either a resident of Worcester County, or a student or employee of institutions within

Worcester County. First Place winners of previous JEL annual poetry contests are not eligible to enter.

Contest Guidelines

- Poems must be the entrant’s original work in English and must not be previously published. Poems composed using AI will not be accepted.
- Submit no more than three poems in any form.
- Paper submissions must not be stapled or attached in any way.
- Poems must be formatted for 8.5-by-11-inch paper.
- Do not put your name on the individual poems; entrants will be judged anonymously.
- Include a cover sheet with your name, address, telephone number, email address, and the title of each poem.
- Submissions should be mailed to: Bill Tremblay

Poetry Prize, c/o Jacob Edwards Library, 236 Main St., Southbridge, MA 01550

- Submissions will not be returned.
- Winners will be listed on the JEL website and announced via our Instagram and our

Facebook page.

Entry fee

There is a modest entry fee of \$10.00 to submit. Checks or money orders only made out to the Jacob Edwards Library, please. Please note the submission or the contest fee on the check or money order.

Judging & awards

- First Place: \$100
- Second Place: \$75
- Third Place: \$50
- Winning poets will also receive a signed copy of Bill Tremblay’s

book, Southbridge: My Triggering Town

- Contest winners will be announced in December 2025
- Winners’ Reading & Award Reception will be on Jan. 29, 2026 at the Jacob Edwards Library, at 6:30 p.m.

Sturbridge planning parade and festivities to celebrate Amerca250

STURBRIDGE — A committee of Sturbridge citizens is working to plan events to celebrate America250 in 2026. The celebration of this anniversary of the country's independence will culminate in a parade, and a festive gathering on the Town Common on June 27, 2026.

The committee is calling on townsfolk, busi-

nesses, and nonprofits to help with the celebration. Needed are behind-the-scenes volunteers to help plan the events and/or on the day of the event, marchers, sponsors, floats, etc. Anyone who is interested in getting involved should contact the committee at Sturbridge250@gmail.com.



Courtesy
Members of the Grand Lodge of Masons Henry Knox Noble Train of Artillery cannoneers demonstrating and firing their cannon.



Courtesy
Speaking on the Town Common Gazebo the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Massachusetts Brother George F. Hamilton talking about the “Knox Noble Train of Artillery” as it came through this area during the winter of 1775-1776 heading towards Boston. Also in front of Gazebo is the Henry Knox Noble Trian of Artillery ceremonial cannon a Tribute to Vision, Valor, and Victory on display.

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VISA MASTERCARD DISCOVER

Town of Spencer is seeking private snow plowers for the 2025-2026 Winter Season.

If interested, please contact the Office of Utilities and Facilities, 3 Old Meadow Road, Spencer, MA Monday-Thursday 8:00am – 5:00pm, call 508-885-7515 or on the Town website www.spencerma.gov

Applications should be submitted as soon as possible. The Town of Spencer is an equal opportunity employer.

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MASONS

continued from page A1

public celebration hosted by the Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts of Boston and the Major General Salem Towne Lodge AF & AM, of Southbridge MA, was held on the Sturbridge Town Common. This celebration included guest speakers by the Grand Master of Masons of Massachusetts’ Most Worshipful Brother George F. Hamilton. A guided walking tour of the old burial ground highlighting the grave sites of the Revolutionary war

veterans. This includes Boston Tea Party participant Samual Hobbs (1752-1785). There was firing volley demonstrations of revolutionary war era muskets by the Sons of the American Revolution and the firing of a revolutionary war-era cannon by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts Henry Knox Noble Train Artillery cannoneers.

Local civic organizations that participated in this event included the Sturbridge Historical Society, and both chapters of the Sons and Daughters of the American

Revolution. The Charlton Grange No. 92 and the Rainbow Girls Assemblies of Oxford, Barre, and Worcester were on hand to share their role in supporting the community. Members of the Major General Salem Towne Masonic Lodge from Southbridge had a booth set up handing literature out to people who wanted to know more about Freemasonry and selling hot dogs. If you would like more information about Freemasonry and to find a lodge nearest you, visit our Web site at www.massfreemasonry.org.



Pasture Prime Players present

“Honeymoon at Graveside Manor”

CHARLTON — Pasture Prime Players, Inc. is pleased to announce performance dates for “Honeymoon at Graveside Manor” by Pat Cook. The production is directed by Stephanie Sawyer and features the acting talents of Greg Glanville, Angela Clark, Christopher Lam, Hillarey Robertson,

Kriste Clemente, Dawn Sedlier, Ducati Sedlier, Tiffany Betty, Sarah Tonkin and Joe Sawyer. Performances will be held at the Charlton Arts & Activities Center, 4 Dresser Hill Rd., Charlton, on Oct. 31 and Nov. 1, 7, and 8 at 7:30 p.m. and Nov. 2 and 9 at 2 p.m. This play is produced by special arrangement with Dramatic Publishing, Inc., Woodstock, Ill.

Marian Thorncraft is looking forward to her honeymoon with new hubby, Tyler. She pictures someplace romantic, secluded and cozy. No sooner have her feet touched the ground after being carried over the threshold than she discovers her love nest is really a one-time mortuary! Graveside Manor, as the locals call it, has been abandoned for years, mainly due to the rumors of it being haunted. Cozy as a bat cave, it is about as secluded as Grand Central Station. A daffy maid shows up to clean the place and gets lost in the catacombs behind the walls. This goes unnoticed because Tyler is too busy ducking a female ghost with a hatchet, three high-school kids trying to set up a Halloween prank and his wise-cracking female editor who once had a crush on him. Throw in an absent-minded cop and the escaped lunatic he is looking for and the stage is set for a Honeymoon at Graveside Manor.

Tickets are \$18 for adults and \$15 for seniors (60 and older) and students (18 and under). For reservations, contact us at (508) 248-5448, message us on Facebook or via e-mail at pasture.prime.players@gmail.com.



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

Webster Lake -
302 Killdeer Island
PANORAMIC VIEWS!



ON DEPOSIT

Renovated + move-in ready lakefront home w/1,700+/- sq ft. Open kitchen/dining/living w/ cathedral ceilings + wall of windows. Primary suite w/private bath! 2 add'l bedrooms, 2nd Full bath. Lower level family room w/walkout to water. Wraparound deck, new vinyl railings, terraced yard, sandy beach, professional landscaping. Many updates.
\$775,000

Snug Harbor Villa!
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THE VILLA'S at SNUG HARBOR! ** END UNIT** IS TRULY A RARE FIND! ONE of ONLY 6 UNITS > Custom Built THIS 4000+/- SF w/Special Features & Upgrades. Offers 4 BRs - 3 are Primary BR Suites w/private baths, 4-1/2 Baths Total!! The Outstanding direct lakefront location provides exceptional Southern panoramic views across Middle Pond, a boat dock, & full recreation activities - whatever Floats Your Boat :-)! Perfect setup for entertaining family, friends & guests! It's more than a home - it's a Life Style! NEW PRICE \$1,050,000



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On the shores of Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg

WEBSTER LAKE
WATERFRONT LISTING! KILLDEER RD



ON DEPOSIT

Ready for your year round enjoyment. 4 bedroom, 2 bath home. Open floor plan. Garage w/ enclosed entry to mudroom. Open living room with spectacular views! 2 bedrooms - 3/4 bath, on main level. Central air. Lower level, additional 2 bedrooms, bath, bonus family room, summer kitchen! Beachhouse! 51' of sandy beachfront!

Webster Lake Waterfront - 31 Bayview!!



ON DEPOSIT

Panoramic View, from this absolutely lovely home. 2600 +/- SF, 3+ Beds, 2 full baths, 2 car detached garage! 63' +/- waterfront. .37 Acres! Sandy Waterfront!
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Webster Lake - 53 Colonial Rd



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Webster Lake Waterfront
8 Long Island



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Bay Path LPN shares how rigorous program paved the way for a thriving career

A smiling woman with long dark hair, wearing a white nursing uniform and cap, holds a single pink rose. She is wearing a purple cord with tassels around her neck. The background is dimly lit, showing another person in a similar uniform.

With her dedication to patient care, continuous learning, and community involvement, Chali Desrosiers, LPN stands as a testament to the powerful foundation provided by the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy and the promising future of the region's newest generation of nurses.

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The image shows the storefront of 7 Star Liquors. The sign above the entrance reads "7 STAR LIQUORS" in large, red, 3D letters. Below the sign is a dark blue awning. The entrance consists of a set of double glass doors and a large display window. The window features several signs: "OPEN" in large white letters, a "BUD LIGHT" sign, a "mike's" sign, and a "Cool LIGHT" sign. A person is visible inside the store, holding up a sign. Two red starburst graphics are overlaid on the image, one on the left and one on the right, containing promotional text.