

School District reports first Positive COVID case

Rockets roll to home victory over Oxford, 4-2

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY/CHARLTON – The Dudley Charlton Regional School District has recorded its first COVID-19 positive test.

On Monday, Oct. 26, district Superintendent Steven Lamarche sent out a letter notifying the public that a bus driver for the district had tested positive for the virus in the district’s first official case of infection since welcoming back students this fall.

As with most COVID-19 cases throughout the state, personal information, including the name of the infected, was not revealed to the public to protect the patient’s privacy, however those who had been in close contact with the bus driver were reportedly notified of the situation. It was also confirmed that the driver had not transported students the day of the notification.

Superintendent Lamarche addressed the situation briefly in his report to the Regional School Committee on Wednesday, Oct. 28, complimenting the staff for their continued diligence and indicating that the positive test is not a sign that the district is letting its guard down.

“Our staff and student continue to do a remarkable job in practicing all of the required mitigating strategies to prevent the spread in our schools. Our collective efforts will continue to build longevity in our current in-person learning model as we are all well organized and prepared to minimize the transmissibility of a positive COVID-19 case. Additionally, we have a great working relationship with our boards of health, health director and health agent. This collaboration is grounded in open lines of communication, confidentiality and professionalism,” Lamarche said.

While the identity of patients and their affiliation with the district are usually kept private, Lamarche felt comfortable identifying the position of the individual as the bus drivers for the district are part of a third party company.

“The purpose of identifying the role of the bus driver was to share that it was not a positive COVID-19 case in our school facilities and thus establishing a particular dynamic that I have observed in other districts,” Lamarche said. “In addition, the bus drivers are an independent vendor and must complete their own processes in combination with our expectations. In hindsight, this might have been better served in the communication so I will continue to work with our team to review future communication and work to provide the right information moving forward when it comes to a bus driver.”

In his letter to parents and the public, Lamarche stated that it is current protocol that both students and drivers always wear masks during transportation and that buses are cleaned thoroughly between trips. First Student, the company that operates the bus, is also reviewing tapes from the vehicle in question to determine any increased health risks.



The Auburn High girls’ varsity soccer team defeated Oxford High, 4-2, last Wednesday, Oct. 28.

AUBURN — Memorial Field played host to a girls’ varsity soccer game last Wednesday, Oct. 28, when Auburn High took on their Route 12 rivals from Oxford High. When all was said and done, the Rockets won the contest 4-2. That win evened Auburn’s regular season record to 2-2.

State officials offer COVID guidance for the holidays

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION – Concerned over the possibility of a major COVID-19 super-spreader situation, state officials have released Thanksgiving guidance to help keep residents safe.

State leaders are particularly concerned about the elderly, who will gather around Thanksgiving tables by the thousands. Family members of all

ages are urged to heed all precautions to reduce the spread and keep vulnerable populations safe.

“Traveling and gathering with family and friends for Thanksgiving will look different this year to keep loved ones safe from COVID-19,” read a statement from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. “The DPH reminds residents and communities to be aware

that gatherings and events are subject to the current state gathering size limits, as well as applicable sector-specific workplace safety standards.”

Thanksgiving weekend is traditionally one of the busiest travel holidays of the year. Officials urge all motorists to follow the Massachusetts COVID-19 travel order, which prevents individuals living in high-risk

states from traveling to Massachusetts without quarantining.

Officials ask all residents to limit in-person holiday gatherings as much as possible. Those at higher risk of contracting the virus are advised to skip large holiday events this year.

“Gatherings with more people pose more risks,” read the DPH statement.

Turn To COVID page A15

Cornerstone Bank donates to Charlton Public Safety Building campaign

CHARLTON — Cornerstone Bank is pleased to announce its recent donation of \$2,500 to support the Charlton Public Safety Building Campaign.

The proposed Charlton Public Safety Building, to be built on Masonic

Home Road next to the current police station, will become the headquarters for the police and the fire departments. The new building will provide Charlton with a 911 communications center for coordinated emergency response,

emergency responder training, and the storage space for town-owned emergency and firefighting equipment.

“We are proud to support the town of Charlton,” stated Cornerstone Bank President & Treasurer

and Chairman of the Bank’s Charitable Donations Committee Todd M. Tallman. “In an emergency, every second counts, and our community must have access to modern safety facilities to keep up with increasing calls for service.”

To learn more about the Charlton Public Safety Building Campaign, please visit: <https://www.townofcharlton.net/>.

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Pictured here, left to right: Public Safety Building Committee Member Lois Sugrue, Public Safety Building Committee Member Karen Spiewak, Public Safety Building Committee Co-Chair Stephen Coleman, Cornerstone Bank AVP, Senior Market Manager Sabrina Webb, Public Safety Building Committee Co-Chair Noreen Smith.

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Dudley parent petitions increased live instruction

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY/CHARLTON – In recent weeks, a petition has been floating around on social media seeking support for added

in-school learning for the students in the Dudley Charlton Regional School District. The change.org petition was started by parent Caitlynn Panczyk of Dudley, who sought

to send a message to Superintendent of Schools Steven Lamarche and the Dudley Charlton Regional School Committee that more live instruction would be beneficial to students of the district during the implementation of hybrid and remote learning due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The petition gained 570 signatures before its closing on Oct. 27 and the following evening Panczyk joined a live-streamed meeting of the school committee to explain the reasoning behind the document. “It had crossed my mind months ago, but I wanted to give it some time and see how the school year started and how it improved as we moved on. After the last (school committee) meeting on Oct. 14, it appeared to me that we have no further steps to improve our school plan and the only way we would have any further steps is if

our budget improved so I was left wondering how could we reach our number one goal, which is to be back in person full time, without having any further steps,” Panczyk said.

After talking with family, friends and coworkers Panczyk learned of how other districts in the commonwealth have handled managing both online and in-person learning during the pandemic and she felt other districts were doing better. While she acknowledged that the Dudley-Charlton District was excelling in its own right compared to some district, she felt there was clearly room for improvement and saw the petition as a way for like-minded parents and citizens to voice their concerns as well. She felt a common theme was the need for more live instruction and she and 569 other signatories wanted to express those concerns to school officials as a united group.

Panczyk also seemed to acknowledge that the petition had its fair of naysayers and took the time to defend the calls for more live teaching opportunities while praising the educators who have worked hard to keep the students learn-

ing even through the pandemic.

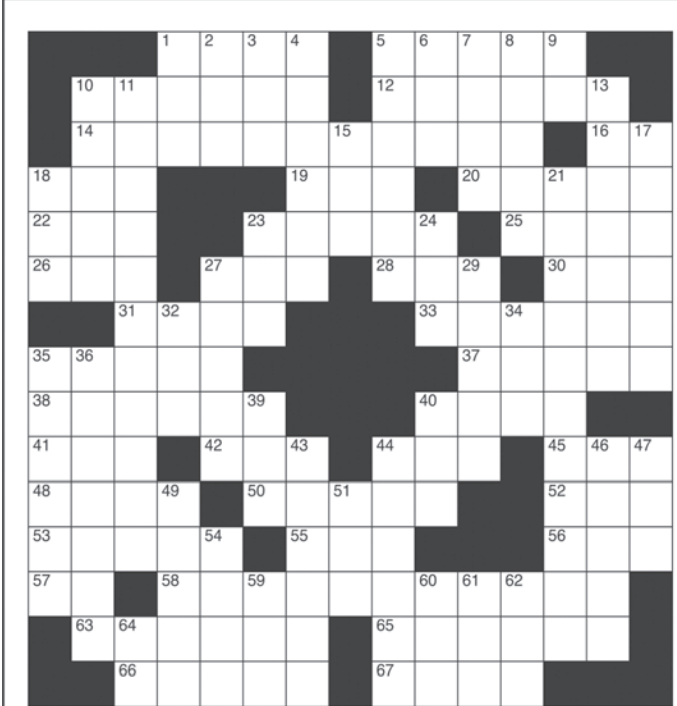
“I do not wish to make any each and every teacher’s job more painful than it already is this year. I understand all the hard work that they are putting into each and every day. I appreciate them and I want them to know that, but my goal is to highlight that we’re missing something. I want to make this year better for everyone, every teacher, every student, and every parent, but first we have to recognize the fact that there is an issue,” said Panczyk. “I don’t know what the answer is, but I think we need to continue to move forward and keep working towards our number one goal.”

While he did not specifically mention the petition, Superintendent Lamarche did address the call for more live teaching and acknowledged that the district and the world remains in a divisive time where they are still learning what they can or can’t do safely and financially and how to approach the full return to in-person learning properly.

“Each and every community is going through the same struggle. Everyone, including all of us, want to be back to

full in-person learning. Our current learning model makes that transition almost seamlessly with student-teacher classroom assignments and studies. This was purposeful in our planning. What we do not have is widespread approval on how or when this move will occur to full in-person learning,” Superintendent Lamarche said, later adding his own notes of support for educators in the district.

“Unfortunately, as public educators we are an easy target. We work in the public and everyone has an established association to schooling through their own experience and what it was. We will continue to provide stability and the Dudley Charlton Regional School District educators are working extremely hard to ensure each student has the best learning experience available under these circumstances - Dudley Charlton School District educators should continuously be applauded for their fortitude, their experience, their can-do attitude and for seeing each student as an individual through this unprecedented time in our lives.”



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Upright post on a boat
- 5. Sentimental person
- 10. Native American tribe
- 12. Wear away
- 14. Where you’re going
- 16. Doctor
- 18. Popular Chinese dialect
- 19. One point east of due south
- 20. Northern sea duck
- 22. Note
- 23. Wives (law)
- 25. Trigonometric function
- 26. A way to communicate (abbr.)
- 27. Swiss river
- 28. No (Scottish)
- 30. Commercials
- 31. Large instrument
- 33. __ Chantilly, __ de Menthe
- 35. Small, saclike cavities
- 37. High and thin in tone
- 38. Treat extremely well
- 40. Famed track star Usain
- 41. Secure web connection (abbr.)
- 42. Rob of energy
- 44. Paving material
- 45. Cool!
- 48. Tip of Aleutian Islands
- 50. Indicates silence
- 52. Water in the solid state
- 53. Security interests
- 55. Popular hoopster Jeremy
- 56. Shed tears
- 57. Low frequency
- 58. Harmful bacterium
- 63. Common language: lingua __
- 65. Standards of perfection
- 66. They consist of two parts
- 67. A detailed description of design

CLUES DOWN

- 1. More (Spanish)
- 2. A subdivision of a play
- 3. Japanese title
- 4. More jittery
- 5. Fabric
- 6. Luke’s mentor __-Wan
- 7. Cleaving tool
- 8. Ancient city of Egypt
- 9. 36 inches
- 10. Farewell
- 11. Second to last
- 13. Improved by critical editing
- 15. Defensive weapon (abbr.)
- 17. Fancy attire
- 18. __ Farrow, actress
- 21. Completely opposed
- 23. Supervises flying
- 24. Pouch
- 27. True firs
- 29. Mistake
- 32. Computing platform (abbr.)
- 34. Snakelike fish
- 35. Greatly horrify
- 36. Despicable person
- 39. Tell on
- 40. Ballplayer’s tool
- 43. Central Brazilian town
- 44. Court game
- 46. Land
- 47. “The Partridge Family” actress Susan
- 49. Retract a statement
- 51. Data executive
- 54. Capital of Yemen
- 59. Portable computer screen material
- 60. Electronic data processing
- 61. “Matt Houston” actor Horsley
- 62. Resinous substance
- 64. Rural delivery



Nichols announces Cybersecurity Master’s Certificate program

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY – Nichols College is rolling out a new graduate program for one of the most in-demand professions of modern society, cybersecurity.

With the increased dependence of technology and communication for both private and business use, cybersecurity is a profession that specializes in helping secure private information and server access to prevent sensitive documents or the public image of a company from being compromised. In October, Nichols College revealed that the school will be offering a new graduate study program offering prospec-

tive students the chance to earn a non-technical master certificate in this growing field.

“Cyberspace touches every aspect of our personal and professional lives,” said Tom Stewart, Associate Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies in a release from the college. “Today’s leaders must be proactive and proficient in developing risk management strategies to combat cyberthreats which can have catastrophic consequences for their own organizations and the global business arena.”

The program will teach students about the evolving threats of the digital world and incorporate input from professionals and academic experts to help teach

students the foundational skills for the profession including best practices, comprehension and even have them create their own protection plans.

The announcement was made in conjunction with MassCyberCenter’s Cybersecurity Month 2020 in October. As part of the announcement the school also hosted a webinar on Oct. 21 which focused on managing the “silo mentality,” a term used to describe a reluctance to share information with employees of different divisions in the same company. The panel included experts in cybersecurity who educated participants in the current landscape and today’s cyberthreats for the digital age.

QCC named fifth best online Associate degree program in the nation

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College’s online Associate degree programs were named the fifth best return on investment (ROI) in the country.

According to OnlineU, an unbiased rankings organization that compares all online colleges and universities in the country, QCC was the only community college listed in the top five, and one of only two community colleges in the country to make the top 10 in the 2020 list.

“Our programs are some of the most affordable and lucrative in the country as shown in this national ranking study. Our online programs are as robust as our in-person programs, without any additional cost differential. At QCC, our goal is 100 percent student success for all, and part of attaining that success means making sure our students have an affordable education that

leads them into a productive future,” President Dr. Luis Pedraja said.

The rankings include an annual tuition comparison of each school, based on out-of-state tuition rates, unless in-state rates are offered to all students. QCC’s ROI ranking of 95.9 percent is based on its out of state annual tuition. QCC’s Fall 2020 out-of-state tuition is \$411 per credit, as compared to its in-state tuition rate of \$205 per credit.

College and university online programs are also ranked based on the median salary and mean debt numbers found in the U.S. Department of Education’s College Scorecard, as well as graduates’ salaries and debt payments for 10 years after graduation accounting for standard salary growth, and interest on debt payments. Each school is then given an “ROI score,” that reflects

how the salary and debt of the programs compare to similar ones.

“It’s particularly gratifying to receive this acknowledgement as we continue with remote instruction due to the pandemic. It is validation of all the work that our faculty and staff do to help our students,” President Pedraja said.

For more information about QCC, contact Josh Martin, Director of Institutional Communications at 508-854-7513 or jmartin@qcc.mass.edu.

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- \$309,000, 33 Bylund Ave, Truong, Anh X, and Dang, Klaudia, to Anderson, Thomas, and Chestna, Alicia.
- \$285,000, 2 Manor Rd, Murphy, Denis, to Ferguson, Colleen.
- \$270,000, 24 Jerome Ave, Flink, Douglas, to Johnson, Brian A.
- \$255,000, 10 Vinal St, Myotte Lisa A Est, and Myotte, James C, to Turcotte, Daniel.
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EDITOR BRENDAN BERUBE (508) 909-4106 news@stonebridgepress.news	LOCAL NEWS AND ADVERTISING Phone: (508) 764-4325 Fax : (508) 764-8015
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PRESIDENT & PUBLISHER
FRANK G. CHILINSKI
(508) 909-4101
frank@stonebridgepress.news
BUSINESS MANAGER
RYAN CORNEAU
(603) 677-9082
ryan@salmonpress.news
OPERATIONS DIRECTOR
JIM DiNICOLA
(508) 764-4325
EDITOR
BRENDAN BERUBE
(508) 909-4106
news@stonebridgepress.news
PRODUCTION MANAGER
JULIE CLARKE
(508) 909-4105
production@stonebridgepress.news

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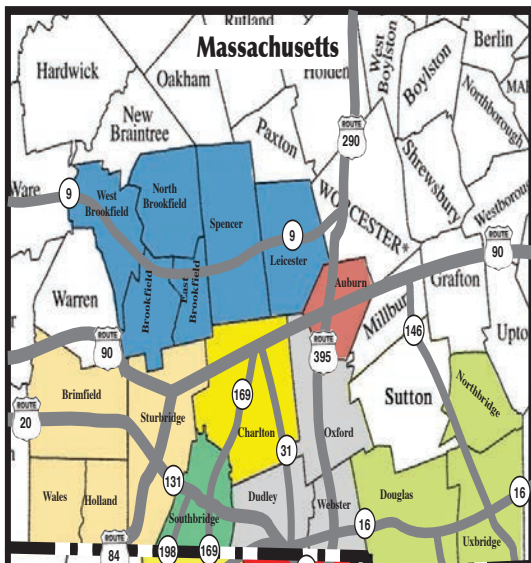
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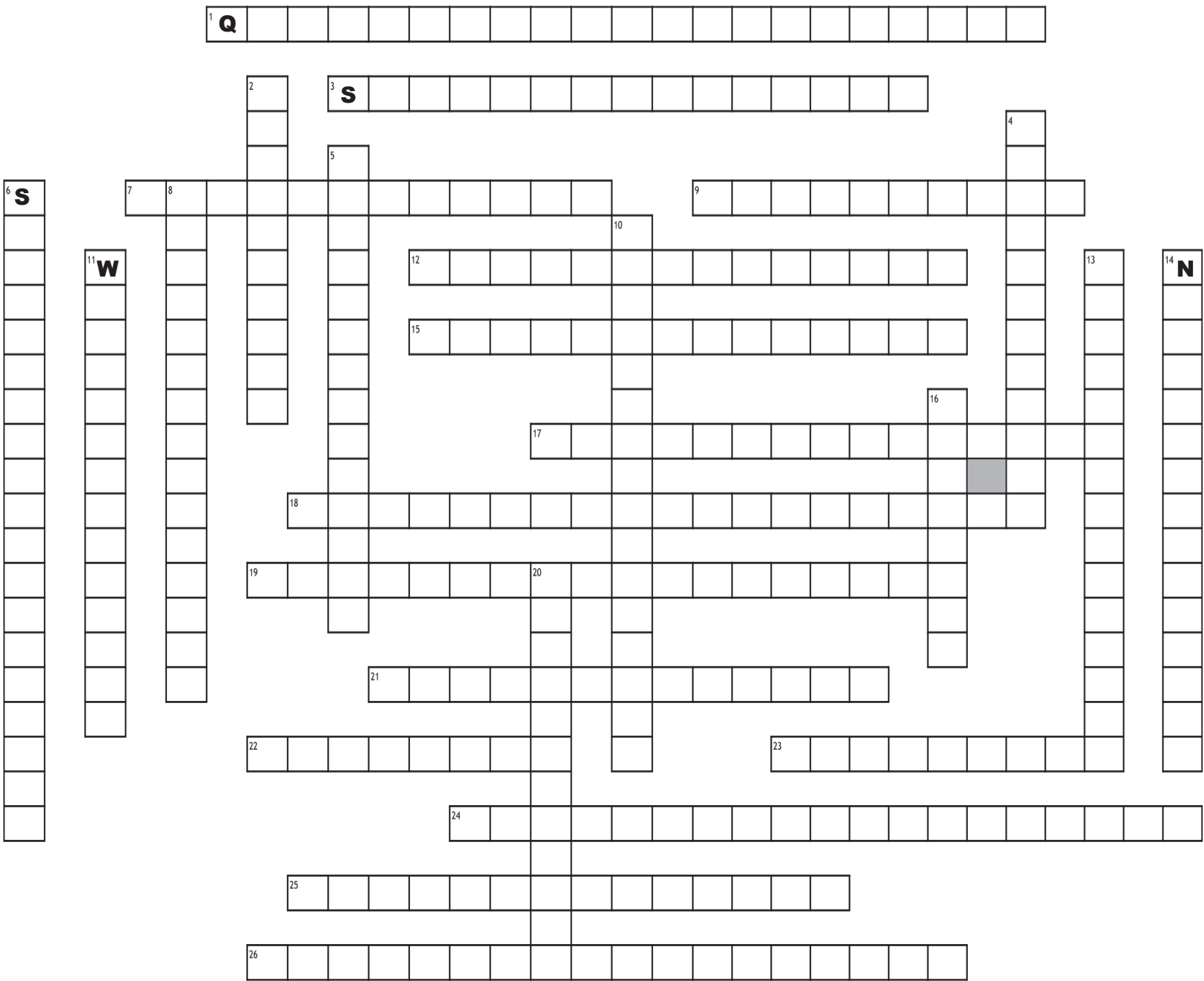
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- 20. ...services starting at less than \$1.50 a day.

3rd Annual ABC'S OF THE SEASONS OCTOBER 30, FALL EDITION

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Please find the answers to this crossword puzzle on page 2. Enter for a chance to win a \$25 gift card to one of these ABC businesses by mailing in your completed crossword to **ABC Crossword Puzzle, Stonebridge Press, P. O. Box 90, 25 Elm Street, Southbridge, MA 01550** OR scan & email or take a picture and email it to jsima@stonebridgepress.news by Wednesday, November 18. Random-drawing for winner of all correct entries to be announced in the November 27th issue.

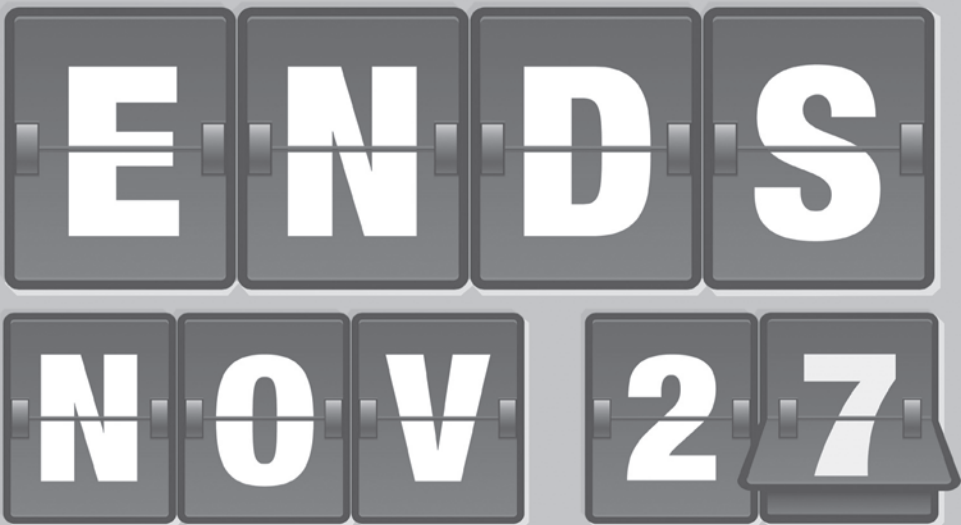
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BRENDAN BERUBE

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EDITORIAL

“There are many kinds of strength”

On Nov. 22, 1963, President John F. Kennedy was en route to give a speech in Dallas, Texas. He was assassinated before reaching his destination. Already written, was a speech he was to deliver at the event.

Here we are 57 years later, reading his words that call for unity and peace. We have taken portions of out due to space, however our hope is that this decades old speech will translate into 2020.

The speech reads as follows:
“This Nation’s strength and security are not easily or cheaply obtained, nor are they quickly and simply explained. There are many kinds of strength and no one kind will suffice.

“Ignorance and misinformation can handicap the progress of a city or a company, but they can, if allowed to prevail in foreign policy, handicap this country’s security. In a world of complex and continuing problems, in a world full of frustrations and irritations, America’s leadership must be guided by the lights of learning and reason — or else those who confuse rhetoric with reality and the plausible with the possible will gain the popular ascendancy with their seemingly swift and simple solutions to every world problem.

“There will always be dissident voices heard in the land, expressing opposition without alternative, finding fault but never favor, perceiving gloom on every side and seeking influence without responsibility. Those voices are inevitable. But today other voices are heard in the land — voices preaching doctrines wholly unrelated to reality, wholly unsuited to the sixties, doctrines which apparently assume that words will suffice without weapons, that vituperation is as good as victory and that peace is a sign of weakness.

“We cannot expect that everyone, to use the phrase of a decade ago, will ‘talk sense to the American people.’ But we can hope that fewer people will listen to nonsense. And the notion that this Nation is headed for defeat through deficit, or that strength is but a matter of slogans, is nothing but just plain nonsense.

“Above all, words alone are not enough. The United States is a peaceful nation. And where our strength and determination are clear, our words need merely to convey conviction, not belligerence. If we are strong, our strength will speak for itself. If we are weak, words will be of no help.

“I have spoken of strength largely in terms of the deterrence and resistance of aggression and attack. But in today’s world, freedom can be lost without a shot being fired, by ballots as well as bullets. The success of our leadership is dependent upon respect for our mission in the world as well as our missiles — on a clearer recognition of the virtues of freedom as well as the evils of tyranny.

“Finally, it should be clear by now that a nation can be no stronger abroad than she is at home. Only an America which practices what it preaches about equal rights and social justice will be respected by those whose choice affects our future. Only an America which has fully educated its citizens is fully capable of tackling the complex problems and perceiving the hidden dangers of the world in which we live. And only an America which is growing and prospering economically can sustain the worldwide defenses of freedom, while demonstrating to all concerned the opportunities of our system and society.

“My friends and fellow citizens: I cite these facts and figures to make it clear that America today is stronger than ever before. Our adversaries have not abandoned their ambitions, our dangers have not diminished, our vigilance cannot be relaxed. But now we have the military, the scientific, and the economic strength to do whatever must be done for preservation and promotion of freedom.

“The strength will never be used in pursuit of aggressive ambitions — it will always be used in pursuit of peace. It will never be used to promote provocations — it will always be used to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes.

“We, in this country, in this generation, are — by destiny rather than by choice — the watchmen on the walls of world freedom. We ask, therefore, that we may be worthy of our power and responsibility, that we may exercise our strength with wisdom and restraint, and that we may achieve in our time and for all time the ancient vision of ‘peace on earth, good will toward men.’ That must always be our goal, and the righteously of our cause must always underlie our strength. For as was written long ago: ‘except the Lord keep the city, the watchmen waketh but in vain.’”

OPINION/COMMENTARY

FYI Tips

**

Fat Burning Boost: ! Did you know you can give your body a fat burning boost by increasing your intake of oils like cod liver oil or evening primrose oil? These



TAKE THE HINT
KAREN TRAINOR

substances ‘link’ with the fat in your body and help digest the fat better.

**

Mighty Minis: Hate working out? The good news is, research suggests that health benefits can just as great from several mini workouts. In fact, exercising as little as ten minutes three times a day has proven to improve cardiovascular health when performed as few as three days per week.

**

Tea tip: The virtues of a cup of tea go way beyond taste! A study conducted by Harvard University found that those who drank one or more cups of black tea per day had more than a 40 percent lower risk of having a heart attack compared to non-tea drinkers.

**

Wonders of Walking: Walking to “digest your meal” is more than an after dinner pastime. Studies show when you walk within 30 minutes after eating you can increase the amount of calories you burn by as much as 30 per cent! But be sure to avoid caffeinated beverages before you walk. They cause thirst and a loss of bodily fluids.

**

Ice is nice: Did you know drinking ice water can give your diet a jump start. It

boosts metabolism, cushions joints, and keeps skin hydrated.

**

BION: Here are a couple of “believe it or not” headache remedies that are gaining attention! The next time you get a headache, don’t reach for an aspirin. Instead try drinking a couple of glasses of Gatorade to ease the pain - headache sufferers claim it really works!

Or take a tip from folks who swear dabbing a bit of Ben Gay on your forehead, temples and the back of your neck relieves a headache fast!

**

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. Protect your family from long-term care costs

The death of iceberg lettuce



POSITIVELY SPEAKING
GARY W. MOORE

I think we’ve heard enough about politics for a lifetime. I know I have, so I think it’s important to talk about something totally different but almost as important ...

It was here, then gone. It was everywhere, then vanished off our plates.

I was always a big salad eater. Give me a pile of iceberg lettuce drenched in thousand island dressing and I was satisfied. Add red onion, bacon bits and boiled egg and I was delighted. I could easily make a meal of a salad. The all-important base to this delicious dish was lettuce ... real lettuce ... the only lettuce ... iceberg lettuce.

I miss it. Who took it and where did they put it? Why is it gone?

Finding a salad of iceberg lettuce these days is like searching for the Holy Grail. I know it exists but for some reason, it’s now hidden away. Instead, we are left with what looks like inedible debris, discarded when weeding a garden. As if someone decided to keep the weeds and discard the produce, iceberg has disappeared. Thistle, twigs, and a little bark thrown in for texture has replace the traditional lettuce. But weeds? That’s not a salad. And what is Kale anyway? Arugula schmugula! I wasn’t asked if I wanted it. One day I had a plate full of beautiful iceberg lettuce, and the next day, unattractive greens that taste worse than they look took its place. How do we reverse this trend? Who hatched this dastardly plot?

While lamenting the disappearance of my beloved iceberg lettuce, someone said, “It’s gone because it was nothing. Do you know iceberg lettuce has negative calories? It takes more calories to digest and burn them in our bodies than they provide!”

That’s a negative? Really? You mean by eating iceberg lettuce you can lose unwanted pounds without dieting? I thought most people ate salad because they wanted to lose weight. And if iceberg has negative calories, how does that make it bad? Doesn’t that make it a desired miracle food?

For me, iceberg is a tasteless delivery system that moved dressing from my plate into my mouth. It was there to add bulk and make me full, while transferring dressing, bacon, and other delightful treats onto my tongue. But now, I’m stuck with a bitter and fibrous mixture of unidentifiable leaves that add calories and interfere with the tastes that I love. You can’t pour enough dressing on this stuff to kill the bitter taste.

I can still buy iceberg in my produce department and do, but when dining out, I want iceberg.

So, tonight, I’m in Iowa City, Iowa for my cancer immunotherapy tomorrow at the Holden Cancer Center. Arlene and I stepped out to a restaurant that was highly recommended. There wasn’t much on the menu that caught my eye. I ordered a gyro sandwich. Normally it’s a lamb and beef combination with onion and tomato, covered in Tzatziki sauce on pita bread. It’s a simple sandwich that I think is hard to mess up ... but it happened. It came as a wrap that was stuffed full of various greens looking more like the above noted garden weeds. I had two bites and pushed it aside. It was awful. Like most unwanted vegetation, these weeds apparently are pervasive. They are spreading out of salads bowls and are becoming infested in sandwiches. What next? In our ice cream?

Someone must stop the madness before it’s too late.

I’ve learned in life that fads and styles come and go and are usually cyclical. If so, I’m eagerly awaiting the return of real lettuce. I’m hoping for the best. My fingers are crossed. Is it coming back? Will it ever?

I can only hope ...
#SaveIcebergLettuce!

Gary W. Moore is a freelance columnist, speaker, and author of three books including the award-winning, critically acclaimed, “Playing with the Enemy.” Follow Gary on Twitter @GaryWMoore721 and at www.garywmoore.com.

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GARDEN MOMENTS
MELINDA MYERS

The popularity of gardening is at an all-time high and people are discovering its many benefits. Some want to grow safe and nutritious food, others are boosting the beauty of their landscape, and many are turning to gardening to relieve stress. With the holidays right around the corner, it’s the perfect opportunity to support new and experienced gardeners with a thoughtful garden-related gift.

Help small space gardeners expand their growing space and reduce maintenance with self-watering elevated cedar planters. Elevated gardens add garden space to a balcony, deck or patio while raising the garden bed to a comfortable and easily accessible height. The self-watering system makes gardening easy with proper, less frequent watering to ensure success.

Do the same for indoor plant enthusiasts with stylish terrariums, plant stands, and lighting features. Terrariums are still popular, creating a decorative means for providing the moisture and humidity tropical plants need. Copper and rot resistant mango wood terrariums (gardeners.com) add a new and decorative twist to this traditional growing system.

Plant stands allow your favorite indoor gardener to maximize any available space. Shelves filled with greenery help improve

indoor air quality, reduce stress, and can elevate one’s mood. New modern metal plant stand designs add a modern vibe to the indoor garden display.

When space is at a premium, give the gift of vertical gardening accessories. Birdcage planters provide a unique way to display tropical or seasonal flowers. Lower them to tabletop level to use as a centerpiece or decorative element in seasonal indoor displays.

Don’t overlook the cooks in your life that may be intrigued by moving their garden indoors. Keep them stocked with fresh herbs and vegetables. Increase their growing space and needed light with a gift of energy efficient LED grow lights in an attractive stand like the Oslo customizable LED Grow Lights. For those with very limited space, consider an organic kitchen caddy planter kit. A windowsill or countertop herb garden is a great way for anyone to add garden-fresh flavor to winter meals.

Make gardening a fun and accessible experience with the help of a deep seat kneeler that when flipped over, converts. Or add storage and mobility with a Deluxe Tractor Scoot with Bucket Basket. The handle allows you to easily take your tools and garden scoot with you to every corner of your landscape.

And don’t forget the stocking stuffers. Who doesn’t need extra plant tags, ties and gloves? Consider replacing the stocking with a colorful Tubtrug. These flexible lightweight tubs are perfect for harvesting garden produce, collecting weeds



Courtesy — Gardener’s Supply Company
Bird cage planters add whimsy to outdoor or indoor décor while providing a unique place to display air plants, seasonal plants and more.

or transporting anything from one space to another.

The gift of gardening provides lifelong benefits. Supporting family and friends with useful tools and equipment can increase their gardening enjoyment and success. And don’t forget to add a few of your favorite garden related items to your gift list. You’ll eliminate the stress and guesswork for the giver and you both will appreciate a gift that provides years of function, beauty and memories.

Melinda Myers is the author of more than 20 gardening books, including Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses “How to Grow Anything” DVD series and the Melinda’s Garden Moment TV & radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and was commissioned by Gardeners Supply for her expertise to write this article. Her Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

Archers bring down some big bucks



Art Syms with his son Mikee and dog Sky after a pheasant hunt at the Whitinsville Fish & Game Club last weekend.



Cheryl Weed with her 11-point buck.

Archery deer hunters are starting to harvest some impressive bucks, as shown in this week's column with Cheryl Weed and her 11-point buck, taken in Rhode Island, as the rut kicks into high gear. Numerous big bucks have also been spotted by hunters that failed to get a good shot, and passed the deer up in hopes of seeing him again. Making a bad shot will often result in a lost deer, which is the last thing any ethical deer hunter wants. Unfortunately, not all archers are a Robin Hood, and do make bad shots even though they thought they had a good shot, that would result in a harvested deer. Unfortunately, the legislature and Massachusetts Fish & Wildlife failed the sportsmen again this year, without the passage of a crossbow bill. It is a no brainer! Almost every state now has a crossbow bill, allowing any licensed

hunter to use the extremely accurate device for harvesting deer and wild turkey. Sportsmen try to prevent wanton waste, but often make a bad shot through no fault of their own. Allowing sportsmen to use a crossbow to harvest deer and wild turkey in an ethical way, should be the number one priority of Massachusetts Fish & Wildlife, but they fail to make the proper decisions when it comes to passing a Cross Bow bill in Massachusetts. Every year, the Massachusetts Sportsman's Council and the Massachusetts Worcester County League of Sportsmen hold an annual banquet to recognize top legislators and Fish & Wildlife officials for their untiring efforts to pass legislative bills that are in the sportsmen's interest. Hopefully, one or two of them will be recognized for their effort in pas-



THE GREAT
OUTDOORS
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sage of a crossbow bill in Massachusetts at this spring's annual banquet. It is long overdue and is the right thing to do! Local sporting goods stores that are barely holding on to the small Bait & Tackle shops that deal in the sale of bow hunting equipment would also benefit from the passage of a bow hunting bill in Massachusetts. The increased revenue could save them from going out of business. Sportsmen with disabilities are allowed to use a crossbow in Massachusetts, and it is time to allow any licensed hunter to use one. Come on, guys, let's get it done! Pheasant hunting was great until this past snow-

storm made hunting conditions crazy. This past Saturday made spotting a flushed pheasant almost impossible for both man & dog. Fortunately, things improved as the bright sunshine melted the snow from the trees, making visibility and hunting a lot better. The state will be stocking birds right up to Thanksgiving and reports of some impressive birds being stocked this year, was good news for local bird hunters. This week's picture shows Art Simms with his son Mike, pheasant hunting at the Whitinsville Fish and Game Club last week. Art owns a Pointing Griffon breed dog named "Sky" for hunting birds. The dog is four years old, and is doing some amazing things in the field. Solid points are always a great thing to watch in the field.

Tautog fishing remained very good in both Massachusetts & Rhode Island with some

bait shops running out of crabs, which is the top bait for catching tautog this time of year. There were still many seabass being caught in Rhode Island waters as of this past week.

Trout fishing at locally stocked waters have numerous anglers catching some nice trout, with reports of some impressive brown trout in the 18-inch class being caught at Wallum Lake in Douglas this past week. A few smallmouth bass were also reported at Wallum Lake. With the weather warming up this week, it will be a great time to get some last-minute fishing in before it really gets cold.

Ice fishing cannot be too far away, at least that is what many anglers are hoping for. The last few years of ice fishing were extremely poor, but things may get better this year. At least that is what many anglers are planning on. A day on the ice with family and friends doing some ice fishing

and gathering around a fire eating some venison, is a good way to enjoy the outdoors. Chasing some flags as they pop on ice fishing gear signaling a bite, will keep you warm, and landing that big one is a good way to get some exercise.

With the cold weather on our doorstep, it would be wise to have a talk with your young family members about staying away from ice covered rivers and ponds. Every year, some family loses a family member after falling through thin ice. It is never too early to have the discussion about the dangers of thin ice.

Practice social distancing and wear a mask whenever possible. It is going to get worse before it gets better, but we Americans have gone through hard times before, and we will survive this threat to our health and our future.

Take A Kid Fishing & Keep Them Rods Bending!

Are your pocket watches valuable?

We often come across pocket watches when handling local estates. Some can be worth as little as a dollar while a rare one could sell for millions. In this column, I'll offer a brief history on pocket watches and some information on evaluating your pocket watches.

A German locksmith named Peter Henlein is credited with inventing the pocket watch in the early 1500's, according to Britannica. The early watches were large and didn't keep very accurate time. An article in the Atlantic quotes a passage from Alexis McCrossen's book "Marking Modern Times: A History of Clocks, Watches, and Other Timekeepers in American Life." She writes that in the 1700's "people want to start carrying the time around with them; they're not content just to look at the public clocks in whatever village or town they might end up in." Improved timekeeping became a necessity. In 1843, elections in Pottsville, Pennsylvania were disputed because the towns people didn't

synchronize their clocks and the time to close the polls was disputed, according to the Smithsonian Magazine. The Atlantic reported that the "advent of the railroad, factories, and electricity, and the standardization of time zones in Europe and the United States—increased demand around the world for watches." Factories in Waltham, Mass. and elsewhere produced watches to meet the demand. The Atlantic reported that "on July 9, 1916, The New York Times puzzled over a fashion trend: Europeans were starting to wear bracelets with clocks on them." It wasn't much longer before this "fashion trend" reached the United States and wristwatches became more popular than pocket watches.

An important factor in pocket watch valuation is the material that the case is made from. The most valuable cases are



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WAYNE TUISKULA

typically made from gold. Most gold cases produced in the United States were 14-karat or 10-karat. James Boss invented gold-filled cases, which were created from sheets of gold bonded to another metal. Gold filled cases have much less gold than solid 10-karat or 14-karat cases, but they have

more gold than gold plated cases, which have only a small percentage. Cases were also made from sterling silver (0.925 percent silver) and coin silver (nine tenths of a percent). Cases marked silveroid, silverine and oresilver contain no actual silver.

After a train collision in 1891, the railroads created pocket watch standards in 1893 which required watches to have at least 17 jewels. Watches needed to be accurate within 30 seconds per week. The Santa Fe Railroad later increased the minimum to 19 jewels. Usually, the more jewels in a pocket

watch, the greater the accuracy and value. Additional factors affecting value are the age and condition of the watch.

Recent auction results show average gold-filled 17 jewel, 19 jewel and 21 jewel pocket watches selling in the \$100 range. An older key wind gold-filled Waltham watch in excellent condition brought \$850 in October. A 14-karat gold watch by the Columbus Watch Co. in its presentation box with a fob (chain) fetched \$2,000 last month.

Some pocket watches bring even greater sums at auction. A rare A. Lange & Sohne 18-karat 1903 gold German watch with an enamel dial and enamel design on the case sold for 440,000 (\$513,00 U.S.) in 2016 and a Patek Philippe Grande Complication 44 jewel 18-karat gold went for 520,000 (\$607,000 U.S.) in 2014. Another Patek Philippe sold even better in 2014: The Henry Graves Supercomplication sold for \$24 million. I'm sure the winning bidder will never be late for any appointments.

We have a pocket



watch collection, along with gold estate jewelry, sterling silver, art, a Red Cross poster collection and many other antiques and collectibles from New England estates in our online auction ending November 17th. Visit www.centralmassauctions.com for a link to

this online sale.

Contact us at: Wayne Tuiskula Auctioneer/ Appraiser Central Mass Auctions for Antique Auctions, Estate Sales and Appraisal Services www.centralmassauctions.com (508-612- 6111) info@centralmassauctions.com.

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State offers funding for infrastructure improvements

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION – The pandemic has not only altered how we work and learn, but also the basics of how we get around and interact in an age of social distancing. Recognizing the need to fund several short-term infrastructure adjustments to accommodate health measures, Gov. Charlie Baker recently announced significant funding for projects.

Last week, the Governor allocated funds to help communities plan for short-term innovations and long-term recovery efforts. A new \$10 million round of the Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program will continue to help cities and towns quickly expand improvements to sidewalks, curbs,

streets, on-street parking spaces, and off-street parking lots, officials said. This will improve public health, safe mobility, and renewed commerce throughout the Commonwealth.

Additionally, local recovery planning grants will soon be available to cities and towns to assist with long-term planning for their business districts. A total of \$10 million is available for this program.

“Our current circumstances call for a plan with the size and scope to match the urgency we need to address the most pressing challenges we now face,” said Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Mike Kennealy. “By targeting vital resources toward

these key areas, this strategy will allow us to lay a solid foundation for our path to recovery.”

The state has also announced several new efforts to support museums and other cultural facilities that have faced multiple challenges this year. These institutions will be eligible for \$10 million in Cultural Facilities Operating Grants, officials said. This funding will help organizations make safety improvements and other upgrades to allow them to continue operations.

Last month, the Governor filed a revised budget proposal that recommends over \$100 million in additional funding for economic recovery and development efforts statewide, including \$35

million for community development grants and loans.

The latest funding packages complement the Governor’s \$275 million economic recovery plan announced in June.

New funding will focus on the following efforts:

\$50.8 million in small business grants

\$10 million to continue funding the Shared Streets and Spaces Program

\$10 million for local recovery planning grants to support cities and towns

\$10 million to support cultural facilities

\$8.3 million in small business technical assistance

“During this unprecedented public health emergency, the Baker-

Polito Administration is continuing to invest significant resources to support recovery and growth initiatives for small businesses and Main Streets across Massachusetts,” said Secretary of Administration and Finance Michael Heffernan. “Through close coordination with federal, state, and local partners – including our legislative colleagues – we are proud to put forth a plan that thoughtfully invests funds from multiple sources to equip employers with the tools, resources, and supports to help navigate the new COVID-19 landscape.”

Added Joseph Kriesberg, the president of the Massachusetts Association of

Community Development Corporations, “Small business owners have sacrificed to help keep all of us safe and healthy. This initiative is our opportunity to have their backs.”

Additionally, in an effort to help keep residents in their homes during the pandemic and support small landlords with expenses, the Baker Administration recently announced \$171 million in support of the Eviction Diversion Initiative. This comprehensive strategy includes funding to help cover housing costs, rent, and mortgage payments, among others.

For more information about ongoing recovery efforts, visit www.mass.gov.

Continuing rise in COVID cases frustrates Leicester officials

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

LEICESTER – Frustrated by the town’s ongoing high-risk designation for COVID-19, officials continue to offer warnings that have had little effect this fall.

Last week, the state required Leicester to revert to Step I of Phase III of the Commonwealth’s reopening plan. With three consecutive weeks spent in the state’s “red category” for COVID-19 risk, Leicester officials and business owners are fed up with residents who refuse to comply with basic health guidelines.

The October COVID-19 spike in town is being blamed mostly on large

private gatherings, as well as refusal to wear masks and social distance in public. By ignoring health measures, residents are not only risking their own safety and that of family members, but they’re also jeopardizing the ability for businesses and schools to stay open, officials said.

“It is important for people to continue to follow the public safety rules issued by the Commonwealth during the pandemic, including wearing masks, maintaining social distancing, and avoiding large gatherings,” said Town Administrator David Genereux. “Residents over the age of 50

account for 60 percent of

Leicester’s cases, but the virus can be transferred by people of any age.”

The town also posted a statement to its website urging residents to follow all guidelines. Mask fatigue continues to be a major problem in all communities, but with winter fast approaching, officials said it’s critically important to stay vigilant.

“We need to continue to wear a mask, social distance, and wash our hands to stop the spread and avoid further roll-backs,” the town-issued statement read. “The current increase in cases can be traced to large private gatherings, as well as failure to take preventative measures, includ-

ing social distancing and wearing masks. This type of behavior is having a negative effect on the public’s health, as well as the ability for local businesses to remain open.”

As of Oct. 29, a total of 213 COVID-19 cases were reported in town since the beginning of the pandemic. Leicester has seen 17 new cases in the last two weeks alone. The October spike in cases was a significant factor in the Select Board’s decision to cancel trick-or-treating in town.

As of Oct. 30, Leicester schools remained in the current hybrid format.

“The town has been designated high-risk, but the schools have not seen many positive cases,” said

Leicester Public Schools Superintendent Marilyn Tencza. “The guidance from the Governor and the Commissioner is to keep students in school. If we were to make a change, the School Committee will make a decision using many different data points.”

Leicester’s parks also remain open, but town buildings are still closed to the public and can only be accessed by appointment. The main Town Hall number is 508-892-7000. All guests entering town buildings for appointments are required to wear masks.

Additionally, residents can drop off payments and documents in the locked black box located to the

right of the main entrance staircase at Town Hall.

Residents experiencing flu-like symptoms are encouraged to get tested and self-quarantine until they receive the results. Free COVID-19 testing is available for all Massachusetts residents in various locations throughout the Commonwealth.

Please visit www.mass.gov for more information on testing. You can also visit the town’s website, www.leicesterma.org, for the latest COVID-19 updates.

For further questions, contact the Leicester Board of Health at 508-892-7008, or Health Agent Francis Dagle at daglef@leicesterma.org.

Baker announces COVID relief plan

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION – Last week, the Baker-Polito Administration announced a \$774 million plan to stabilize the economy amid a second wave of COVID-19.

The plan focuses on getting residents back to work, supporting small businesses, fostering innovation, revitalizing downtowns, and ensuring housing stability. At least \$115 million will be directed to small businesses, many of which are struggling to stay afloat.

Additionally, the Governor is aligning multiple funding sources, both existing and proposed, to

help respond to the crisis.

“This plan represents a comprehensive strategy to get people back to work and to support the small businesses hit the hardest by the pandemic, putting the Commonwealth on a path to recovery,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “By leveraging existing tools and programs and implementing new ones, this plan will allow us to make critical resources available to those who need it most.”

The latest plan was supported by Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito, Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy, Labor and Workforce Secretary Rosalin Acosta, and Administration

and Finance Secretary Michael Heffernan. It was also endorsed by Joe Kriesberg, the president and CEO of the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations.

“While we continue to combat this pandemic, this plan takes an approach that addresses key needs of the businesses in downtowns and main streets, provides housing support for vulnerable families, and opens new doors for people seeking to return to work,” said Polito. “While we acknowledge we still have a ways to go, this plan will help to jumpstart our innovation economy and

position Massachusetts to be on a path for success.”

In addition to the \$115 million for small businesses and workforce training, the plan will also direct \$323 million to existing capital programs statewide. Another \$171 million will be used to keep people safely housed during the pandemic.

The state is also supporting internet connectivity improvement plans to facilitate remote work and online career advancement. About \$9.2 million will be used to subsidize internet service for low-income populations, and to expand hotspots in unserved and underserved communities.

Another \$3.2 million will

help modernize MassHire virtual pathways, which can assess unemployment claims and provide other supports. Additionally, \$2 million will bolster manufacturing education by purchasing a standardized virtual training program.

Baker said an additional \$54 million is available to support workforce recovery efforts through existing programming, such as the Skills Capital Grants program, the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, and the Workforce Training Trust Fund.

“These funds will provide critical re-employment services to our workforce, helping people make the transition from

unemployment benefits to good paying jobs in some of the Commonwealth’s key long-term job growth sectors,” said Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Rosalin Acosta.

In its assistance of small businesses, the state will be focusing heavily on providing relief to businesses owned by women, minorities, veterans, and members of other under-represented groups. Additional grant awards will allow small businesses to cover expenses like rent, payroll, and utilities.

For more information about the state’s relief efforts, visit www.mass.gov.




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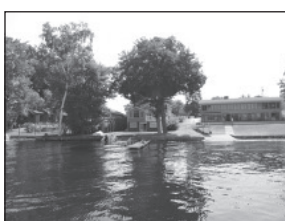
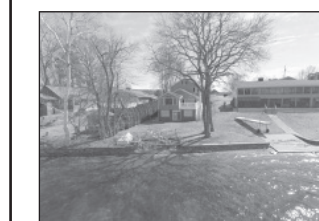
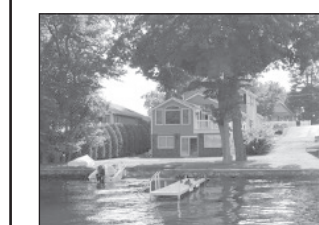


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Condominium - Living leisurely! 3 bedroom, 2.5 bath (including master suite) home. Freshly painted! Recessed lighting, gas fireplace, and sliding doors, to beautiful balcony. Walkout basement! built-in outdoor grilling spot. Easy access to 1395. **\$224,900**

THOMPSON - 452 FARYAN ROAD



SORRY, SOLD!

Impressive Gambrel Colonial! 2,343 SF, 3 BRs, 2-1/2 Baths, 1st Flr Master BR Suite! Master bath w/whirlpool tub & shower. Country Home on 2.41+/- PRIVATE Acres! Cathedral wood ceilings! Granite counter-tops, stainless appliances, & ceramic tile floors! 2nd Flr - 2 bed rooms & full bath, lot/great room w/balcony! Over-sized 3 car, detached garage, w/2nd story room! TRULY A FAR-AWAY PLACE NEARBY! **\$398,500.**

DANIELSON CT- 52 TAFT STREET



SORRY, SOLD!

Spacious Ranch, 1520+/- Sq Ft 8 room 3 Bedroom, 2 Full Baths, Hardwood Floors throughout. Fireplace family room. FHW/OIL Heat. - New Furnace, Windows, Also, recent Asphalt Driveway! Over sized Garage! 1/2 Acre Lot. Dead end road. Close to I-395! **\$255,500.**

WEBSTER - 195-199 THOMPSON RD



3 ACRE COMMERCIAL SITE! APPROX. 550 FT ROAD FRONTAGE ON STATE HIGHWAY RTE 193 A/K/A THOMPSON ROAD. STRATEGICALLY NESTLED BETWEEN TWO (2) I-395 (NORTH & SOUTH) ON-RAMPS & TWO (2) I-935 (NORTH & SOUTH) OFF-RAMPS! PROPERTY DIRECTLY ABUTS 1-395! 48'X200' CONCRETE BLOCK BUILDING, 7,680 SF TOTAL! FULL LOWER LEVEL USE & DRIVE IN GARAGE DOOR! HIGH TRAFFIC - HIGH EXPOSURE! WHAT DO YOU HAVE PLANNED?! **\$600,000.**

WEBSTER - 103 UPPER GORE RD



ON DEPOSIT

ester Lake! Main level has 3 Bedrooms, Kitchen, Dining Rm, Common Bathrm, Master Bedroom & Master Bath - Fireplaced Living Room!! Finished Lower Level, 1/2 Bath, Laundry, Large room w/Pellet Stove & Direct Garage Access! Tiered deck, w/ Screened porch, leads directly to your "Salt water" Inground Pool! **\$319,900.**

LAND WEBSTER/OXFORD/DUDLEY/DOUGLAS

Oxford - 4 Leinster St - Approx. 8.47 ACRES! River Frontage Possible to be Subdivided! **\$89,900**
Webster - Upper Gore w/View of the Lake! 1+ Acre! Artisan Well, Septic Design & Conservation - DONE. **NEW PRICE \$115,000.**
Webster - Cooper Road 2 Buildable Lots! Water & Sewer Access. Zoned Lake Res! **Each \$24,500.**

Douglas-Mount Daniels 2.5 Acres abuts Douglas State Forest! **ON DEPOSIT! \$132,900**
Dudley - Marshall Terrace 12,000+/- Sq Ft Lot! Potential for a 2 Family! **SORRY SOLD! \$70,000.**
Dudley - Packard Dr. 2 Lots! Very Private! off Ridge Dr. Will not last! **SORRY SOLD! \$50,000**

OXFORD - 4 SPICEBUSH LANE



ON DEPOSIT

One level living with added 35 x 18 finished walk-out lower level. Cathedral ceilings, skylight dining, hard-wood flooring and central air. Stainless appliances w/large double oven. Over-sized 30 x 14 deck. quiet cul-de-sac! **New Price \$314,900.**

SOUTHBRIDGE - 14 SERVANT WAY



SORRY, SOLD!

Young ranch with heated 2 car garage, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Efficient Propane heat, central air! Open floor plan! gas fireplace! Master Suite w/bathroom, Master California Closet! assisted sale **\$279,900.**

OXFORD - 115 CHARLTON ROAD



SORRY, SOLD!

Beautiful home set back off road providing privacy and oversized yard. Kitchen w/granite counters & abundance of cabinets. Cathedral ceilings kitchen, dining and living room. Open floor plan! large deck with large backyard through sliders in dining room. Hardwood floors! Tile baths. Master bedroom/master bath! Finished walkout lower level w/bat! 2 car garage. Extras: above ground pool! **\$369,900.**

WEBSTER - 20 KINGSBURY



SORRY, SOLD!

NEW TO THE MARKET! Custom Sprawling Split 2800+ SF Central Air! Kitchen, Dining Room, Cathedral Ceiling Living Room, 3 Bedrooms! Granite Counters & New Flooring! New Boiler - Hot Water Tank - Oil Tank! FULL finished Lower Level w/Full Bath & Laundry! THERE'S MORE! 2 Car Garage, renovated to include Hydro Heat, AC & 1/2 Bath! Great for Fitness Studio, Game Room or Home School! Over 1.4 Acres! **\$360,000.**

WEBSTER - 52 CUDWORTH ROAD



ON DEPOSIT

1.99 ACRE INDUSTRIAL ZONED LOT! GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE & WORK FROM HOME! Amazing 1790 Antique Colonial! Undergone major updates & renovations, maintaining Antique Charm! Great Room graced by an Open Hearth Stone Fireplace! Soaring Cathedral Ceilings! **\$499,900.**

WEBSTER LAKE - 100 LAKESIDE AVE



SORRY, SOLD!

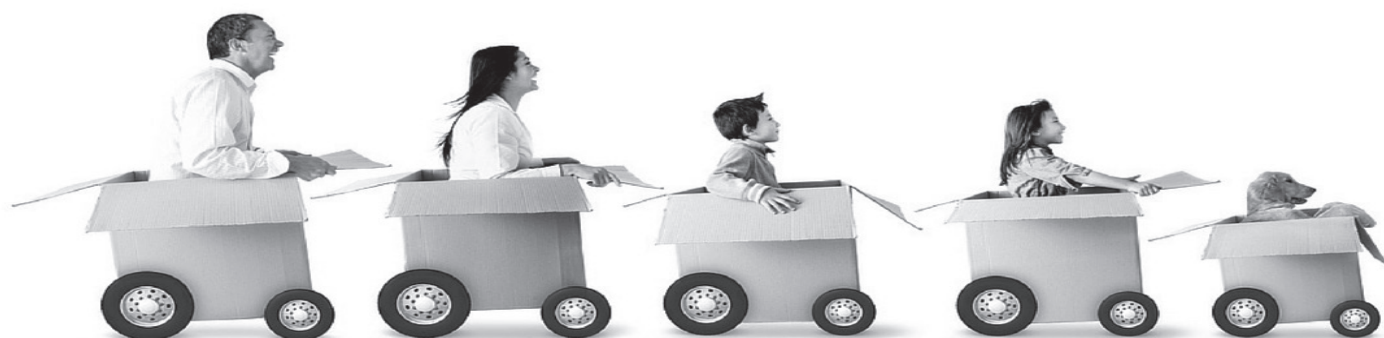
WEBSTER LAKE! PANORAMIC VIEWS! BEAUTIFUL SUNSETS! Extraordinary Waterfront Contemporary! Architect designed with Lake Living in mind, Custom Built with Attention to High Quality & Detail. Outstanding open concept, water view from almost every room. Nicely situated on a .25 acre level peninsula, 180'+/- prime lake frontage! Enhanced by a all natural shoreline! All you need to live is located on the 1st floor. Grand 2 story foyer, cozy fireplaced living room, gourmet kitchen, lake facing dining, formal dining room, media room & spacious 1st floor guest BR Suite w/private bath. Incredible 2nd floor fireplaced lake-facing corner master suite w/luxurious private bath, 3 more 2nd floor BRs & full bath! Something Special! **Remember, Timing Is Everything \$1,075,000.**

LAKE SHIRLEY - 647 RESERVOIR RD



SORRY, SOLD!

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ON DEPOSIT

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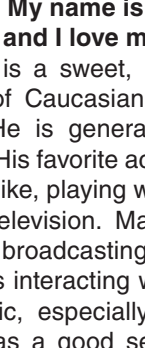
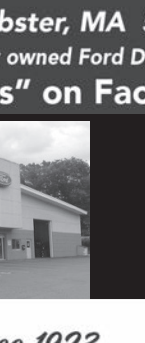


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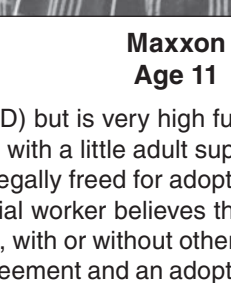


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Friday's Child



Maxxon
 Age 11

Hi! My name is Maxxon and I love music!

Maxxon is a sweet, inquisitive and kind boy of Caucasian and Hispanic descent. He is generally easy-going and calm. His favorite activities include riding his bike, playing with trucks, and watching television. Maxxon is fascinated with broadcasting and radio. He also enjoys interacting with adults and loves music, especially classic rock. Maxxon has a good sense of humor and will often surprise everyone with a funny joke out of nowhere.

Maxxon is currently attending a therapeutic school with extra supports. He is doing well overall in school and gets along with his peers. Maxxon is diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) but is very high functioning. He can do his own daily care and hygiene, and with a little adult support is comfortable accessing his community.

Legally freed for adoption, Maxxon is eagerly awaiting his forever home. His social worker believes that he will thrive in a nurturing family of any constellation, with or without other children in the home. Maxxon has an Open Adoption Agreement and an adoptive family must be willing to help him visit with his birth father three times a year. Maxxon also has two half-sisters in Massachusetts who he would like to remain connected to. Maxxon can be placed outside of Massachusetts but must be within driving distance of the central part of the state.

Who Can Adopt?

Can you provide the guidance, love and stability that a child needs? 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.

The process to adopt a child from foster care requires training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you, and if so, to help connect you with a child or sibling group that your family will be a good match for.

To learn more about adoption from foster care, call the Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) at 617-6273 or visit www.mareinc.org. The sooner you call, the sooner a waiting child will have a permanent place to call home.

DUDLEY — Nichols College students studying sport management will be headed to the Super Bowl for the second consecutive year, but the experience will be markedly different.

A group of 10 students and two Nichols faculty members will travel to Tampa, Florida, for the event, which will be hosted at Raymond James Stadium on Feb. 7, 2021. The trip is incorporated in the Super Bowl Practicum course, which aims to provide students with insider access and hands-on field experience in sports.

Priscilla Alfaro-Barrantes, Ph.D., assistant professor of sport management, leads the practicum. "My hope for our students is to learn and have fun," she says. "The Super Bowl is one of the world's largest sporting events. The ability to attend not as a fan but as a volunteer employee gives our students an incredible opportunity to connect their coursework to the business of sports." Students work directly for both the Super Bowl Host Committee and the NFL, volunteering their services at Super Bowl Live, Super Bowl Experience and the main sporting event itself, Super Bowl Sunday.

"This year will be very interesting," shares Alfaro-Barrantes. "Our students will have a

unique perspective to see how such a well-established event will pivot their offerings to meet the current challenges due to COVID-19. I consider this to be a unique and valuable experience for students, giving them a competitive edge for their future job prospects."

As part of the experience, each student will be expected to host a social media take-over on the Nichols College accounts, in addition to submitting a reflection paper on their top takeaways, lessons learned, and connections to their coursework.

Alfaro-Barrantes muses, "Last year, I was so proud of the students that attended the Super Bowl experience. They worked 12-hour days, had 3 a.m. wake-up calls and requested more challenging tasks from our volunteer coordinator. They were not distracted by sports legends. They were professional and got the job done. This maturity and a sense of business professionalism in students is something I have found to be unique at Nichols College."

Students participating in the Super Bowl Practicum this year include:

Thomas Budzinski
of Gardner.
Michael Butler
of Tewksbury.
Sean Carrigan
of Millbury.
Hunter Clements

of
Whitensville.
Timothy Crandall
of Dunstable.
Ian Cusick
of Greenwich, R.I.
Benjamin Ian
of Guilford, Conn.
Austin Paul of Middleton.
Brendan Stierli
of Cronton On Hudson, N.Y.

To follow the student's journey, be sure to follow Nichols College social media accounts.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Nichols.College>
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/nichols_college/

About Nichols College
Nichols College is a college of choice for business and leadership education as a result of its distinctive career-focused and leadership-based approaches to learning, both in and out of the classroom, and through impactful research and professional education. Students thrive in a learning and living environment that is supported by an experiential business curriculum and a strong liberal arts foundation aimed at transforming them into tomorrow's leaders. Nichols also offers master's degrees in business, leadership, accounting, and counterterrorism, as well as a range of certificate programs, to promote career advancement for today's professionals.


A rolled-up newspaper with the title "Local News" printed on it. The paper is white with black text. The title "Local News" is in a large, bold, serif font. Below the title, there is a line of text that reads "News +++ Information +++ News +++ Information +++ News +++ Information +++ News". The newspaper is rolled up from the left side, and the right side is unrolled, showing the title and the line of text. The background is a solid light gray.

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COVID

continued from page A1

"You can also consider hosting a virtual holiday dinner with extended family or friends, especially if they are at higher risk for illness from COVID-19."

Residents can also arrange to safely deliver food items to family members or neighbors who aren't able to participate in traditional dinners.

Additionally, the following guidelines were released by the state for Thanksgiving gatherings that involve individuals from more than one household.

Wear a mask when not eating or drinking
Wash your hands often with soap and warm water

Stay at least six feet apart from others

Assume that all guests beyond your immediate household could be asymptomatic spreaders

Take precautions to reduce risks for older adults and those with medical conditions.

If gatherings are held indoors, improve ventilation by opening windows and doors when possible.

Also, officials caution against sharing food, drinks, or utensils during meals. Encourage your guests to bring food and drinks for themselves and for members of their own households.

"Wear a mask while preparing or serving food to others who don't live in your household," read the DPH statement. "Consider having one person serve all the food so that multiple people are not handling the serving utensils."

Officials strongly urge residents to avoid any self-serve food or drink options, such as buffets or buffet-style potlucks, salad bars, and condiment or drink stations.

For 14 days before and after holiday gatherings, minimize your public contacts and appearances. Only leave home for essential services like going to work, buying groceries, and appointments with doctors, officials said.

In addition to holiday meals, there are several other risks to consider this Thanksgiving. Avoid shaking hands and hugging, DPH officials said; instead, wave and verbally greet others. Also, avoid singing, dancing, and shouting, as these activities increase the chances of catching COVID-19 through the air.

Also, in the weeks preceding your Thanksgiving plans, check to ensure that COVID-19 conditions are not worsening in your community.

"The number and rate of COVID-19 cases in your community – and in the community where you plan to celebrate – are important to consider when deciding whether to host or attend a holiday celebration," read the DPH statement.

Individuals who aren't feeling well should avoid attending in-person celebrations. Do not host or participate in any in-person festivities if you have symptoms of COVID-19 or may have been exposed to the virus.

All residents are encouraged to get the flu vaccine this year. For additional information on how to stay safe this fall and winter, visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.

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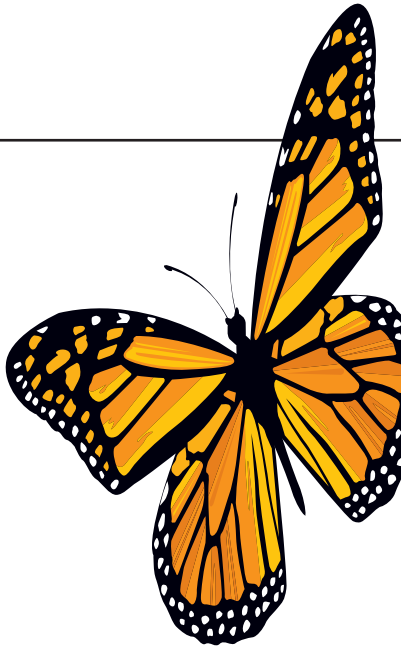
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