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Thursday, January 5-Friday, January 6, 2023

Charlton Lions provide gift cards to families in need



Steve Doucette and Principal Lilley.



Doucette with Principal Olson.



Doucette with Principal Packard.

CHARLTON — Thanks to the incredible generosity of the great people of Charlton, the Charlton Lions were again able to help families in need this Christmas. You've seen us throughout 2022 conducting fundraisers throughout the year to support the Club's causes. Top on the list is helping families in need during the Christmas season. Once again, our fellow Charltonians have stepped up in a major way. The fundraisers that we ran throughout the year to help those in need in Charlton were a success. This year we

were again able to raise enough money to allow us to donate Walmart gift cards to families in Charlton. Christmas is a time for families to gather and give thanks for all the good times over the past year. Some families face a little bigger challenge than others. For over ten years the Charlton Lions have been supporting families in Charlton with gifts cards that they can use at Christmas to help with presents, or to help them put a special Christmas dinner on the table. Dennis Tucker, the

President of the Charlton Lions Club, said "Making donations at Christmas time is one of the Club's favorite service projects. Our Club members look forward every year to providing the Walmart gift cards to help our town members and their families at Christmas. It is one of the best and most rewarding things we do." This year, the Lions were again able to donate Walmart gift cards to the Principals at the Elementary, Heritage and the Middle School. This year, the Lions were able to give \$500 in Walmart gift cards to each School

Principal so that they could give them to families who they knew could use a little extra help this year. Lion Steve Doucette delivered the cards, and said, "When we show up and announce our gifts, they all thank us for our donations, and they tell us how they have families that they know need and will greatly appreciate the help." The principals were so appreciative of the gifts, and the opportunity that these cards gives them to help out their students. We give ten \$50 gifts cards to each school. These gift

cards will allow the three school Principals to help 30 families in town. The principals know the families that need help, and these gift cards help them give these families a little something extra over the Christmas holiday. The most important part of this story is the amazing generosity of the folks in Charlton. The Charlton Lions are merely an extension of all the good people in town who help. Your support of our fundraisers throughout the year makes things like the Walmart gift cards possible. So, whether it's dropping off cans and

bottles at our redemption box across from the Post Office, buying our raffle tickets, or supporting one of our other fundraisers, every penny you give us we give back to help others. To the great folks in Charlton, thank you, and take a bow! Your generosity throughout the year has allowed a few more families in town to have a better Christmas. If you want to be part of something truly fantastic, please reach out to us by email at thecharltonlions@gmail.com. Become something special, become a Lion.

Sturbridge selectmen considering streetlight ownership

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

STURBRIDGE — At their last meeting of 2022, selectmen took "under advisement" Town Administrator Robin Grimm's recommendation to stick with National Grid as the owner and maintainer of the town's streetlights. The four selectmen present delayed a formal vote on doing so until Mary Dowling's return. Grimm brought the issue up as part of a discussion on converting the lights to LEDs,

which can be done either by National Grid or by the town taking ownership of the system and contracting the work out to some other company (which she oddly termed "privatizing" it). She noted NatGrid is offering a one-time incentive of \$600,000 to convert, while Sturbridge would save about \$1.5 million over 20 years if it bought the system outright (at a cost of about \$45,000) and converted afterward. To Grimm, though, the longterm maintenance was a bigger concern.

"There's a little bit of a gamble on service and maintenance contracts" if Sturbridge buys the system, she said. She has been looking into alternatives, and specifically talking to a firm that now manages local systems in 13 states and 18 Massachusetts towns. To her, the risk comes if multiple towns the contractor serves are hit at once by a storm, or if there are issues with having to coordinate with National Grid to erect new poles. Turn To **STREETLIGHTS** page A13

Council votes on key charter changes

SOUTHBRIDGE — After multiple meetings to debate them, the Town Council finally voted on a raft of proposed charter changes at their last meeting of 2022. That meeting saw some of the same debate points raised previously, with similar outcomes as those less formal sessions had had. The ones that passed, and a long list of minor, housekeeping-type changes the council didn't formally vote on, are going to the town attorney for a final review before the council votes to submit them to the ballot. The basic plan at this

point is for voters to see them this June, but exactly what they will look like is still somewhat uncertain. An issue to still be decided is whether the major changes will be individual questions while the generic changes form one question, or whether the whole text will be one question (and how to publish them). The ones voters approve will then go to the legislature for approval. The most heavily debated issues surrounded residency. By a 6-1 vote, the Council approved a proposal amending section 4-2-5 to require managers hired after July 1 become

a resident within one year of hire. Members rejected one (by a 3-4 vote) that would also have required that of department heads. The council can waive the manager's requirement by a vote of six members. The debate surrounding both was very similar, with Scott Lazo saying several prior managers and department heads did buy homes in town, although Dave Adams noted some quickly left when their tenure ended. To Lazo, the underlying issue comes down to "one community serving and Turn To **CHANGES** page A13

Charlton FD battles pair of late December blazes



Firefighters make quick work of a garage fire on Dec. 28 on City Depot Road in Charlton.

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — The Charlton Fire Department ended the year battling two residential fires in December, both involving unattached garages. The first incident occurred on Dec. 15 at around 10:51 a.m. when Charlton firefighters were dispatched to a report of black smoke coming from the back yard of a residence at 14 Morton Station Rd. Charlton Engine 1 responded to the scene while Captain Dennis Carlson, who was conducting an inspection in the area, was one of the first on scene and confirmed the fire in an unattached steel garage. Mutual aid was called in to the scene to provide

water tankers while Engine 1 established an early water source and began an interior attack of the blaze. Engine 2 soon arrived on scene and was stationed at the end of the driveway pumping water to the fire from mutual aid tankers. The fire was under control by 11:34 a.m. with Auburn, Dudley, Leicester, Oxford, and Southbridge departments turning out to help. The District 7 Fire Investigation Unit and Charlton Building Commissioner were requested to the scene to investigate the cause. The second incident happened later in the month on Dec. 28 as a second unrelated fire brought crews to 90 City Depot Rd. in the evening hours, once again involving an unattached garage struc-

ture. Charlton Engines 1 & 3 were first on scene and called for a tanker from the Dudley Fire Department. That fire took place at around 4:26 p.m., and the scene was cleared within an hour and a half. Southbridge and Leicester also turned out to help with this incident. Charlton Fire Captain Jason Cantara said crews worked hard and fast at both incidents. He said one major challenge at both incidents was the limited space to work and the distance of the garages from the roadways where responders set up water sources. "The distance from the road with no hydrants made it a bit of a challenge. We had over 700 Turn To **FIRES** page A13

'Buildwave' program leaves audience spellbound by creativity



Gus Steeves

Flora Blinn focuses on finishing her creation.

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — “Games People Play” is a classic Peter Gabriel song. But he wasn’t thinking of the kind of games Tim Merle brought to Jacob Edwards Library last week.

Merle’s concept is called “Buildwave,” a combination of game, music, art and science in short, fast “waves” of creativity. For an hour, about a dozen kids and their parents dove into that mixture to create all kinds of curious devices, creatures and engineering marvels that disappeared as fast as they came into being.

Afterward, Merle showed a quick video of all of them, the only remaining vestige they’d ever existed.

That impermanence was actually the whole point. Instead of giving participants a creation to take home, Merle said

the goal is to have them leave with something more important: “a resonant feeling that’s what’s in me is serious creative potential.”

“I’m completely spellbound with the capacity of human beings to create,” he said.

The concept of Buildwave was born as ImagArena in 2016, when Merle was a student at Berklee School of Music and wanted to devise a music lesson for kids who don’t identify themselves as “artsy.” Since then, Merle and his staff have run more than 500 such events across southern New England, some one-offs like this one; others 12-16 week programs. He runs it as a “gig” business, but notes its not like Uber or that ilk. It’s more akin to musical performance, something he’s done since childhood (he’s a drummer).

In the process of business-building, he’s



One adult participant holds up her creation from the day’s last Buildwave period.

explored hundreds of kinds of toys (some commercially available, many he made himself), recorded the music, designed the graphics, drafted the curriculum for multiple-session series and otherwise spent as much time expressing his own creativity as he has opening its doors to others.

Those others are not just kids, either. Although he’s often seen that adults are more willing to let go when kids are around, he’s found many are themselves

willing to “tap into [their] inner child” if they feel they’re in “a safe place” and won’t be “graded.”

“I’m stunned by what adults build. ... I’ve seen every possible permutation of these materials,” Merle recalled. Later, he returned to the subject, adding, “It’s really valuable to see members of the community in this context. It’s a total blank slate and lots of preconceived notions and stereotypes just melt.”

The whole point was for sessions to be fast



Tim Merle with his traveling crate of creativity toys.

and short with simple instructions. “I just give them a box of stuff and they open it,” Merle said. “... They’re just going to start building whether they’re 5 years old or 50.”

Merle noted he has seen quite a bit of difference in settings. The best programs tend to happen in scheduled settings like libraries where participants choose to come. The most challenging are afterschool programs after the kids have already been there for eight hours. There, he said, the key is to make

sure it’s not yet another “adult-directed” activity.

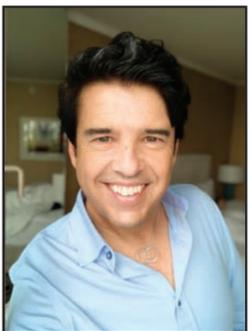
It had a positive effect on Christine Blinn, one of those adults.

“This was a really great event. My children all enjoyed it,” she noted. “You don’t know what you’re building with and some materials I’d never seen before. He ran it really well.”

Her daughter Flora simply said she “had really fun.”

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

CMS Chamber presents an evening with Steven the Medium



Steven the Medium

STURBRIDGE — Steven F. Macek—better known as Steven the Medium—is a nationally renowned medium who has been developing a connection to Spirit for the past ten years. Steven is a bridge between the spirit world and our day-to-day, physical world—relaying messages and insight from those who have passed on to people seeking answers in the here and now. The Chamber of Central Mass South is excited to welcome Steven the Medium to The Barn at Wight Farm in Sturbridge on the evening of Thursday, Jan. 19. If you are curious about Spirits, if you

lost someone close to you, if you are afraid of death or wonder what life is like when we cross over, this show is for you. Have you been missing your loved ones who have passed? Maybe you just need to know they are OK? One simple validation can change your life!

Steven will connect attendees to the spirit world through live readings—delivering detailed, powerful, and sometimes humorous messages from the other side. In addition, he will read a number of handwritten notes, transcribed word-for-word from your loved ones in Spirit to their intended recipients in the audience.

The event will include a full bar and Steven will offer two raffles for free readings. Tickets are \$39 for Chamber Members and \$45 for non-Members. You may register to save your seat by emailing info@cmschamber.org or calling 508-347-2761. Reserve soon as it is likely this event will sell out. The Chamber gratefully acknowledges the

evening’s sponsor, The Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home in Southbridge, MA.

More from Steven the Medium

For most of my life, I had no idea that I had an ability to communicate with Spirit. There were no great signs during my youth, except perhaps not wanting to visit my dad’s grave. He died when I was eight years old and when I was a teenager, my mother and brother would get upset when I didn’t want to go to the cemetery. In hindsight, I felt a strong connection with my father—I didn’t need to go to the cemetery to feel his presence.

In 2010, Spirit set me on a path to mediumship when my husband, Elix, and I attended an event of a well-known Massachusetts medium. The venue was full, with over 100 people hoping to be chosen for a reading. When the medium was about to begin, she walked over to me and said, “You are a medium but don’t know it.” She then walked away and never approached me

again.

Although intrigued, I didn’t act on this information right away. My interest in spirit communication piqued years later when Elix registered me for a mediumship training and encouraged me to simply embrace the learning process and the experience. I loved it immediately! Eager to hone my skills and learn as much as possible, I worked with some of the world’s most well-respected teachers to develop an understanding of my abilities and how to use them. In 2013, I earned a certification as a medium from the Imagine Spirit Intuitive Arts Institute in Arizona.

This profession as a medium allows me to fulfill my purpose of helping others in a completely different way than law does. My mission is to connect with those in Spirit to share messages that offer healing, love, and guidance. Clients often leave my office with a newfound sense of peace, connection, and a distinct clarity that they

didn’t have before. It’s a beautiful thing to see someone change in real-time. Especially when someone is hanging on to grief or some type of burden. Feeling those energies and auras change is the most rewarding aspect of what I do. My mediumship has also led me to help others discover and develop their own psychic abilities, which is so satisfying.

Two years ago, I created my signature “A Whisper in a Note”. I ask someone in spirit to stand next to me and dictate to me what they want me to write down for their loved one who is here on earth. I use software to scan the note and include a visual recording explaining every word,

every sentence and emotion their loved one in spirit was feeling when they dictated what I wrote in the note. It has been a great, fulfilling ride—and this is just the beginning! Visit Steven online at www.steventhe-medium.com.

Learn more about the Chamber of Central Mass South online at cmschamber.org.

Joshua Hyde Library to host active bystander training

STURBRIDGE — Join the Joshua Hyde Public Library on Thursday, Jan. 26 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. for an Active Bystander training session on zoom. The Training Active Bystanders program (TAB) is a unique and innovative evidence-based program.

It promotes leadership and positive connections while significantly reducing violence and other harm doing. This training gives bystanders the competencies they need if they decide to take action when they witness something they feel is unfair, wrong, or troubling - Empowering bystanders to make a difference.

This program is sponsored and brought to you by the Friends of the Joshua Hyde Library and Quabbin Mediation. To register for this event, please visit the event page on our website at sturbridgelibrary.org for a link to the registration form or for more information please call our main desk at (508)-347-2512.



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The Brimfield Select Board Public Hearing

The Brimfield Select Board will hold a public hearing and discussion regarding opting out of Vote By Mail for the June 20, 2023 local Town Election on February 13, 2023 at the Brimfield Elementary School. The public is encouraged to attend and ask questions and share any concerns.

ALL WE KNOW IS LOCAL ~ StonebridgePress.com



Friends of the Joshua Hyde Library present “Stewing Over Mysteries” with author Megan Collins



Megan Collins

STURBRIDGE — The Friends of the Joshua Hyde Public Library will present the annual ‘Stewing Over Mysteries’ event on Thursday, Jan. 12 at 6:30 p.m.

Since 2011, ‘Stewing Over Mysteries’ has been held at the Publick House in Sturbridge. A dinner of beef stew is offered along with a New England mystery writer to entertain and enlighten - all in the cozy atmosphere of one of the oldest taverns in MA. This event is limited to 75 people and has

sold out in the past.

“We are thrilled to be able to offer our Stewing Over Mysteries event back in full, and we are excited to have Megan Collins as our guest of honor,” said Becky Plimpton, library director. “This event is not a fundraiser, but a community event subsidized by the Friends of the JHPL and supported by the Publick House. Our goal is to make this an affordable and entertaining evening with a first class author.”

Tickets are still available - \$16 per person and include beef

stew, rolls, coffee and dessert. Tickets and can be purchased at the Joshua Hyde Library or online at www.sturbridgeliibraryfriends.org. Ms. Collins’s books can be purchased at the library and at the event.

There is a snow date of Jan. 19.

Megan Collins is the author of “Thicker Than Water,” “The Family Plot,” “Behind the Red Door,” and “The Winter Sister” (Atria/Simon & Schuster). She received her B.A. in English and Creative Writing from Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts,

and she holds an M.F.A. in Creative Writing from Boston University, where she was a teaching fellow. She has taught creative writing at the Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts and Central Connecticut State University, and she is Managing Editor of 3Elements Review. A Pushcart Prize and two-time Best of the Net nominee, her work has appeared in many print and online journals, including Compose, Linebreak, Off the Coast, Spillway, Tinderbox Poetry Journal, and Rattle. She lives in Connecticut.

LPN reflects on family and nursing journey



CHARLTON — As we celebrate the holidays and the coming of the new year, Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy recognizes nurses for their successes along with their commitment, tenacity, compassion, kindness, and uniqueness.

Khamphan Houatchanthara, LPN of Southbridge reflects on her family and her nursing journey.

Houatchanthara became a nurse following her sister, Maxine Houatchanthara Khounthy.

“I am close to my sister. We have been through a lot together. We had to grow up very quickly,” she said. “I learned a lot of great lessons from my family. The work ethic, compassion, responsibility, and drive all have been instilled in me by my family.”

Houatchanthara was born in Laos in what she described as challenging times.

“We still were dealing with the effects of the Vietnam war and our own revolution. My grandfather had to flee because he was part of the French-backed side that lost the war. My father was the oldest of ten siblings. We were the last to escape to Thailand because he was the only one that already had a family. We spent four years in a refugee camp. With the help of Catholic Charities and my grandfather we were able to settle in Southbridge,” she added.

Houatchanthara graduated with the Practical Nursing class of 2021 and was the recipient of the Clinical Excellence Award and the Random Act of Kindness Award. While at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy she was a member of the Mock Code Team, UNICEF Club, and Admissions Panel Interview. She is certified in Mental Health First Aid, Dementia Care, and Infusion Therapy/Central Line Care Program. She completed training on COVID-19 Contact Tracing through

Johns Hopkins University.

Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, Academy Director thanks Houatchanthara for her dedication to nursing. To Bolandrina, Houatchanthara’s kindness is synonymous with her compassion. No matter what stresses or difficulties Houatchanthara encountered, she faced them with grace and humility. One of her favorite memories of Houtchanthara as a student nurse is helping a graduate with a healthcare crisis.

“Although busy with school, work, and her own family, she had gone above and beyond to help, including members of her cohort,” Bolandrina said. “Many of her kind acts did not receive the recognition they deserved.”

Houatchanthara said it best by stating, “My family is my backbone. Whether it was to encourage me or to give me the truth that I didn’t want to see or hear. Now, I am happy to say I have my own little family. My partner in

life Simon and my beautiful daughter Athena. They have given me a greater strength to become a more complete person. They are the reason; I am striving to be better person for my daughter and set a good example she can follow. Through my journey to become a

nurse, I realized even more how much my family means to me. They have helped with my daughter and allowing me to concentrate on my studies. It’s funny how life comes full circle. When my sister was going through nursing school, my family and I were helping take care of her first child.” She concludes by saying, “family to me is everything. Without them I would not be who I am and vice versa. Through thick and thin we always have been there for each other. We are not perfect, but we are family, and we love each other.”

About Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy

Bay Path Practical Nursing is a 40-week (10-month), full-time, Monday through Friday, evening program. The program begins mid-August and is completed in late June. Graduates receive a Practical Nursing Certificate and are eligible to take the NCLEX-PN licensure exam. For more information, visit www.baypath.net.

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visit www.townofcharlton.net or more information.

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Shepherd Hill Regional High School
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Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical
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CHURCH LISTINGS

- Charlton Federated Church, 64 Main St., 248-5550, Sunday worship 10:30 a.m. www.fedchurchcharlton.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. 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 Life/TEEN Mass 5 p.m., Weekday Mass Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 a.m.
- Hope Christian Fellowship, 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, 01507, Pastor Craig Bellisario, (508) 233-8349 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 9:30 am Pastor Dan Purtell

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Bay Path students welcome Santa

CHARLTON — On Saturday, Dec. 3, a “Breakfast with Santa” was held at Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School with National Honor Society students assisting at the event. The Breakfast, held to support the Bay Path Education Foundation in supporting senior scholarships, returned after a two-year hiatus due to Covid.

Activities for students included tinsel hair extensions, tattoos, and Magic Reindeer Food. A raffle, organized by Secretary to Director of CTE Peggi Corsi, helped raise \$3,000. More than \$10,000 was raised in total. Various departments and constituents at the school contributed to the planning of the Breakfast. Secretary to the Superintendent Ms. Sue Foskett helped organize and decorate for the event. The graphics department printed invitations and signs and the marketing department helped set up a balloon arch. The culinary department provided food preparations and members of the Bay Path Education Foundation helped clear tables. Teachers and some of their spouses volunteered their time. Principal Cliff Cloutier served food and took photographs and Superintendent-Director Kyle Brenner helped announce raffle winners. School committee member Mr. Don Montville endured the rain to head parking duty. The Bay Path community thanks all who contributed, volunteered, and/or attended the event.



Courtesy

Pictured at the Breakfast are (L-R): Nicholas Wing of Webster, Zaydyn Streeter-Wornham of Oxford, Phoebe Lawendowski of Charlton, Isabel McLam of Charlton, Mystic Marion of Auburn, Aliyah Gonyea of Charlton, Niti Patel of Southbridge, and Emma Gachagua of Southbridge. Bottom, (L-R): Terry Simon of Southbridge, NHS Advisor Mrs. Stephanie Stone, Jenna Gajewski of Oxford, Sophia Balestracci of Oxford, Zoeybeth Streeter-Wornham of Oxford, Nathan Chenevert of Webster, and Dylan Dejesus of Charlton.

Christmas spirit alive and well in Southbridge

SOUTHBRIDGE — This Christmas season, the Southbridge Lions, along with the Southbridge Police Cops and Kids program, again worked together on The Steve Ide Memorial Toy Drive – Sponsored by Cops and Kids and the Southbridge Lions Club. This year the Toy drive serviced more than 175 local families and 410 kids under the age of 15, give or take. Most were under the age of 10. This program would not be possible if it were not for the generosity of the Southbridge Tri Community area. Here is an attempt to thank the community.

To start with, the Lions again had our “Jolly” sponsor, The Southbridge Credit Union. Their help each year behind the scenes and their donations are very much appreciated. A special “shout out” goes to the Sturbridge Police as well, with their coordination with our Southbridge Police with this program.

We had collection boxes all over the area including Cornerstone Bank, Big Bunny, Southbridge Hotel and Conference Center, SAVERS Bank – both Southbridge

and Sturbridge locations, The Italian Club, Southbridge Fire Dept, Harrington Hospital, Southbridge Town Hall, Enrico’s Pizza, Dexter Russell, All Southbridge Credit Union Locations and the Southbridge and Sturbridge Police Departments. The Lions Club thanks you and your employees who were wonderful, helpful and a joy to work with for this program. The toy donations from the community into these collection boxes just amazed us this year. Thank you to the entire community.

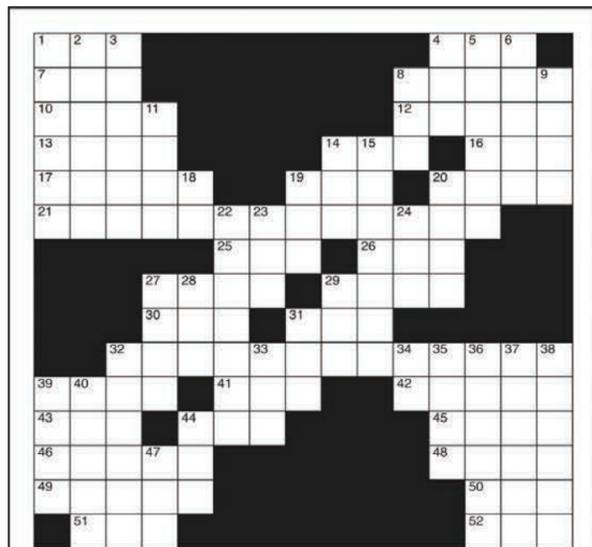
We had donations and help this year from some local companies and organizations. Arland Tools, Southbridge Credit Union, Cornerstone Bank, A&M Tool, The Knights of Columbus, Walmart, The Camp Club, Guaranteed Builders, Sturbridge Autobody, Hillside Collision, Desrosier Insurance, Sansoucy Funeral Home, The Quinebaug Lodge, Ocean State Job Lot, The Cohasse Woman and The Red Men. The Lions thank you all for your help this year.

We had monetary donations from individuals which

were amazing and too numerous to list. This includes many of our own members that supported this effort with monetary contributions. Our elves went shopping with these donations to help the overall effort. The Lions thank you for your generosity.

The Steve Ide Memorial Toy Drive originated from the US Marine Toy drive that used to have a local presence here in Southbridge. When they closed and reorganized, leaving Southbridge behind, Steve Ide stepped up and had our local Lions Club begin to carry this torch. The Toy Drive began small back in 2016 and over the past few years we joined with the Southbridge Cops and Kids program to better support the local community. Each year the Toy Drive continues to grow. It is in the memory of Steve Ide that we push forward with this special program.

Southbridge and the Tri Community should be very proud of its citizens and businesses. The Christmas Spirit is alive and well. The Southbridge Lions Club thanks all of you.

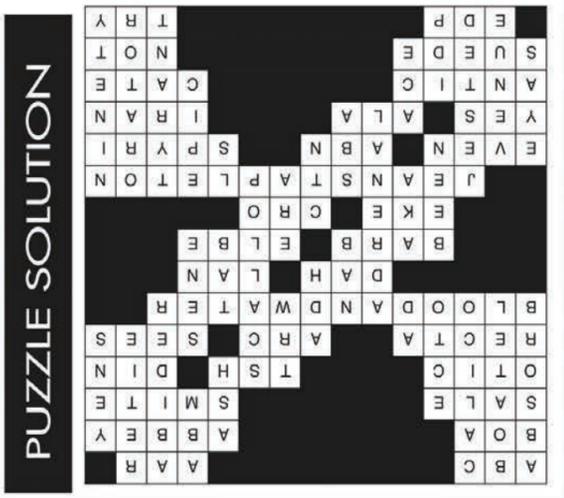


CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Basics
- 4. Swiss river
- 7. Constrictor snake
- 8. Building occupied by monks
- 10. Discount
- 12. Deal a blow to
- 13. Relating to the ear
- 14. Thyrotropin
- 16. Loud, unpleasant noise
- 17. Large intestines
- 19. Move with a curving trajectory
- 20. Witnesses
- 21. You need both to live
- 25. Dash
- 26. Network
- 27. Dig
- 29. C. European river
- 30. Supplement with difficulty
- 31. Corporate executive
- 32. Carroll O’Connor’s onscreen wife
- 39. No variation
- 41. Airborne (abbr.)
- 42. “Heidi” author
- 43. Affirmative
- 44. Pie ___ mode
- 45. W. Asian country
- 46. Grotesque or bizarre
- 48. Delicacy (archaic)
- 49. Textile
- 50. Denial
- 51. Electronic data processing
- 52. Attempt

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Engulf
- 2. Waterside hotel
- 3. Printed cotton fabric
- 4. Defensive nuclear weapon
- 5. One who follows the rules
- 6. Lace up once more
- 8. Fire byproduct
- 9. Hankerings
- 11. Outer
- 14. One-time aerospace firm
- 15. Seafood
- 18. Commercial
- 19. Epoxy hardener (abbr.)
- 20. Samoan monetary unit
- 22. Type of gland
- 23. Arrest
- 24. Check
- 27. Past participle of be
- 28. Alias
- 29. Major division of geological time
- 31. Kids programming channel (abbr.)
- 32. Joked
- 33. Helps little firms
- 34. Roman numeral 50
- 35. Impressive in size or scope
- 36. Domineering leader
- 37. A person who delivers a speech
- 38. One after 89
- 39. Young hawk
- 40. The scene of any event or action
- 44. A team’s best pitcher
- 47. Integrated data processing



Winter storm puts holiday plans on hold across region

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — Residents throughout the region saw their Christmas weekend plans hindered by a powerful storm that knocked out power across the area.

Packing the dual punch of high winds and a flash freeze, the Dec. 23 storm caused temperatures to drop forty degrees in just a few hours in some communities. For residents left in the dark, an initially annoying situation quickly became dangerous when windchills dipped below zero overnight and into Dec. 24.

Several local towns, including Spencer and Sturbridge, responded quickly by opening their senior centers as warming shelters on Christmas Eve. Instead of taking part in their scheduled holiday plans, many residents found themselves trying to stay warm, cleaning their yards of debris, or receiving updates on when the lights would return.

According to the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, 74,000 customers across the state were still without power as of Dec. 24. These included about 500 Spencer customers with outages by the afternoon of Dec. 24.

Additionally, parts of East Brookfield, Sturbridge, and Brookfield experienced significant outages, officials said.

The warming shelter at the Spencer Senior Center closed at 4 p.m. on Dec. 24, as full power was restored to the town by that time, officials said. Meanwhile, Spencer Police Chief David Darrin told the New Leader his town saw no major traffic issues resulting from downed trees or wires.

Across the country, the storm was responsible for more than 50 fatalities, many of which occurred in western New York. In Buffalo, N.Y., hundreds of drivers were stranded in their vehicles amid several feet of snow, some forced to abandon their cars and seek shelter.

The storm also caused thousands of flights to be cancelled across the country, as well as the postponement of professional sporting events and other programs.

Locally, residents and municipalities are credited with taking steps ahead of time to prepare

for weather emergencies and minimize the safety impacts of the latest storm. These precautions include town officials having a coordinated emergency management plan ready to be activated, if needed. Residents also took advantage of warnings from local police departments to stay off the streets during the height of the windstorm.

“My thanks go out to the town’s emergency management team, including our SEMA volunteers, [Fire] Chief Parsons and his crew, Town Clerk Sandra Fritz, and Senior Center Director April Caruso for opening and staffing the warming center,” said Spencer Town Administrator Jeffrey Bridges. “The prolonged loss of electricity any time of year can be stressful, but with the extreme cold it is outright dangerous. Having a trained and experienced emergency management team is a blessing and critically important to the safety of the community.”

Joshua Hyde Library receives grant for STEM educational programs

STURBRIDGE — The Joshua Hyde Public Library has received a \$1,335 IF/THEN Gender Equity grant from the IF/THEN® Initiative and the Association of Science and Technology Centers (ASTC).

This grant was awarded in recognition of the library’s commitment to gender equity in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education and strong project proposal. The grant will provide funding for 3 STEM workshops for kids ages 6+ - two in person and one by zoom. In addition, books on STEM topics will be added to the collection with grant funds.

“The funding, made possible by Lyda Hill Philanthropies, will allow us to empower children, particularly young girls, to pursue their interest in STEM through hands-on activities at the library and on Zoom,” said Lisa Rice, children’s librarian.

The upcoming Lava Lamp Reactions workshop will be in person at the Joshua Hyde Public Library, 306 Main St., Sturbridge on Thursday, Jan. 19 at 6 p.m. This workshop will also be offered online on Thursday, Feb. 2 at 6 p.m. Once participants have registered, materials for the online workshop will be available for pick up at the JHPL starting Monday, Jan. 30. The grant also funded a Make-Your-Own Polymer Bouncy Ball workshop that happened on Jan. 5.

Those interested in the Lava Lamp Reactions workshops can sign up at sturbridgelibrary.org or call the library at 508-347-2512.

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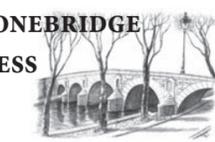
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Flexibility is key for Practical Nursing student

CHARLTON — The typical Bay Path Practical nursing student



“The flexibility of the Bay Path Practical Nursing program made it possible for Kamicha to pursue her educational goals uninterrupted,” said Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN Academy Director.

“Kamicha had a caring family who was her strong support system and kind members of her clinical team from the 2023 cohort, along with her Clinical Facilitator,” she says. “And so having the format of learning that we have available at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, where we created a learning contract and weekly check-ins, Kamicha was able to complete her learning and her clinical experiences in a face-to-face format uninterrupted. It all came down to prioritization and time management for the student.”

“My professors were kind to listen and understand my situation,” said Kamicha. “I was privileged to observe the performance of evidence-based interventions and follow the nursing process of assessment, diagnosis, planning, implementation, and evaluation. I understood that teamwork is vital in nursing care. My fellow students have been a key factor to my success on Term one, I have found moral support when I felt discouraged. I have learned that communication and teamwork are important.”

Nursing is one of the unique fields where often

students simply cannot complete 100% of their learning in a classroom.

Bolandrina emphasized that “it is required by the Board of Registration in Nursing (BORN) that nursing students complete in-person clinical training because the skills they develop are critical for patient safety.”

Said clinical skills can make all the difference to a patient facing a life-or-death situation. Some of the hands-on learning occurs at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy’s clinical affiliated facilities

such as Harrington Memorial Hospital, Fairlawn Rehabilitation Hospital, Vibra, The Meadows, The Overlook, Webster Manor, Life Care Center of Auburn, Quaboag Rehabilitation and Southbridge Rehabilitation Center. These clinical sites as healthcare partners have proved beneficial to practical nursing students, who are able to use the facilities for training purposes.

Kamicha is enthusiastic about entering Term two in January.

She stated, “I recognize the experience as

a blessing in disguise, I have discovered qualities in me – to keep an open mind, to accept and appreciate people more, and to be positive and optimistic. I look forward to more learning experiences throughout nursing school. I will always be reminded of the kindness that was extended to me by Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, the administration, professors, my fellow students, my care team, and my family on my journey to becoming a nurse.”

Nursing student is a working adult who also has a family and other responsibilities. The typical Bay Path Practical Nursing student wants to improve their chances of landing a job with greater responsibilities and higher pay. Imagine the demand and stress of a full-time evening nursing program. Add a curve ball such as an unfortunate fall resulting in a broken elbow! This is what happened to Nancy Kamicha of Worcester.

began in August, just like any other student,” said Kamicha. “I was focused on studying hard and attending clinicals which I really enjoyed because of patient interaction. I fell at home and fractured my left elbow!”

Kamicha worried that her academics would be interrupted and her goal to become a nurse derailed. She wondered how she would cope, wondered how long her recovery would take, and felt a little lost.

QCC’s winter break offers students a chance to get ahead

WORCESTER — As colleges and universities across the country gear up for winter break, Quinsigamond Community College is preparing for its Winter Intersession. Winter Intersession classes are full credit classes (three credits) that run during the winter break from Jan. 3-10. These two-week classes save students time and money towards their degree or certificate. Intersession classes at QCC are well-known in the area, not just for students already enrolled at QCC, but for students attending other colleges.

“This is a terrific way for students to catch up or get ahead on their college courses, or just experience a class they’ve always wanted to try,” said QCC’s Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. James Keane, noting that there are over 30 online and in-person courses available.

Professor Bill McCarthy, QCC criminal justice department chair, said that intersession courses are historically popular across the country and help retention and graduation rates.

“The Winter Intersession benefits visiting students because many get stuck in a situation where they need just a class or two to graduate,” McCarthy said. “This can keep them from graduating late.”

“QCC students as well as students who regularly attend college away from their homes in Central Massachusetts have benefitted from the Winter Intersessions,” added Melissa Fama, dean of the School of Public Services, Education, and Social Sciences.

Visit QCC Intersession to learn more.



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School District receives Pathways, Fells Foundation grants

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY/CHARLTON — The Shepherd Hill Regional School District has received a pair of grants that will help continue the district's career pathways programs and emergency preparedness efforts respectively.

Superintendent Steven Lamarche announced both grants during the Regional School Committee's final meeting of 2022 in December starting with \$50,000 courtesy of the state's Innovation Pathways Implementation and Support Grant program for Fiscal Year 2023. The grant awardees were recently announced by Governor Charlie Baker's office. Superintendent Lamarche said the awards will help build on Shepherd Hill's career pathways programs designed to help prepare students for futures in a variety of specialty careers.

"This grant provides resources and continues to help us establish an exceptional opportunity for Shepherd Hill Regional High School Students through innovative instructional practices in both engineering and biomedical studies," Lamarche said. "We really appreciate the Governor for providing us a \$50,000 grant."

The second grant comes courtesy of the Fels Family Foundation. The School District has been granted \$7,000 to partners with The Edward Davis Company, a risk management firm, to complete extensive multi-hazard scenarios through one internal and one external exercise. Superintendent Lamarche explained that the exercises will include involvement from both school officials and emergency personnel.

"An internal training engagement will allow the Dudley Charlton leadership team and district office leaders and school principals to walk through realistic and calculated multi-hazard scenarios as an in-person tabletop training," said Lamarche. "The second occasion is an external engagement that will include Dudley and Charlton first responders, police, fire, emergency management, and extend an invite to Nichols College leaders so we can do a more comprehensive tabletop multi-hazard training as well."

These trainings will continue a recent push for emergency preparedness within the district especially in the wake of the Uvalde, Texas school shootings in May. Dates for these exercises have not been set but are expected to take place in 2023.

OBITUARY

Conrad L. Vandal, 75



Woodstock / Southbridge- Conrad L. Vandal, 75, formerly of Southbridge, passed away on Saturday, Dec. 24th, in his home surrounded by his loving family, after a 40 year battle with Multiple Sclerosis.

He leaves his devoted wife of 57 years, Nancy M. (Leduc) Vandal; his two children, Wendy L. LeBouef and her husband Eric of Woodstock and Paul R. Vandal and his long-time companion, Kristin Hemingway of Brimfield; his three sisters, Theresa Berry of Clearwater, FL, Lucille Trombley and her husband Michael of Southbridge and Lorraine Christie and her husband Robert of Bellingham; his three grandchildren, Kayla Perez and her husband Roldans of Spring Hill, FL, Caleb LeBouef of Woodstock and Ethan LeBouef of Woodstock; and several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his brother, Raymond R. Vandal. Conrad was born in Southbridge the son of the late Jules and Irene E. (Arsenault) Vandal. He was a US Army Veteran of the Vietnam War. He was a proud resident of Southbridge for most

of his life, moving to Woodstock 5 years ago.

Conrad worked at Russell Harrington Cutlery Co. in Southbridge for 19 years, retiring due to illness. He was a rental property owner and manager for 42 years. Conrad served his beloved town of Southbridge for many years, first on the School Committee for 7 years and later on the Town Council for 23 years. He was an avid bird watcher and loved antiques and antique fairs. He raised homing pigeons and enjoyed riding his horse, 'Dream'. Conrad was a former recipient of the 'Father of the Year' award from the Multiple Sclerosis Foundation. Conrad was a friend to many and had a heart of gold. Above all he was a loving and devoted husband, father and grandfather.

His funeral was held on Thursday, Dec. 29th, from the Daniel T Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge, with a Mass at 11:00am in St. Mary's Church of the St. John Paul II Parish, 263 Hamilton St., Southbridge. Burial was in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Southbridge. Calling hours in the funeral home were held on Wednesday, Dec. 28th, from 5:00 to 7:00 pm.

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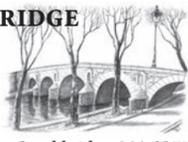
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 PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
 EDITOR

OPINION

TO THE EDITOR

Catholic Charities grateful for support of United Way

To the Editor:

Catholic Charities of South Worcester County in Southbridge would like to express our deepest gratitude by acknowledging the United Way of South Central Massachusetts for their continued generosity and support the Webster, Dudley, Charlton, Sturbridge, and Southbridge community.

We would like to thank Mary O'Coin for her wonderful leadership, the board

members, and all the donors that makes it possible for the United Way of South Central Massachusetts to spread kindness and live united.

With gratitude,

MIURKA TORRES
 CATHOLIC CHARITIES
 SOUTHBRIDGE

Relying on God

BEYOND THE PEWS

REV. JOHN H.D. LUCY
 CHARLTON CITY UMC

Another year down. No doubt, another set of new year's resolutions forgotten from last year, and another set made.

You and I know that very few of us will follow through with our resolutions for long. Indeed, many of us have given up on making resolutions knowing we won't follow through. Here's the problem: most resolutions require willpower, constant willpower. We naturally don't have enough, unless your resolution is to stop relying on willpower.

St. Augustine diagnosed our human problem with this simple phrase: "without God, we can't; without us, God won't." In other words, we have free will, but simultaneously we need God's grace and power to become the people we hope to be.

When I first heard the call to be a pastor, I hated public speaking and, to make matters worse, I wasn't good at it. I also, funnily enough, rarely went to church. At first I worked hard to become worthy of the call. That didn't work. I didn't have enough dedication to become a different person. Then I rejected the call. Clearly God had made a mistake.

Until one day, in a college class, I found myself suddenly loving an obligatory class presentation and also crushing it. How did that happen? Well, in the process of rejecting the call, I prayed daily that if God wanted me to be a pastor, God better help me out. I couldn't do it alone. And, well, voila.

Now, I'm not special. These types of things don't only happen to clergy. Nor do I mean to say it happened overnight. However, I did accidentally learn how right Augustine was, and that the best resolution we can make is to rely on God and God's help. Whatever it is we hope to do, we can't do it alone.

Since most New Year's resolutions involve habits and rituals anyway, like going to the gym three times a week, we might as well resolve to also or instead pray, read the Bible, go to worship, and otherwise turn to God as often as we can. Resolve to do the rituals by which we can rely upon God. It certainly won't do any harm. Who knows, you may also find all your other resolutions becoming reality for once.

Resolutions that have stood the test of time

"Play and sing good, dance better, help win war - beat Fascism." - Woody Guthrie, 'New Year's Rulin's,' 1943.

"I will tell people not to call in the morning, or not answer the phone." - Susan Sontag, diary, 1977.

"Keep looking around me - only much more so - observing - but not only myself but others and everything - take things (it) for what they (it's) are worth." - Marilyn Monroe, diary, 1955.

"Makeup in privacy, not where he sees you." - Dating Guide, 1938.

"Things not to worry about: Don't worry about popular opinion, don't worry about dolls, don't worry about the past, don't worry about the future, don't worry about growing up, don't worry about anybody getting ahead of you, don't worry about triumph, don't worry about failure unless it comes through your own fault, don't worry about mosquitoes, don't worry about flies, don't worry about insects in general, don't worry about parents. don't worry about boys, don't worry about disappointments, don't worry about pleasures, don't worry about satisfactions." - F. Scott Fitzgerald, letter to his daughter, 1933.

"A New Year's Resolution that a man can keep... take a glass of Guinness every day." - Guinness advertisement, 1935.

"Into each day put 12 parts of faith, 11 parts of patience, 10 of courage, 9 of work, 8 of hope, 7 of fidelity, 6 of liberality, 5 of kindness, 4 of rest, 3 of prayer, 2 of meditation and one well-selected resolution." - Ocala Motors Inc. advertisement, 1960.

"No New Year's Resolutions except to make the bed and stop moaning about." - Christopher Isherwood, diary, 1968.

"Set great goals, daily rest, brief vacations, knowledge of all weaknesses, better use of time." - Richard Nixon, diary, 1965.

Do what you've never done before, see what you've never seen. Feel what you've never felt before. Go where you've never been." - Donovan, "New Year's Resolution," 1970

Time for New Year's financial resolutions

It's that time of year when many of us promise ourselves we'll go to the gym more, or learn a new language, or take up a musical instrument, or any number of other worthy goals. But this year, when making New Year's resolutions, why not also consider some financial ones?

Here are a few to consider:

Don't let inflation derail your investment strategy. As you know, inflation was the big financial story of 2022, hitting a 40-year high. And while it may moderate somewhat this year, it will likely still be higher than what we experienced the past decade or so. Even so, it's a good idea to try not to let today's inflation harm your investment strategy for the future. That happened last year: More than half of American workers either reduced their contributions to their 401(k)s and other retirement plans or stopped contributing completely during the third quarter of 2022, according to a survey by Allianz Life Insurance of North America. Of course, focusing on your cash flow needs today is certainly understandable, but are there other ways you can free up some money, such as possibly lowering your spending,



FINANCIAL FOCUS

TREVOR NIELSEN

so you can continue contributing to your retirement accounts? It's worth the effort because you could spend two or three decades as a retiree.

Control your debts. Inflation can also be a factor in debt management. For example, your credit card debt could rise due to rising prices and variable credit card interest rate increases. By paying your bill each month, you can avoid the effects of rising interest rates. If you do carry a balance, you might be able to transfer it to a lower-rate card, depending on your credit score. And if you're carrying multiple credit cards, you might benefit by getting a fixed-rate debt consolidation loan. In any case, the lower your debt payments, the more you can invest for your long-term goals.

Review your investment portfolio. At least once a year, you should review your investment portfolio to determine if it's still appropriate for your goals, risk tolerance and time horizon. But be careful not to make changes just because you

feel your recent performance is not what it should have been. When the financial markets are down, as was the case for most of 2022, even quality investments, such as stocks of companies with solid business fundamentals and strong prospects, can see declines in value. But if these investments are still suitable for your portfolio, you may want to keep them.

Prepare for the unexpected. If you encountered a large unexpected expense, such as the need for a major home repair, how would you pay for it? If you didn't have the money readily available, you might be forced to dip into your long-term investments or retirement accounts. To prevent this, you should build an emergency fund containing three to six months' worth of living expenses - or a year's worth, if you're retired - with the money kept in a low-risk, liquid account.

These resolutions can be useful - so try to put them to work in 2023.

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@edward-jones.com.

Ring in the New Year with traditions, fruits, and vegetables

Start your New Year with a bit of luck and nutritious eating. Try a few of these food-related traditions and then plan on growing a few of your own to enjoy.

Eating grapes on New Year's Eve is a Mexican food tradition. One grape is eaten with each stroke of midnight and is believed to lead to prosperity in the year ahead. Grapes are low in saturated fats and relatively high in vitamins C and K.

If space allows, grow your own grapes in a sunny location on decorative arbors and trellises. Use these as a decorative and edible entryway to the garden, as screening, or to provide shade. Plan for the squirrels and birds that may join you during harvest season.

In the southern United States, black-eyed peas have long been part of the New Year's celebration. Many people believe the swelling of the peas as they cook represents prosperity, while others think their shape resembles coins.

Southern peas are warm-weather plants and should not be planted until the soil is warm and toasty, preferably above 65 degrees. Multiple plantings can be made at three-week intervals to have fresh peas all summer and fall. Space the seeds about two inches apart down the row. The rows should be three



Melinda Myers

Increase your good luck and prosperity by growing and serving a cabbage dish on New Year's Eve.

to four feet apart.

GARDEN MOMENTS

MELINDA MYERS

Southern peas are one vegetable that doesn't require pampering. They thrive in summer heat and stand up to the dry weather without a complaint. Most selections require 50-55 days from planting until harvest in the green pea stage. If dried peas are desired, 65-75 days are needed.

Elevate the fun of future New Year's celebrations by growing your own. Plant black-eyed peas in a sunny spot in your garden. Wait for the soil to warm to begin planting the seeds. Make several plantings to have fresh peas all summer long. Most varieties are ready to harvest fresh in 50 to 55 days. Allow

some of them to mature on the plant. These are usually ready to harvest in 65 to 75 days. Pull and hang the plants in a warm location to dry. Then shell and store the black-eyed peas for your winter and New Year's meal.

Increase your good luck and prosperity by including a cabbage dish. This German, Irish, and U.S. tradition is tied to the fact that cabbage leaves resemble money, promoting personal wealth.

You can start your own cabbage plants from seeds or purchase transplants from your favorite garden center. Plant cabbage in the garden in spring for an early summer harvest or plant in mid-summer for a fall harvest. Preserve your cabbage by quartering, blanching, and freezing some for use in your favorite cabbage dishes and New Year's celebration.

Growing your own fruits and vegetables elevates the fun of these New Year's celebrations. It also encourages all of us to eat healthier, a common resolution for many.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the recently released Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition and Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" instant video and DVD series and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment TV & radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and her Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

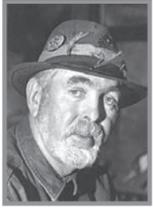
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Letters to the Editor must include the author's name, address, and a daytime phone number for purposes of verification in order to be considered for publication. Only the author's name and the town in which they reside will be published. Letters submitted 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.



The ice fishing outlook



THE GREAT
OUTDOORS
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The start of a new year has many hoping for a better year than 2022. The Covid crisis has returned, but should not be as bad as last year, as most residents of the state have had most of the required shots. Traveling is something that needs to be given a lot of thought. There is plenty of hunting and fishing here at home. The few cold days that we had a week ago gave ice fishing anglers an opportunity to get a few days of ice fishing in, although only seasoned anglers should have attempted to venture out onto the ice. Fishing on thin ice as we all know is extremely dangerous and can present anglers with life or death situations, in a matter of seconds.

The quick change in temperatures last week, and continued this week, should make any sensible person stay off of the ice locally, but ice fishing continues the farther north and west you go. Some local anglers headed for Maine last week, and had substantial ice on many ponds providing anglers with some great fishing. When and if some colder weather arrives, ice fishing should resume for many anglers, and many of them will be targeting Northern Pike.

This trophy fishing for Northerns is like a fever for some



Courtesy

This week's picture shows an excited angler with a trophy Northern Pike he caught a few years ago. Nice fish!

anglers. Purchasing large live bait like six inch suckers, at close to \$5 or more (if you can find them at your local bait shop) is just the start of fishing for Northerns. Many anglers travel out of state to find these trophy fish, which is only an hour or two away. States like Rhode Island and Connecticut provide anglers with some great fishing if you do your homework. Anglers that have located the best Northern fishing are

very careful not to divulge their fishing hotspots, but sometimes it is very hard to keep secret. It has become such a prized secret, that some anglers are gathering information from anglers at bait shops and Facebook and following them to their destination. That is how bad some guys want to catch one of these trophy fish. If you have a fishing hotspot be sure to check the car behind you when you head out for a day

of fishing. You could be being followed!

Rat poison is in the news, and it is not only killing rats! One animal rehab center is claiming that the poisoned rats and mice are being eaten by other animals and birds, and are dying from the ingestion of the poisoned four legged mammals. Getting rid of these mammals is not easy, and is a constant problem for homeowners and farmers. Setting traps and homemade devices never seems to be enough to eradicate these four legged mammals. They are responsible for eating clothing and other valuable items that are stored away for the winter months. They will eat wiring in cars and lawn equipment. You can never take enough precautions to protect all of your items. So what do you do? Most resort to calling an exterminator; if the situation gets out of hand! I spoke with a local exterminator this past week and he is aware of the problem, but insists it is not as bad as some people think. The latest poison on the market to rid your home of these nasty pests is better than the poison of years ago, but you still need to closely monitor your pets and livestock and most of all your family members. There is no real quick fix to the problem, and the nasty critters are here to stay, as are the problems with coyotes. Unfortunately, some of the poisoned critters will get eaten by other animals, but hopefully, it will be kept to a minimum.

Next week, we will discuss the art of Jig fishing through the ice! Don't miss it!

Take a Kid Fishing & Keep Them Rods Bending!

Tips to Keep New Year Resolutions

Let's face it, New Year resolutions are difficult to keep. Even the firmest intentions can lose steam come March. So what's the secret to will-power longevity? The key factors to resolution success are attitude and commitment. Oftentimes New Year resolutions are self-improvements, and that requires a lifestyle change. Taking on the challenge with an eye to the future can increase the odds of your New Year resolution turning into a longtime success.

The following strategies are geared toward arming you with the tools to expand your January vows into lifelong achievements. Happy New Year!

According to Statista Global Consumer Survey, Americans top New Year resolutions for 2023 are as follows:

Exercise more 52%; Eat healthier, 50%; Lose weight: 40%; Save more money, 39%; Spend more time with family and friends, 37%; Spend less time on social media, 20%; Reduce stress on the job, 19%.

The list reveals Americans put a premium on health and fitness, want to practice frugality

and spend quality time with loved ones. While that's no surprise, the path to getting their might be. Here's how to approach your goals with a different plan of action (and hopefully a better outcome!)

Rule #1: Stop Overachieving

Whittling your resolutions down from a top ten list to one or two increases the odds of long term success. With a focus on one main goal, your "eye is always on the prize."

Rule #2: Adjust your Attitude

So you hate working out? Resent pinching pennies? Can't bear to sack the sweets?

Remind yourself you are doing this of your own free will! Remember the "fake it till you make it" research that reveals even a forced smile boosts your happy genes, thus actually making you happier! The phenomenon is called "facial feedback," and according to Psychology Today, it works because the brain senses the flexion of certain facial muscles and interprets it as "Oh I must be happy about something."

No one is forcing you



TAKE
THE
HINT
.....
KAREN
TRAINOR

to get on the treadmill or give up your \$6 morning Latte - it is your choice. You are choosing to improve your life. Sometimes reminding yourself that you are willingly partaking in the sacrifice can get you through the tough times.

Rule #3 Be Accountable

Taking pen to paper (or keyboard to screen) can be powerful, and research repeatedly reveals that holding yourself accountable, be it via an exercise chart, daily food list, or budget list, is very effective to making long term changes. Better yet, log your progress and map out your future goals on a graph, spreadsheet or on a calendar.

Rule #3: Break it Down

It sounds like common sense to break goals down into manageable tasks, but people don't

always take the time to practice it. Make a plan with mini goals. When you achieve each goal, log it on paper or on the computer. Again, the power of the written (or typed) word solidifies the commitment.

Rule #4: Group Therapy

There's a reason WW (formerly known as Weight Watchers) is a huge success. Misery (and merriment) loves company. With plenty of support groups available online there is no reason not to seek out others striving for the same end results as you. Posting on a website that promotes healthy eating, frugality or even organization skills can boost your willpower and give you "shots" of encouragement. Not ready to join in a discussion? No worries. Just visiting a website with information and resources can aid you in your journey of improvement.

Rule #5: Make it Fun!

When's the last time you had fun achieving a goal? It's easier than you think to stay the course if it's a pleasant trip. Besides, who ever said a self-improvement

plan has to be grueling? For example, it might not work for everyone, but I watch the Food Channel while on the treadmill. This way, I get my "food fix" virtually (and with no calories!)

And although pinching pennies can feel like punishment, why not make a game of your budgeting? Challenge yourself to save a certain percentage at the grocery store each week, and up the ante when you reach your goal. Many supermarkets reveal the percentage or dollar amount saved right on the receipt, making it even easier to track your progress.

Rule # 6: Motivate Yourself

Motivational speakers spark results, but you can use simple tools to be a self-motivator! Research the habits successful people and take a cue from them on how to carry on and achieve success even after failures. Remember Thomas Edison's famous quote: After someone remarked his light bulb experiments failed, he said: "I have not failed 10,000 times. I have successfully found 10,000 ways that will not work."

Win Dinner for Two at the Publick House

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

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

Vintage cars

I hope that you have been having a wonderful holiday season and wish you a healthy and happy New Year!

We are currently preparing for our first auction of 2023. One of my favorite aspects of our work is the element of surprise with each new estate. We never know what we'll find. That includes two exciting finds that will be up for sale in our next auction: Two popular 1970s cars from two different estates.

Car enthusiasts collect a wide variety of cars ranging from some of the earliest versions like Ford Model Ts and Stanley Steamers to modern vehicles like a 2023 Ram 1500 TRX Havoc Edition Baja Yellow Super Truck, which has a list price of over \$100,000.

The auto industry saw many changes during the 1970s. Supercars.net notes that gas shortages forced vehicles to become more fuel efficient and consumer advocates demanded safer cars.

American auto companies and consumers were slow to respond to these changes and many muscle cars (mid-sized high-performance car) were still being manufactured in the United States during the 1970s. Motorcities.org refers to the late 1960s and early 1970s as the "American Performance Generation." A variety of bright colors and high-performance engines appealed to buyers. Plymouth sold fast cars in "Vitamin C Orange" while Chevrolet produced cars



ANTIQUES,
COLLECTIBLES
& ESTATES
.....
WAYNE
TUISKULA

in "Rally Red." As you might expect, some of the 1970s cars that are most popular with collectors are muscle cars. However, there are some surprising choices on hotcars.com's list of "Some of The Coolest American Cars of the 1970s." The top 10 are:

10. 1970 Chevrolet Chevelle LS6
9. 1970 Dodge Challenger R/T Convertible
8. 1970 Ford Mustang Boss 302
7. 1971 AMC Hornet SC/360
6. 1971 Plymouth Hemi GTX
5. 1972 Oldsmobile Cutlass 442 W-30
4. 1973 Buick Riviera Boat Tail
3. 1973 Chevy Camaro Z28
2. 1974 Cadillac Fleetwood Sixty-Special Brougham Talisman
1. 1974 Lincoln Continental MKIVs line

The 1970 Chevrolet Chevelle, 1973 Camaro Z28, 1970 Dodge Challenger R/T Convertible and Ford Mustang Boss 302 are cars I'd expect to see on the list. But the 1971 AMC Hornet SC/360, 1974 Cadillac Fleetwood Sixty-Special Brougham Talisman and the 1974 Lincoln Continental MKIVs line surprised me. The Hornet had a 5.9L V8 engine and offered a lot of performance in a smaller car, which could explain why it made the list. They chose the Cadillac and Lincoln based on how lux-



urious they are.

Some 1970s muscle cars sell for under \$10,000. A 1972 Dodge Charger sold for \$8,500 in 2021 and a 1970 Chevrolet SS Camaro in running condition sold for \$2,500 in 2016. Conversely, some 1970s cars rank on the list of top 10 prices for cars sold at auction, according to American Legend Wheels (Americanlegendwheels.com). In 2015, a 1970 Plymouth Hemi Cuda convertible brought \$2.25 million at auction. A 1971 Hemi Convertible topped that, selling for \$3.5 million in 2014.

We will be offering a 1970 Plymouth Satellite muscle car from a Watertown, MA estate in our upcoming auction.

It is a project car but has already been drawing interest. We will also be selling a 1975 Chevrolet Corvette Stingray from a Westborough, MA estate. This car is in running condition. We'll continue to gear up for this auction and hope some local bidders drive away with something to enjoy when the cold winter weather ends.

This auction will start soon and end in late January. Please visit our website <https://centralmassauctions.com> for links to upcoming events.

Please contact us at www.centralmassauctions.com (508-612-6111) info@centralmassauctions.com for antiques and collectibles auction services.

SPORTS

Barbale's strong performance brings Bay Path to victory over Wolverines



Peter Barbale of Bay Path flings a pass down the court to teammate Jon Nussey.



Bay Path's Trent Szela reaches up to catch a pass thrown his way.

Bay Path's Jon Nussey steps into and makes a shot versus Leicester.

Nick Ethier photos

BY KEN POWERS
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — Peter Barbale scored a game-high 24 points — 20 in the second half — to help lead the Bay Path Regional boys' basketball team to a 64-33 victory over visiting Leicester High on Wednesday, Dec. 21.

The victory over the Wolverines was a breakout game for the 6-foot-2 Barbale, who is the starting point guard for the Minutemen, despite being just a sophomore.

"Yes, finally," Barbale said when asked if he felt like this was his best game of the young season. "The first couple of games I got off to a rocky start but today I feel like I played the way I'm capable. The only thing I did different (against Leicester) is I took more shots and I was able to put a lot of them in the basket. Shooters shoot, right?"

Bay Path coach Al Greenough was happy to see the player he knows Barbale can be show up for the Leicester game.

"Peter has a good scoring touch but he struggled, shooting-wise, the first

two games. It was good to see him finally break out and have the game he had tonight," said Greenough, who was quick to point out that Barbale is much more than just a shooter for the Minutemen. "Our team runs through Peter. He's our point guard and our best shooter. He is tall for a point guard but I don't care how tall they are as long as they can handle the ball and he can; he doesn't turn it over very much. That's really what his job for us is."

Barbale wasn't a one-man show for Bay Path in the win over Leicester. Classmate Dale Nussey added nine points, while senior Zack Fritze, junior Trent Szela and sophomore Corey Scovil all scored eight points each.

Nussey was an all-around thorn in the side of the Wolverines throughout

the game. He was the focal point of the Minutemen press, which produced several steals and caused many of Leicester's 20 turnovers. On two occasions, after one of the Wolverines had secured a defensive rebound, Nussey slipped in behind the player, stripped the ball and scored a layup.

"Dale is the sparkplug on our press. He makes us go and he's 100 percent all the time; every single play," Greenough said. "His effort may not show up in the box score after every game but he can score when he needs to. He's basically out there to give us a spark, to get some steals, and to get us in transition. Dale

is around the ball all the time. As a coach you want a player on the court like that, a player who always finds a way to be in the mix. He's very quick and very fast."

Nussey knows when he's on the court playing defense is job No. 1.

"Points are secondary for me. I just always try to play hard because I'm not the biggest guy out on the court. I try to play like I'm their size even though I'm not," the 5-foot-8 Nussey said. "Speed is my thing. With our press we like to make our opponent make quick decisions, which are often bad decisions. When we can do that we can get out and run the floor and have that quick decision by the other team end up as a layup for us. I don't think they were expecting our press to be so effective."

The Minutemen took control of the game right away, jumping out to a 7-0 lead by forcing Leicester into three turnovers and three missed shots on its first six possessions. Bay Path, which led 11-5 at the end of the first quarter, pushed its lead to 23-7 with 1:42 to play in the first half on a pair of Barbale free throws.

Leicester scored the last five points of the second quarter (in the final 32 seconds), however, on a right-side 15-foot jumper and a top-of-the-arc 3-pointer by Steven Diaz (a team-high 13 points). The Wolverines trailed, 23-12, at intermission.

The Minutemen scored the first 11 points of the third quarter, and 16 of the first 18 points in the period to extend their lead to 39-14, with 4:45 remaining in the quarter. Barbale scored nine points in the run.

The Wolverines' Matt Dizenzo scored six of his 10 points in the game during a 9-0 Leicester run which cut the Bay Path lead to 39-23 with 2:28 left in the third quarter. The Minutemen led, 48-25, after three periods.

With the win over Leicester, Bay Path evened its record at 2-2. The Minutemen closed out the December portion of their 2022-2023 schedule with a loss to Auburn (65-56, Tuesday, Dec. 27) and a win over Southbridge (59-42, Thursday, Dec. 29) in the Rocket Holiday Classic. Bay Path began January with a 3-3 record.

Following the loss to Bay Path the Wolverines (0-5) lost at home to Tahanto Regional (64-31, Tuesday, Dec. 27) and Oxford (74-54, Thursday, Dec. 29).

Local fire departments earn grants for safety equipment

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

REGION — Numerous local fire departments were named recipients of 2023 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grants in December as the annual funding announcement revealed a total of \$5 million worth of investments in helping 308 fire departments stay equipped and ready for any emergency.

Gov. Charles Baker and Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito announced the recipients on Dec. 9 in the third year of a five-year, \$25 million bond bill filed by their administration to support firefighters across the Commonwealth. In a statement, Baker praised the work firefighters do across the state.

We ask so much of our firefighters, and no matter how dangerous or diffi-

cult the situation, they always do whatever it takes to help," said Baker. "This program is an opportunity to make sure they are properly protected every time they answer a call for help."

Lt. Governor Polito concurred, taking her own opportunity to praise those who choose to protect others as their line of work.

"The decision to become a firefighter is one of the bravest, most selfless choices a person can make," said Lt. Gov. Polito. "I am so thankful to the men and women who have dedicated themselves to this calling. In every city and town, these heroes drop what they're doing and rush to help — even when it puts them in harm's way."

The funding will help provide a variety of tools to different departments in need including ballistic vests and helmets, boots and coats, cold water

immersion suits, gas detectors, gear driers, gloves, hoods, hoses and assorted complimenting equipment, rescue ladders, thermal imaging cameras, vehicle stabilization struts, and much more although what the funding will be used for by each individual department was not listed in the announcement.

Numerous towns in Southern Worcester County were on the list of grantees including Auburn which is receiving \$12,382.30, Brookfield which will receive \$7,697.25, Charlton which was awarded \$18,995.40, Dudley which is receiving \$13,207, Northbridge which is receiving \$15,418.73, Oxford which is receiving \$19,000, Southbridge and Sturbridge which are receiving \$14,460 and \$10,070.70, respectively, Spencer which is receiving \$11,114.92, Uxbridge which was awarded \$19,000, and Webster will receive \$18,524.

Sturbridge resident joins Fattman's staff



B O S T O N — State Sen. Ryan Fattman (R-Sutton) has announced the hire of Sturbridge resident Amanda G a l o n e k Hellyar as the Deputy District Director and Special Projects Coordinator for his Senate office.

Hellyar received her B.A. in Political Science with a minor in Journalism and Mass Communication from George Washington University in 2013, and her Master of Public Administration from Louisiana State University in 2016. Furthermore, she completed an undergraduate semester studying Social and Political Transformation with the School for International Training (SIT) in Durban, South Africa. She joins the Senator's team after spending the past five years as a History and Special Education teacher at her alma mater, Tantasqua Regional High School, in Sturbridge.

"Amanda is going to make a great addition to my staff. Amanda brings a strong academic background, knowledge, and passion about serving the community in which she resides," said Fattman. "My constituents will be well served by her representation and knowledge of the new areas of my district."

Hellyar's responsibilities will include reporting to District Director Kylie Gibbons on an array of issues throughout the western portion of Senator Fattman's district, providing staff support to the Senator or District Director at events, assist in the scheduling of regional meetings in conjunction with the District Director and Senator such as office hours, ribbon cuttings, senior center and community events, and attend and track legislative committee hearings and briefings.

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SPORTS

Tantasqua's defense clamps down to edge Sammies

BY NICK ETHIER
SPORTS EDITOR

STURBRIDGE — For the Tantasqua Regional boys' varsity basketball team to be successful, at least for now, the Warriors need to be as sharp as possible on the defensive end of the floor.

And through Tantasqua's first four games of the 2022-2023 season, they have exceeded — and exceeded extremely well — in three of those contests, as the Warriors improved to 3-1 following a 35-30 victory over Sutton High on Wednesday, Dec. 28.

"I told them at halftime our defense has to be our staple. We're clearly trying to figure ourselves out offensively, so we have to live and die by our defense, which I think we were able to," Tantasqua head coach Scott Dion said as his team held an 11-9 lead over the Sammies at the break. "We held them to 9 in the first half and 21 in the second half. We left some points out there — some missed free throws, some layup opportunities — but so did they, and we made the plays when we had to."

When asked why the Warriors are much further along with their defensive game compared to the offensive production, Dion was candid with his response.

"I think it's easier to collectively get your unit to defend than it is to collectively get your unit to make shots," he began. "Defensively, as coaches, we can have much more structure and much more influence on what they have to do. They follow what we're trying to teach them defensively."

Offensive maturity can happen individually or while playing pickup during the offseason, Dion added.

Tantasqua lost its season opener to Doherty High in a high-scoring overtime affair, 72-66, but Dion credited that output with the Highlanders' high-octane style of play. Since then, the Warriors defeated Northbridge High (33-32), Uxbridge High (45-42) and now Sutton. Tantasqua has averaged just 37 points a game in those victories, but the stingy defense has allowed only 34.67 points a contest.

"We're going to get better. We'll keep working offensively and stick with the process," said Dion.

In the win over the Sammies, the Warriors' scoring was spread out. Aiden Gingras led the way with 10 points, while Adam Howe (6 points), Liam Hubacz (6), Colm McGrath (6), Elijah Webb (3), Bryce Tessier (2) and Trevor Harris (2) also scored.

"We're more of a spread it out team. We're also pretty young, too," said Dion.

With Tantasqua starting three juniors, a sophomore and a senior — and with that group having little quality minute varsity playing experience heading into the season — Dion has hopes that their scoring totals will elevate into the New Year.



Tantasqua's Colm McGrath streaks past Sutton's Javen Nazario and lays the ball in for two points.



Bryce Tessier of Tantasqua leaps to catch the ball and keep it from bouncing out of bounds.



Tantasqua's Trevor Harris wedges between Sutton defenders Ryan O'Rourke (32) and Thomas Salem to loft a shot toward the basket.



Paddy McGrath of Tantasqua looks around Sutton's Charles Marchand while trying to make a pass inside.



Tantasqua's Adam Howe works the ball down the baseline against Sutton's Charles Marchand.

Sutton is 2-1 following the loss.

HIGH SCHOOL NOTEBOOK — TANTASQUA SWIM TEAMS FALL TO WESTBOROUGH

Wednesday, Dec. 21

Competing against the Rangers, the boys' and girls' swim teams from Tantasqua couldn't pull out a victory. The boys lost, 90-76, while the girls fell short, 117-52.

Highlights of the meet included first place swims by Eben Mazeika (200 free), Sam Merchant (200 IM, 500 free), Ethan Zhu (100 fly) and Jonah Scherer (100 breaststroke). Merchant qualified for sectionals and Zhu swam a state qualifying time in the 100 back.

For the girls, Zoey Zhu placed first in the 50 free, Kira Dambly placed first in the 500 free and Tori Stendrup placed first in the 100 breaststroke.

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LEGALS

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

Premises: 663 North Woodstock Road, Southbridge, MA 01550
By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Armand O. Rondeau and Patricia A. Rondeau to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Mortgagee, as nominee for PNC Bank, National Association, said mortgage dated July 13, 2012 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 49323, Page 331, said mortgage was assigned from Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. to Everbank by assignment dated December 31, 2013 and recorded with said Registry of Deeds in Book 51943, Page 278; said mortgage was assigned from TIAA, FSB f/k/a Everbank to PNC Bank, National Association by assignment dated June 2, 2022 and recorded with said Registry of Deeds in Book 67764, Page 51; for breach of the conditions in said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at **Public Auction** on January 27, 2023 at 10:00 AM Local Time upon the premises, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

The land referred to herein below is situated in the county of WORCESTER, State of MA and is described as follows:

ALL THAT PARCEL OF LAND IN TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE, WORCESTER COUNTY, COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, AS MORE FULLY DESCRIBED IN DEED BOOK 9037, PAGE 386. ID# 110-005-00001. BEING KNOWN AND DESIGNATED AS:

THE LAND IN SOUTHBRIDGE, ON THE WESTERLY SIDE OF NORTH WOODSTOCK ROAD, BOUNDED AND DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

BEGINNING AT AN IRON PIPE IN THE GROUND ON THE WESTERLY SIDE LINE OF NORTH WOODSTOCK ROAD AS RELOCATED BY THE WORCESTER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS IN 1935, SAID ESTHER PAGE AND ALSO BRING 331.9 FEET NORTHERLY FROM A WORCESTER COUNTY BOUND IN THE GROUND OPPOSITE STATION 0+00 ON THE SAID 1935 LAYOUT PLAN; THENCE RUNNING SOUTH 84 DEGREES 46' 10" WEST ALONG LAND OF HENRY AND ESTHER PAGE, 337

FEET TO AN IRON PIPE IN A STONE WALL; THENCE RUNNING NORTHEASTERLY ALONG THE CENTER LINE OF SAID STONE WALL AND LAND OF SIGRID PAGE, NOW OR FORMERLY, 159

FEET TO AN IRON PIPE IN SAID STONE WALL; THENCE RUNNING NORTH 84 DEGREES 46' 10" EAST ALONG THE WESTERLY SIDE LINE OF NORTH WOODSTOCK ROAD; TEHNCE RUNNING SOUTH 5 DEGREES 13' 50" EAST ALONG THE WESTERLY SIDE LINE OF NORTH WOODSTOCK ROAD 150 FEET TO THE IRON PIPE IN THE GROUND AT THE POINT OF BEGINNING. EXCEPTING THEREFROM A STRIP OF LAND ABOUT 25 FEET IN WIDTH ALONG THE SOUTHERLY BOUNDARY OF THE PREMISES CONVEYED BY GEORGE PAGE AND WINIFRED PAGE TO HENRY PAGE AND ESTHER M. PAGE BY DEED DATED JULY 20, 1960 AND RECORDED WITH SAID DEEDS IN BOOK 4126, PAGE 140.

Tax/Parcel ID: 110-005-00001

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 25, 1985 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 9037, Page 386.

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
1080 Main Street, Suite 200
Pawtucket, RI 02860
Attorney for PNC Bank, National Association
Present Holder of the Mortgage
(401) 217-8701

December 22, 2022
December 29, 2022
January 5, 2023

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 Jose A. Rosario, Xiomara Vega to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Consumer Home Mortgage Corp of America, dated June 18, 2007 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 41373, Page 308, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, by assignment from: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Consumer Home Mortgage Corp of America to Nationstar Mortgage LLC, recorded on May 31, 2013, in Book No. 50979, at Page 104

Nationstar Mortgage LLC to U.S. Bank National Association, not in its individual capacity, but solely as trustee for the RMAC Trust, Series 2016-CTT, recorded on August 8, 2017, in Book No. 57549, at Page 307

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 PM on January 27, 2023, on the mortgaged premises located at 176 South Street, Southbridge, Worcester County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,

TO WIT:

The land with the buildings thereon and all privileges and appurtenances there-to belonging situated on the northerly line of South Street in Southbridge, Worcester County, Massachusetts, bounded and described as follows:

BEGINNING at the southwesterly corner thereof at an iron pin on the northerly line of said South Street, said iron pin being 99.40 feet easterly of the intersection of the easterly line of High Street and the northerly line of said South Street; thence

NORTHEASTERLY with an included angle of 69 degrees 32' with the northerly line of South Street, by the easterly line of land now or formerly of Anthem Archambeault et ux, 77.96 feet to an iron pin at the southeasterly corner of land formerly of Felix P. Carmel et ux; thence

NORTHEASTERLY with an included angle of 175 degrees 59' 30", by the easterly line of land of said Carmel, 75 feet to an iron pin on the southerly line of land now or formerly of Wesley K. Cole et ux; thence

EASTERLY with an included angle of 90 degrees by the southerly line of land of said Cole, 56.91 feet to an iron pin at the northwesterly corner of land now or formerly of Elaine P. Grandone; thence

SOUTHWESTERLY with an included angle of 94 degrees 50' 30": by land of said Grandone, 124.50 feet to an iron pin on the northerly line of said South Street; thence

SOUTHWESTERLY with an included angle of 109 degrees 38' by the northerly line of said South Street, 68 feet to the point of beginning.

The above described premises are subject to building restrictions, restrictions and conditions in Book 427, Page 143; right of way and condition as to greenhouse in Book 2611, Page 569; condition that premises are to be used for dwelling purposes only and fencing restrictions as recited in Book 563, Page 640, if still in existence.

For mortgagor's(s') title see deed recorded with Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 36140, Page 89.

These premises will 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, 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 Five Thousand (\$5,000.00) Dollars 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 certified or bank check at Harmon Law Offices, P.C., 150 California St., Newton, Massachusetts 02458, or by mail to P.O. Box 610389, Newton Highlands, Massachusetts 02461-0389, 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. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.

U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS TRUSTEE FOR THE RMAC TRUST, SERIES 2016-CTT Present holder of said mortgage

By its Attorneys,

HARMON LAW OFFICES, P.C.

150 California St.
Newton, MA 02458
(617)558-0500
2016060308
December 29, 2022
January 5, 2023
January 12, 2023

MORTGAGEE'S NOTICE OF SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain Mortgage given by Dennis Drake, Jr. to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for First Franklin a division of National City Bank, its successors and assigns, dated November 6, 2006 and recorded with the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 40226, Page 364, subsequently assigned to LASALLE BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION AS TRUSTEE FOR FIRST FRANKLIN MORTGAGE LOAN TRUST 2007-FF1, MORTGAGE LOAN ASSET-BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2007-FF1 by MORTGAGE ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION SYSTEMS, INC. by assignment recorded in said Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 42532, Page 353, subsequently assigned to U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee, in trust for registered holders of First Franklin Mortgage Loan Trust, Mortgage Loan Asset-Backed Certificates, Series 2007-FF1 by LASALLE BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION AS TRUSTEE FOR FIRST FRANKLIN MORTGAGE LOAN TRUST 2007-FF1, MORTGAGE LOAN ASSET-BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2007-FF1 by assignment recorded in said Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 62354, Page 66 for breach of the conditions of said Mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing same will be sold at Public Auction at 1:00 PM on January 26, 2023 at 5 Apollo Drive, Southbridge, MA, all and singular the premises described in said Mortgage, to wit:

The land in Southbridge, Worcester County, Massachusetts and the buildings thereon known as lot 7A, Apollo Drive, Southbridge, Worcester County, Massachusetts, containing 14,064 square feet, more or less, and shown as Lot 7A on a plan of land entitled "Plan of Land, 'Autumn Ridge, Southbridge, Mass.'" Prepared by Metrowest Engineering, Inc. dated June 10, 1991" recorded in Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Book 650, Plan 28. BEING the same premises conveyed to Grantor by deed dated September 15, 1986 and recorded in book 10066, Page 230 at said registry. For title, see deed recorded herewith in book 40226, page 363

The premises are to be sold subject to and with the benefit of all easements, restrictions, encroachments, building and zoning laws, liens, unpaid taxes, tax titles, water bills, municipal liens and assessments, rights of tenants and parties in possession, and attorney's fees and costs.

TERMS OF SALE:

A deposit of FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND 00 CENTS (\$5,000.00) in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or money order will be required to be delivered at or before the time the bid is offered. The successful bidder will be required to execute a Foreclosure Sale Agreement immediately after the close of the bidding. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid within thirty (30) days from the sale date in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or other check satisfactory to Mortgagee's attorney. The Mortgagee reserves the right to bid at the sale, to reject any and all bids, to continue the sale and to amend the terms of the sale by written or oral announcement made before or during the foreclosure sale. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication. TIME WILL BE OF THE ESSENCE.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.

U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee, in trust for registered holders of First Franklin Mortgage Loan Trust, Mortgage Loan Asset-Backed Certificates, Series 2007-FF1 Present Holder of said Mortgage, By Its Attorneys,
ORLANDS PC
PO Box 540540
19-008599/231/NOTOP_DR
Waltham, MA 02454
Phone: (781) 790-7800
19-008599
January 5, 2023
January 12, 2023
January 19, 2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate and Family Court

225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
Docket Nos. WO22P4296GD
NOTICE AND ORDER:
Petition for Appointment of
Guardian of a Minor

In the interests of
Liliani J Rivera-Oquendo
of Southbridge, MA
Minor

NOTICE TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

1. Hearing Date/Time: A hearing on a Petition for Appointment of Guardian of a Minor filed on **12/14/2002** by **Lilliam Oquendo** of Southbridge, MA **Rebecca Rivera** of Southbridge, MA will be held **01/17/2023 08:30 am. Guardianship of Minor Hearing.** Located **Worcester Probate and Family Court**

2. Response to Petition: You may respond by filing a written response to the Petition or by appearing in person at the hearing. If you choose to file a written response, you need to:

File the original with the Court; and
Mail a copy to all interested parties at least five (5) business days before the hearing.

3. Counsel for the Minor: The minor (or an adult on behalf of the minor) has the right to request that counsel be appointed for the minor.

4. Counsel for Parents: If you are a parent of the minor child who is the subject of this proceeding you have a right to be represented by an attorney. If you want an attorney and cannot afford to pay for one and if you give proof that you are indigent, an attorney will be assigned to you. Your request for an attorney should be made immediately by filling out the Application of Appointment of Counsel form. Submit the application form in person or by mail at the court location where your case is going to be heard.

5. Presence of the Minor at Hearing: A minor over age 14 has the right to be present at any hearing, unless the Court finds that it is not in the minor's best interests.

THIS IS A LEGAL NOTICE: An important court proceeding that may affect your rights has been scheduled. If you do not understand this notice or other court papers, please contact an attorney for legal advice.

Date: December 16, 2022

Stephanie K. Fattman
Register of Probate

January 5, 2022

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 January 11, 2023, on the application of Scott Baker

The applicant has submitted a Request for Determination of Applicability for the removal of nine trees. The project site is located at Baker Road – Parcel ID 83A-J-15, Charlton, MA

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Charlton Conservation Commission will be conducted via remote means. Members of the public who wish to participate can access the meeting remotely, via Zoom Conferencing by calling 1-646 558 8656 and using meeting ID # 892 9898 0343 Passcode 458971 or using the link below <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89298980343?pwd=VjlmZGlnU-GRnYzRkR1c2eTJTL3lWZz09>

Copies of the RDA may be examined electronically by visiting this Website: <https://www.townofcharlton.net/262/>

Conservation-Commission

Thomas O'Malley

Chair, Charlton Conservation

Commission

January 5, 2022

The Brimfield Select Board will hold a public hearing and discussion regarding opting out of Vote By Mail for the June 20, 2023 local Town Election on February 13, 2023 at the Brimfield Elementary School. The public is encouraged to attend and ask questions and share any concerns.

January 6, 2023

January 13, 2013



STREETLIGHTS

continued from page A1

"I'm just concerned about the gamble," she said. "In the end, we have to rely on a private contractor."

Jamie Goodwin noted National Grid is also private, but they have to act under state Department of Public Utility rules and have "so much structure."

Grimm agreed, noting they're so widespread, they can call in crews from across the country. Historically, they've been "pretty responsive" to maintenance issues, although Sturbridge and National Grid have "gone to battle on some billing issues," she said.

Before that, the board held two short public hearings on liquor licenses, unanimously granting Tutti Quanti and the Hamilton Rod & Gun Club their requested changes. The former wanted to allow customers to purchase wine with their other purchases (they've previously only had one-day wine tasting licenses). The latter sought to have a "general on-premises" license instead of the "club" license they've had for years; that would allow the general public to buy drinks without having to sign in as a club member.

Afterward, the board heard from Water/Sewer Director Shane Moody, who reported that his department is looking into relining the main along Hall Road this spring. They recently repaired it, and have gotten a roughly \$4 million estimate to completely replace it if it can't be relined. Additionally, he said, they'll eliminate a hydrant near the Antique Shoppes on Route 20 that's been repeatedly hit by cars, after having had to fix it "five times already."

Fire Chief John Grasso's report noted his biggest concern "is the overlapping and multiple simultaneous calls that we're experiencing" that force the town to call in mutual aid. He said Sturbridge isn't unusual in that regard, nor is it new, but it "seems to be increasing." There's no "rhyme to the reason," with several calls often happening back to back without enough time to finish one first.

The board appointed three new firefighters – Joe Doldoorian, Mike Gelinas and Jeff Hastings. They also approved increasing the ambulance rates, but Grasso said "We do not bill the citizens." Those bills go to insurance companies; an uninsured person might get one "however, we do not pursue those bills if they cannot afford to pay us," he said, adding "We do not balance-bill the citizens either" if the insurer only pays part.

Additionally, the board filled several committee seats, including four on the new Affordable Housing Trust Committee, one on Conservation, and one on Historical Commission. Grimm said she will bring several more names forward in future meetings.

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

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**LEGALS****MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE**

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain Mortgage dated September 8, 2006 from Scott A. Menard to World Savings Bank, FSB recorded with Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 39934, Page 207, as affected by Loan Modification Agreement recorded July 29, 2016 in Book 55715, Page 62, the undersigned U.S. Bank National Association as Legal Title Trustee for Truman 2016 SC6 Title Trust being the present holder of said mortgage by Assignment of Mortgage dated November 28, 2018 from Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., successor by merger with Wells Fargo Bank Southwest, N.A., formerly known as Wachovia Mortgage, FSB, formerly known as World Savings Bank, FSB, to U.S. Bank National Association as Legal Title Trustee for Truman 2016 SC6 Title Trust recorded in Book 59745, Page 202, for breach of the conditions of said Mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosure the same will be sold at Public Auction at:

1:00 P.M. Thursday, February 2, 2023

upon the hereinafter-described premises, known as and numbered as 20 Allen Road, Sturbridge, Worcester County, Massachusetts, all and singularly the premises described in said

CHANGES

continued from page A1

living locally."

"You can economically draw pay from Southbridge, but you economically can't live in Southbridge. I just have a hard time with that and probably always will," he said, later noting he wants Southbridge to have a "farm team" that builds talent from within.

Mike Marketti said he supported both ideas for a similar reason: that he wants them to "drive the same roads I drive and pay the same taxes I pay."

Many on both sides generally agreed with that concept, with Gus Steeves later noting the best way to get people involved that would be to start young and rebuild the civics program in our schools. Resident Maureen Doyle urged councilors to consider that the tax money for paying salaries would be going out of town.

To opponents, though, the idea of requiring department heads to live here would make it "difficult to find qualified people," in Jasmin Rivas's words. Adams agreed later, saying he hopes qualified local people would apply, but didn't want to "miss the opportunity to get the most qualified individual."

Steeves noted many people who do live in town "barely spend any time in

our community, but call it home, technically." To him, it's understandable that employees wouldn't want to "upend their families" for their job, and Adams noted many people work outside town.

One notably controversial proposal would have created a new section 2-4-7 allowing the council to "dictate the appointment of any officer under the Town Manager" by a vote of six members. That was rejected 2-5.

Proposed by Lazo and Mike Montigny, the idea was originally rooted in previous meetings' frustration over the fact the DPW Director's job and other key posts remain unfilled, but neither of them actually argued their case this time. Responding to Marketti, though, Montigny did note he did not see it as contradicting the language that already exists in 2-4-6.

Opponents, however, did repeat their rationale, with Adams saying he felt it circumvented the manager's authority and would make it unclear whether staff hired that way answered to the manager or the council. Rivas agreed, dubbing it "overreaching and contradictory."

To Steeves, "This is quite frankly just a nepotism clause. A relative handful of people can shoehorn whoever they want into jobs that are critical for our community." Agreeing with Lazo that the council speaks for the community,

he added, "our role is as a legislature, not an executive."

One of the more technical debates surrounded amending section 4-2-4, where the council gets to approve hiring department heads and the police, fire and DPW staff. The Charter Committee suggested deleting the DPW staff, but adding in the deputy director. Rivas wanted to eliminate the word "alone" in the clause "on the basis of merit and fitness alone," arguing that "it's not just merit we want to evaluate when candidates are coming forward."

After a bit of confusion over what the final wording of the amended motion was, the board approved Rivas' change and reinstated council authority over the DPW by a 4-3 vote.

The rest of the items were far less contentious. Cleaning up language in Chap 7 (regarding the town attorney) and rejecting the Charter Committee's language in 12-3-3 (regarding ballot petitions) both passed unanimously, with Marketti noting he felt the latter "forced [people] to get two petitions for one ballot question." Similar rejection of the Charter Committee's proposed changes to 10-12-1 (regarding transfers) passed 5-2, with Adams noting the attorney approved a council transfer policy in 2019 and he intends to bring it back up again soon.

FIRES

continued from page A1

feet to lay in with our large hose for a supply line. Both fires required the use of tankers and water shuttles. Those operations both went smoothly and assisted us with a quick knock-down for both fires," said Cantara.

He also stressed that these were both unrelated incidents despite their similarities, adding "They are not related at all. Both are considered accidental at this time."

No injuries were reported from either fire. Both incidents continue to be under investigation for potential causes.



Firefighters tackle a garage fire on Morton Station Road on Dec. 15.

Georgia man arrested on fraud charges

BY KEVIN FLANDERS

STAFF WRITER

STURBRIDGE — A Georgia man is facing several charges in connection with an incident that took place near Fiske Hill Road last month.

On Dec. 23 at approximately 8:15 a.m., Sturbridge Police officers were dispatched to a residence in the Fiske Hill Road neighborhood for reports of suspicious activity. The homeowner told responding officers that he'd had a conversation with a man who was parked in front of his house. The suspect allegedly told the homeowner that he was there to pick up a package which was sent to that address by mistake, police said.

"He showed the homeowner a tracking number from UPS but could not provide any further information," read a statement released by the Sturbridge Police Department. "The homeowner informed the male party that the police had been called and the male party left the neighborhood."

The homeowner was able to describe the suspect and his vehicle to police. A short time later, officers located a vehicle matching the description and made contact with the driver. The man proceeded to supply officers with a fake name and date of birth, then showed officers a picture of a fake Massachusetts driver's license with a different name and date of birth than what was given, police said.

"In the aftermath, Detective Obuchowski was able to make contact with UPS to inquire about the

package the arrested person was trying to pick up. Two packages were located on the UPS truck addressed to the original caller," read the SPD statement. "Contact was again made with the original caller, who said he was not expecting any packages at his house, but that he had received a notification from his credit card company that they had stopped a purchase of over \$17,000 the previous day."

The name of the company on the return label of the package matched the name of the vendor on the fraudulent charge.

Officers received signed consent from the original reporting caller to open the packages addressed to him. Inside the packages were two high-end Hermes handbags with sales receipts matching the fraudulent charges, police said.

The suspect, Telvin Cortez Harvey, of Georgia, was arrested on charges of attempting to commit a crime; receiving stolen property over \$1,200; refusing to identify self; forgery of an RMV document; and disturbing the peace.

Harvey was arraigned on Dec. 26 at Dudley District Court.

The suspect's vehicle, a 2015 Nissan Versa with a New Hampshire registration, has been impounded as the investigation continues.

As of our press deadline for this week's edition, law enforcement officials were in the process of making arrangements to return the handbags to the vendor.

Mortgage, in cash or by certified or bank cashier's check at the time and place of said sale of said premises. The balance of the purchase price is to be paid to said holder in cash, by certified check or bank cashier's check, and thereupon the deed shall be delivered, in thirty (30) days from the date of sale at the firm of Cunningham, Machanic, Cetlin, Johnson, Harney & Tenney, LLP, Attorneys for said holder, 220 North Main Street, Suite 301, Natick, Massachusetts. The successful bidder shall be required to sign a Memorandum of Terms of Sale. The description of the premises contained in said Mortgage shall control in the event of an error in publication. Other terms, if any, to be announced at the time and place of sale.

U.S. Bank National Association as Legal Title Trustee for Truman 2016 SC6 Title Trust,
By its Attorneys,

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CETLIN,
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LLP
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Natick, MA 01760
(508) 651-7524

January 5, 2023
January 12, 2023
January 19, 2023

hundred sixty and 04/100ths (260.04') feet along last named land to the point of beginning.

Containing an area of 1.645 acres or 71,675 square feet.

Said Lot 1 is subject to a drainage easement as shown on above-referenced Plan and as set forth in Worcester District Registry of Deeds, Book 11886, Page 18.

For informational purposes only: The APN is shown by the County Assessor as 110-00644-020; source of title is Book 26173, Page 181 (recorded 03/18/02)

For Mortgage's Title, see Deed recorded in Book 26173, Page 181.

The above-described premises shall be subject to all easements, restrictions, municipal or other public taxes, assessments, liens or claims in the nature of liens, outstanding tax titles, building, zoning and other land use laws and all permits and approvals issued pursuant thereto, including, without limitation, orders of conditions, and existing encumbrances of record created prior to said Mortgage, if there be any. Said premises are to be sold subject to the right of redemption of the United States of America, if any there be.

TERMS OF SALE: The highest bidder shall be required to make a deposit of \$10,000.00 to the holder of said

mortgage, to wit:

A certain parcel of land located in Sturbridge, Worcester County, Massachusetts and shown as Lot 1 on a plan entitled "Plan of Land in Sturbridge, MA prepared for Scott Menard" dated January 13, 2002 by Sherman and Woods, Land Surveying & Engineering and recorded in the Worcester District Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 778, Plan 49, and bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at a rebar on the northeasterly line of Allen Road at the northwesterly corner of land of Keith E. Douty, Trustee of the Douty Irrevocable Trust,

Thence Running N. 29 degrees 09 minutes 14 seconds W. two hundred four and 92/100ths (204.92') feet along the northeasterly line of Allen Road to a rebar at remaining land of Robert H. & Ruth L. Menard;

Thence turning and running N. 39 degrees 56 minutes 29 seconds E. two hundred seventy and 82/100ths (270.82') feet along last named land to a rebar;

Thence turning and running S. 29 degrees 09 minutes 14 seconds E. three hundred sixty-one and 69/100ths (361.69') feet along last named land to a rebar at land of Keith E. Douty, Trustee of the Douty Irrevocable Trust; Thence turning and running S. 74 degrees 13 minutes 01 seconds W. two

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WEBSTER - 18 THIRD STREET
2 Family - Needs work! 1st Flr has 4 Rooms - 2 Bedrooms. 2nd & 3rd Flr - 6 Rooms, 2 Bedrooms. 2nd Flr & 2 Bedrooms on 3rd Flr! 32,560 +/- sq. ft. 75 Acre - Property being sold "As-is". **\$259,000.**

CLOSING SOON



WEBSTER LAKE - PATTISON RD
LAND - Terrific opportunity 14,798 Sq. Ft. of LAND. CONSERVATION APPROVAL for proposed Building, MASS DEP# 313-1167. 248+/- Road Frontage, 279+/- Water Frontage. Town Water & Sewer accessible. **\$250,000.**

THOMPSON - 266 POMPEO ROAD
Unique, spacious raised ranch, TRI-LEVEL on 1.96 ACRES! 11 spacious rooms! 2800+/- Sq ft above grade living area. 3 bedrooms & 2 baths. Primary Bedroom Suite w/Hardwoods, full bath, walk-in closet & Private exterior balcony! Upgraded cherry cabinets, granite countertops, SS Appliances, so much more! A MUST SEE! **NEW PRICE \$525,000.**

DOUGLAS - 7 MOUNT DANIELS WAY
DOUGLAS - 7 Mount Daniels Way 1st TIME OFFERED! Custom 4 Bedroom Cape with inground Pool. Abutting Douglas State Forest. Stone fireplace. 1st floor bedroom. 2 Car Attached Garage! 2 ACRES! Located on a cul de sac road **NEW PRICE \$545,000.**

ON DEPOSIT

DUDLEY - 18 WARSAW AVE
3 bedroom ranch has gleaming hardwood floors, Corian countertops. 3 season porch. Many updates! New shingle roof, Buderus boiler, Roth Tank + New Hot Water Heater. Central Air! Heated lower level. **\$279,900.**

SORRY, SOLD!

PUTNAM - 96 ELVIRA HGTS
Exceptional opportunity! Conveniently located 5 room, 2 bedroom, 2 bath ranch! Downsized? Must see! Hardwoods, Appliance dine-in kitchen w/skylight! Fireplace living rm, Bay window! Private bath/whirlpool tub! Central-air! Two car garage! **\$287,900**

ON DEPOSIT

LAND: WEBSTER/OXFORD/PUTNAM
WEBSTER LAKE LAND - 22 SOUTH POINT RD Architectural Plans included! **\$315,000.**
OXFORD - LAND - General Business Zoned! Marijuana OVERLAY DISTRICT! LAND with 4,095 SF Metal Building! 124 SOUTHBRIDGE RD (RTE 20). Town Sewer Project Plans are Approved. 22,884 sq. ft Level Lot. 140 ft of road frontage. **EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES! \$795,000.**
OXFORD - LAND - RTE 20 General Business Zoned! Marijuana OVERLAY DISTRICT! Vacant LAND, Level & cleared. 39,549 SF. **\$419,000.**
PUTNAM - LAND Zoned General Business. 29 acre 103' frontage. Water, Sewer, & city gas available. 2 street entrances. **\$125,000**
OXFORD - 2 Marriam Rd 80+/- Wooded Acres in Oxford & Charlton. **ON DEPOSIT \$229,000**

On the shores of Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg

Webster Lake Waterfront Lot - Corner of Black Point Rd & Cedar Point Rd
SORRY, SOLD!
Hard to find 6500 +/- Sq Ft corner Lot. Beautiful View & Setting! Sandy Beach! Few tall Pines for shade. Town Water & Sewer Available! Will Custom Build if Preferred!
\$330,000. FIRM

Webster Lake 13 Loveland Rd
SORRY, SOLD!
Eastern Exposure & Amazing Sunrises! Beautiful shoreline, 3 bedroom Cape features eat in kitchen w/island, fireplace living & dining room. 2nd floor, 2 bedrooms with 1 1/2 bath!
\$785,000

Webster Lake 27 South Point Road
SORRY, SOLD!
OOH! WHAT A VIEW!!! Middle & South Ponds! 80' +/- ft sandy beach! Expansion possibilities! 2 Bedrm, 2 1/2 Bath, Garage, **\$811,000.**

Webster Lake 13 Bates Point Road
SORRY, SOLD!
1st Time Offered! Impeccable Home! 6 Room, 3 bedroom 2-1/2 Baths. Master bedroom, Master Bath! Level Lot to the Shoreline. Nicely Landscaped!
\$705,000

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WOODSTOCK- 2.75 Acres

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- New flooring
- Open floor plan
- 3 bedroom • 1.5 baths

49 Lebanon Hill Rd - \$364,900

DUDLEY- Inground Pool!

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- Hardwood Floors • 2 garages
- Unfinished room offers expanded living area

169 Klondike Road - \$500's

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EAST BROOKFIELD: First time on the market! One owner, one of a kind Cape on Lake Lashawa. Bring your boat! Over 2500 sq ft of living space to enjoy all 4 seasons! 50 feet of water frontage! Great location tucked away on a quiet spot just off Main Street. Generous sized rooms and lots of additional space! Plenty of entertaining space! This home does need some updating but you will enjoy putting your own stamp to it. Fresh basement for your more space. Spacious living room features a large fireplace which will be the spot for gathering at the holidays. Sit places for your dining room table AND a quiet nook in the kitchen for quick bites! Beautiful and spacious yard, but also features privacy which is perfect for the property! Walk to breakfast or drive your boat up the dock to 5000 Lashawa restaurant! East Brookfield pop is (est) 2300 people, yet less than 15 min. to the lake & quick access to major routes. **\$500,000**

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Southbridge Superintendent shares positive strides district has taken with DESE

SOUTHBRIDGE — Southbridge Superintendent/Receiver Dr. Jeffrey Villar presented to the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education before the holidays about positive strides that the district has taken during the last few years while in receivership.

At the meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 20, Dr. Villar discussed steps that he and his staff have been implementing across the district to support the success of students, staff and the district as a whole.

He noted to the board that a main goal

of theirs is to align the district's math and English curriculum to state standards. In comparison to 15 similar districts, Southbridge eighth-graders saw the highest growth scores in math on the 2021-22 MCAS test. Dr. Villar hopes to replicate this growth across other grade levels in the coming school years.

"Our student growth performance is starting to show signs of improvement, despite coming out of the pandemic and the massive disruption in education this caused," Dr. Villar said. "The area that we are most proud of is our eighth-grade math. That is really a light into

our future and a trend that shows we're heading in the right direction."

Dr. Villar also discussed the importance of social-emotional support services for students. To provide this specialized support, the district has partnered with the University of Connecticut to focus on positive behavior interventions and supports, a technique that is used to improve and promote school safety and positive behavior. Through this partnership, the district was able to add a Social-Emotional Learning Coordinator and collect real data on improvements.

Thanks to these efforts, disciplinary issues at Southbridge Middle School have drastically improved. In 2021, there were 42 out-of-school suspensions issued to 29 students, representing approximately 115 days of lost learning. In 2018, 443 out-of-school suspensions were issued to 146 students, representing a total of 768 lost learning days.

"We still want to lower these num-

bers, but they are heading in the right direction. We are proud to see that this school has really turned the corner and has become a leader in the district for what we expect of our students and our staff," Dr. Villar said.

Another positive change is increasing diversity within faculty. Approximately 19% of faculty members are Hispanic, as opposed to only about 8% in the 2017-18 school year. Southbridge is a community with a large population of people of Hispanic heritage.

Additionally, about 90 percent of Southbridge students are considered high need, which includes students from low-income families, English learners, those that are homeless and those facing other challenges. Dr. Villar noted that although students with high needs may require additional support, he firmly believes that all students are capable of learning at high levels.

Dr. Villar also noted to the board that he recognizes the challenges that the district faces, but is firmly committed to continuing to work toward the success of the district in its entirety.

Friday's Child



Berniece
Age 16
Registration # 7424

Hi! My name is Berniece and I love music and anime! !

Berniece is a kind, well-spoken young lady of African American descent. Those who know her best describe Berniece as a caring and pleasant teen that always has a large smile on her face. She enjoys camping, spending time outdoors, and having a good time with animals. Berniece also likes to draw and read journals.

Berniece is currently in the 11th grade. She enjoys school and has joined the Anime club and the Gay-Straight Alliances (GSA) club in school. She is able to build and maintain close relationships with her peers and siblings.

Legally freed for adoption, Berniece would do well in a patient, loving family of any constellation, with or without other children in the home.

A family for Berniece must be able to advocate for her in order to best support her emotional and academic needs. Berniece shares a good relationship with her birth father, whom she sees monthly, which must continue after placement.

<https://www.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/child/7424>

Can I Adopt?

If you're at least 18 years old, have a stable source of income, and room in your heart, you may be a perfect match to adopt a waiting child. Adoptive parents can be single, married, or partnered; experienced or not; renters or homeowners; LGBTQ+ singles and couples.

As an adoptive parent, you won't have to pay any fees, adoption from foster care is completely free in Massachusetts.

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

To learn more about adoption from foster care, call the Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) at 617-964-6273 or visit www.mareinc.org. Start the process today and give a waiting child a permanent place to call home.



Courtesy
Maureen Doyle peruses Jacob Edwards Library's new display of climate change books, which she and others recently raised funds for as part of Grassroots Central Mass.

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Starting 2023 in stride



Tom Chamberland holds up a Riverlands trail map as he introduces the hike.



A chain of hikers weave their way up the Cistern Trail.



The tour explores the hilltop cistern, which is actually a little off its namesake trail. Its age is somewhat uncertain – probably early 1900s – but it was built to hold water for firefighting, with gravity providing enough pressure to serve several mills downhill along the river.



Brandon Goodwin, center, tells participants about the upcoming bridge project.



One of the hikers passes behind a collapsing tree.

Gus Steeves

STURBRIDGE — Unseasonable warmth and sunshine drew dozens of people to the Riverlands property New Year's Day, as Friends of Sturbridge Trails kicked off 2023 with a hike.

The parcel, long known as a polluted dumping ground laden with all kinds of debris, was cleaned up in recent years, with volunteers pulling out lots of tires, metal junk, bricks and other building material and more. In the last few months, Sturbridge finished blazing a network of trails for hikers and bikers, some of which are handicapped-accessible and stonedusted, but some are just dirt.

According to hike leader Brandon Goodwin, the town is working on expanding the trails, building a bridge across the Quinebaug River to Route 20, and adding signage to highlight various aspects of the landscape. It will also be linked into the Grand Trunk Trail system as that trail is extended across town.



One of the park's native denizens, a spotted salamander, enjoys the mud.

Happy New Year!

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Bay Path students apply Physics concepts

CHARLTON — Recently at Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School, students in Marc Christianson's AP Physics class applied their knowledge of physics to create miniature versions of trebuchets, which were medieval siege weapons similar to catapults. In the middle ages, armies would use these weapons to hurl stones at castle walls. In the lesson, students first watched a video about the history and use of these weapons. They were then provided with materials such as cardboard, popsicle sticks, scissors, pencils, straws, glue, and tape, and worked collaboratively to make their models.

As Mr. Christianson stated, "The goal, of course, is to launch a projectile of candy."

At Bay Path, the school has been focusing on various instructional focus areas that include purposeful assessment, high expectations and support, engaging instruction, inclusive instruction, and critical instruction.

Purposeful assessment refers to providing students with multiple ways and opportunities to demonstrate learning, enabling students to draw from their

cultural knowledge and lived experiences, and ensuring that assessment methods and instruments maintain the rigor and high expectations outlined in standards in culturally sustaining ways. Another goal is also to not perpetuate racial, cultural, or linguistic bias.

High Expectations and Support refers to teachers using evidence-based pedagogical practices to provide equitable opportunities, supports, and scaffolds for grade-level learning, providing clear criteria for success (e.g. rubrics and exemplars), reinforcing perseverance and effort with challenging content and tasks, and communicating specific, frequent, accessible, and asset-based feedback to students on progress and areas for growth.

Engaging Instruction is defined as the following: "Providing opportunities for students to explore topics and apply learning in culturally relevant, authentic, and real-world contexts; building on students' strengths, interests, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and prior knowledge; facilitating cooperative learning and equitable student discourse; and developing students' positive identities as learners."

Inclusive Instruction refers to the making of grade-level content accessible and culturally relevant to students and accommodating and supporting individual differences in all students.

Critical



Courtesy

Pictured in the first photo (L-R) are Terry Simon of Southbridge and Sabrina Rodrigues of Webster. In the second photo are Terry Simon, Sabrina Rodrigues, Delaney Kirkorian of Spencer, Mr. Christianson, Alex Tetreault of Southbridge, Emma St. Francis of Oxford, and Makayla Collins of Dudley.



Instruction refers to the developing of students' abilities to think critically, ask questions, and analyze sources, perspectives and biases in order to deepen learning and make connections between content and real-world problems and events.

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