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Thursday-Friday, September 11-12, 2025

Marcos Rios Tournament to raise funds for playground



Charlton Craft Supply Swap brings local artisans together



Local crafters sift through donations during the Charlton Public Library's second annual Craft Exchange on Sept. 6.

> BY JASON BLEAU CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — The Charlton Library played host to its second annual Craft Supply Swap on Sept. 6. These gatherings are quickly becoming a new tradition for local crafting enthusiasts to exchange or offload their unused material for others to incorformal June dedication,

Turn To **SWAP** page **A8**

and Ruben Rios stand at right. BY GUS STEEVES CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — Many people in town remember Marcos Rios. Many more know the town has been taking steps to honor his memory with a playground next to Charlton Street School.

On Sept. 26, the fourth annual golf tournament to raise funds in his name is coming around again at Heritage Country Club, with the playground project as the primary goal.

As Marcos' mother Severina Rios recalled, the family had originally aimed at raising money for scholarships, but didn't get many applicants. So she was out walking near the school, thinking of what else they could do and hit on a solution:

"It'd be perfect if we could refurbish that playground and name it after Marcos ... with equipment and things for the little guys to do," she said at the Dec. 2, 2024 Town Council meeting, which unveiled the initial playground plans.

Last week, she added, "I don't know what people say about Southbridge, but we have a community that cares. We're very, very, very grateful for what the community does for us."

At the playground's Recreation Director Mike mentioned the idea two years ago.

Back in June, a couple dozen people attended the formal dedication of the Marcos Rios Community Playground. Marcos's parents Severina

"It goes along with what Marcos' ethos was all about," he said. "His Eagle Scout project was building a playground at Henry Street."

Councilor John Daniel agreed, saying it also reflects the town ethos: "This is a perfect example of what our citizens want to do in terms of making our town better."

Marcos Rios was well known as a local athlete, both in Southbridge schools and college, an Eagle Scout, and generally a role model for younger people. As Jasmin Rivas noted in December, that extends to the Rios clan as a whole.

"You were one of the first Puerto Rican families in town," Rivas said then. "... Your family has always been our role models in the community and having a park named after Marcos means a lot to the young Latino students using the playground and looking up to your family."

The project's design and budget are on the Southbridge Civil Space webpage. Documents there estimate it'll cost about \$253,000 total, with the funding coming from grants, donations and/or in-kind work. Among other sources, the state House Brunelle said Severina first budget (H.4000) includes an amendment seeking \$25,000 for the work, and the town has applied for a \$140,000 PARC grant with a \$42,000 match coming from the Marcos Rios Memorial Fund. Some contractors have also pledged to donate their services; the family intends to keep running the tournament; and there's an effort to raise public donations through Southbridge Credit Union.

One of those contractors is Councilor Scott Lazo, who runs a concome here and play in his for apartments at 39 Elm St. memorial playground."

walks of life" turning out and he said no." as "a tribute to the family and Marcos Rios."

to stand the test of time," Lazo said then.

Planning Board rejects 39 Elm proposal

BY GUS STEEVES CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — After struction firm. In June, he a contentious hearing prodescribed the effort as "an cess that was delayed by the all-volunteer community council's refusal to renew one project" and hoped "some- member in June, the Planning day, [Marcos's] child will Board voted 4-1 to reject a plan

All of the "no" votes cited Back in December, he one specific issue - a statenoted there are many ment by Fire Chief Paul Nor-"California best-ball tour- mandin that he didn't feel his naments in Southbridge" crew could safely fight a fire raising funds for various there. Chair Dave Payeur addthings. But at the first ed to that by citing the fact Marcos tourney in 2022, departed member Corey Bel-"the golf course could lerose had asked if "there was barely accommodate it," anything [Normandin] could with hundreds "from all do to make the building safe,

To Teri Hensel, the proposal's 48 apartments with a "This [playground] is shared driveway being used a great tribute, and this by neighbors (Town Hall, Elm is a project that's going Center Cafe and, if it becomes occupied again, the Southbridge News building) made it Gus Steeves can be a public safety issue. She noted reached at gus.steeves2@ she's not against apartments in the center core, having supported the Wells School conversion, but felt those were"on the outskirts, not smack downtown."

Sandy Acly saw those other buildings as being potentially a "perfect storm." She pictured a fire at 6 PM on a Thursday (Town Hall's late day) with lots of people "coming and going" from the various build-

"I wouldn't want to see a fire happen at that time," she

To the sole yes vote, that issue wasn't really in the board's purview. Mike Loin said "the proponent has shown they process, not this board's.

"I know he has an opinus to slow down, listen, and discover how God ion, but until he has seen the

St. Anne – St. Patrick Parish invites community to upcoming Faith, Healing, and Community events



STURBRIDGE — St. Patrick Parish and Shrine warmly invites parishioners and neighbors throughout the community to participate in several upcoming opportunities for prayer, healing, and fellowship.

The Heart of Prayer Study Group

Beginning Saturday, Sept. 20, for seven weeks said. from 6:30 – 8 p.m. in the Parish Center, the parish will host The Heart of Prayer, a reflective study program taught by spiritual educator and fellow parishioner Joseph Krans. This seven-session course offers participants a chance to deepen have 360-degree access around their spiritual lives by exploring the rhythms of the building" for fire vehicles, prayer, silence, and scripture in community. To and that's part of the building register, contact Joseph Krans at 508-867-8881 or inspection and construction email joseph.krans.presencework@gmail.com.

"The Heart of Prayer Study Group invites

Turn To **EVENTS** page **A8**

Healey works to ensure vaccine access

BY KEVIN FLANDERS STAFF WRITER

REGION — Amid heightening confusion over vaccine availability across the country, Gov. Maura Healey recently announced a series of measures to ensure that vaccines remain accessible to Massachusetts residents.

National vaccine access took center stage last week, when Health and



APPLIANCES



Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., was grilled by members of the Senate Finance Committee over policymaking and recent actions taken at the federal level.

In Massachusetts, leaders are hopeful that the Governor's recently announced actions will alleviate fears. With flu season fast approaching, residents statewide have flooded their elected leaders with questions over COVID vaccine access.

"Massachusetts has the best healthcare in the world," said Healey. "We won't let Donald Trump and Robert Kennedy get between patients and their doctors. When the federal government fails to protect public health, Massachusetts will step up. The actions we are announcing today will make sure people can continue to get the vaccines they need and want in Massachusetts."

At Healey's direction, the Division of Insurance (DOI) and Department of Public Health (DPH) issued a bulletin that requires insurance carriers in Massachusetts to continue covering vaccines recommended by DPH, and not rely solely on CDC recommendations. Massachusetts is the first state in the nation to guarantee insurance coverage of vaccines recommended by the state.

These include respiratory virus vaccines, like COVID, flu and RSV, as well as routine vaccines for children, like measles, chickenpox, and Hepatitis B.

> This action follows legislation filed by Governor Healey last month that would give DPH authority to set independent standards for vaccine purchasing and recommendations.

> "We are so fortunate to live in Massachusetts, where we prioritize science and

Charlton

Holland

SOUTHBRIDGE

Pagan, Cristopher J.

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Meagan A, to Santos, Dione.

support patients," said State Secretary of Health and Human Services Kiame Mahaniah. "With Gov. Healey's leadership and collaboration between DPH and DOI, those who want to get vaccinated will be able to without added cost or confusion because of decisions made at the federal level."

CVS is now administering COVID vaccinations in the Bay State. This followed a period of uncertainty during which Massachusetts pharmacies were unable to offer the vaccine due to a lack of required federal guidance.

After the Governor's new order opened up availability, residents secured COVID vaccine appointments at pharmacies, as of last Friday.

"As an infectious disease physician, I have seen the extraordinary impact vaccines have had in saving lives and preventing serious illness. Limiting access to vaccines is not just shortsighted – it is reckless," said Public Health Commissioner Robbie Goldstein. "Massachusetts will not allow ideology to override evidence. We must continue to be guided by science and data. And we must do what is right, even when it is hard, because protecting public health is not optional – it is a responsibility."

Children under the age of five can receive the vaccine through their pediatrician.

Additionally, Massachusetts officials are leading efforts to create a public health collaboration with states in New England and across the north-

The multi-state collaborative, if launched, would focus on developing evidence-based recommendations on vaccinations, disease surveillance, and emergency preparedness, among others.

"The Commonwealth has a long history of serving as a national leader in healthcare, especially during moments of federal mismanagement, and this action from Gov. Healey is the latest example of that leadership," said House Speaker Ronald Mariano.

Added Senate President Karen Spilka, "Vaccines save lives and pro-

REAL ESTATE

to Snow, Jeffrey, and Kemp, Piyaporn.

\$474,000, 23 N Main St #23B, Joseph Const Services Inc,

\$435,000, 11 Hamilton Dr, Weaver, Jonathan, and Weaver,

\$560,000, 111 Country Club Pl, Blais, Toby A, and Blais,

\$432,000, 400 N Woodstock Rd, Andino-Martinez, Carlos,

\$335,000, 51 Crystal St, Khattar, Anthony, to Vinuela,

\$188,500, 44 Maria Ave #303, J&r Re Holdings LLC, to

\$145,000, 297 Ashland Ave #24, Marrero, Yamaris, to

\$837,000, 109 Mcgilpin Rd, Zilaro, Joseph A, and Zilaro,

\$650,000, 16 Preserve Way, Paez, Yohandy, and Benedito,

\$465,000, 110 New Boston Rd, Rogalski, Erik J, to Osberg,

\$419,000, 114 Westwood Dr, Wildgrube, Danial J, and

Wildgrube, Marcia, to Chaput, Nicole M, and Dileo, Lisa.

and Saldana-Martinez, Evelyn, to Saldana, Angely M, and

Kathleen, to Hoey, Michele B, and Hoey, Glenn J.

Coulson, Evan M, and Laganelli, Jillian H.

Kathleen A, to Seger, Matthew, and Stano, Holly.

Maria, to Rogalski, Erik, and Rogalski, Jennifer.

Blash, Julia M, and Andio, Jacob T.

tect families. Period. The Healey Administration's actions will help ensure federal drama does not affect our access to vaccines that are essential to public health."

To learn more about the Governor's order, visit www.mass.gov.

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BRIMFIELD: 413-245-3451 Weekdays: 9:00 – 4:30 and Sat. 9:00 -12:00

WALES: 413-245-9808

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

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Central Baptist Church

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

· Charlton Federated Church, 64 Main St., 508-248-5550. Sunday worship 10:30 a.m. Summer worship is 9:30 a.m. www.fed-church.org • Charlton Baptist Church, 50 Hammond Hill Road, 248-4488, www.charltonbaptist.org, Sunday worship 10 a.m.

• Charlton City United Methodist, 74 Stafford St. 248-7379, web site: CharltonCityUMC.

Sunday worship and Children's church 10am •St. Anne St. Patrick Church, 16 Church St.,

Fiskdale (508) 347-7338

www.stannestpatparish.com Saturday Vigil Mass at 4 pm, Sunday 8 am, 10 am. 12 noon. Youth Mass (September to May) 5

pm. Daily Mass Mon - Thurs 7:30 and 10 am, Fri and Sat 7:30 am • St. Joseph's Church, 10 H. Putnam Ext, 248-7862, www.stjosephscharlton.com, Saturday

Vigil Mass 4:30 p.m., Sunday Mass 8 a.m., Sunday Family Mass 10 a.m., Sunday LifeTEEN Mass 5 p.m., Weekday Mass Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 a.m. • Wayside Church, 6 Haggerty Road, 248-5144 · Assemblies of God Southern New En-

gland 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.livingwordhcarlton.com in fo@living word charlton.com

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

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

www.sturfed.org Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m. • Bethlehem Lutheran Church- 345 Main

Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566 Phone 508-347-7297 Web: www.bethlehemsturbridge.org

Services - Sunday 9:00 am Pastor Dan Purtell Holland Congregation Church

"Where the Bible is preached." 11 Sturbridge Road, Holland, 413-245-9926 Hollandchurch.org

Sunday Service @ 10:00 am Pastor Dan Maketansky Holy Trinity Episcopal Church 446 Hamilton St., Southbridge, MA 01550

Phone: 508-765-9559 Web: www.holytrinitysouthbridge.org Sunday Service 11:00 am Pastor Dan Purtell

10 13

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Utilitarian fashion accessory
- 4. Engine additive
- 7. Macaws
- 8. Listens to 10. Self-righteously moralistic person 12. Made of wood
- 13. Chinese lute 14. Beginning military rank
- 16. Indicates near 17. Ties the score
- 19. Chum 20. Long ago
- 21. Localities
- 25. Midway between northeast and east
- 26. Make fun of
- 27. Tennis great Arthur
- 29. Construction location 30. Cow's noise
- 31. Blue 32. One of the Fab Four
- 39. Formula 1 team 41. Dash
- 42. Lifting device 43. Basics
- 44. Keyboard key
- 45. Old Irish alphabet
- 46. Shaking of the Earth's surface 48. Covered stadium
- 49. Sword handles
- 50. Longing or yearning 51. Creators' social network
- 52. Boxing's GOAT

CLUES DOWN

- 2. Show up
- 3. Capital of Taiwan 4. Ocean 5. Givers and
- 6. Gets ready 8. Ad 9. Fit of irritation
- 11. Criminal organization
- 14. Exclamation that denotes disgust 15. American state
- 18. Sensor hub 19. Before
- 20. The boundary of a surface 22. Witnesses
- 28. Former French coin of low value
- 32. Calm down
- 34. Cola brand
- 35. Stepped on 36. Japanese city

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- 23. Singular
- 24. Type of meal 27. Music awards show
- 29. A bag-like structure in an animal
- 31. Schenectady County Airport
- 33. Partner to cheese

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First Student hoping for smoother experience heading into new school year

BY JASON BLEAU CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY/CHARLTON - Following an at times frustrating year for First Student in Dudley and Charlton, the company has entered the new school year confident it can close any gaps that resulted in staffing shortages and delays in route change notifications to help make for a more consistent experience for both parents and stu-

Denise Bales, Operation Supervisor for First Student, which is the contracted bus service for the Dudley Charlton Regional School District, provided an update to the School Committee in late August acknowledging that the previous year wasn't ideal and the company is working to make the new year more efficient. The school year started with 42 drivers on the fleet for

39 routes, which include some drivers still undergoing their licensing process and fill-in drivers in case of emergencies. The discussion included input concerning analytics and how the district and the company can work together to address times of increased driver shortages without interrupting the educational experience.

Last year intermittent driver shortages forced routes to be delayed, combined, or even canceled altogether causing frustration for parents who needed to work around their schedule to get their kids to stop locations or the schools. Bales said January was particularly difficult due to a stomach bug sidelining numerous drivers during a short time span. Bales said they had four reserve drivers and that she herself could step in to drive if needed. She's confident the company can maintain its routes and staffing to make for a smoother year overall.

"I have hope that this year we're going to be a thousand percent better. Our pay is competitive, there's no reason why people shouldn't be lining up for the job quite honestly," said Bales.

School Committee member Anthony Aube said he would like to see data collected so that both the district and First Student can better understand peaks and valleys in driver absences which can help both parties better predict when there will be a shortage and work around these times when it comes to field trips, sports and other programs that require extra bus transportation accommodations.

'To a degree, there's a pattern of yes, there are these are high times of people getting sick because of the nature of the industry. But if we start seeing the analytics that show these are the normal spikes we can plan for those and we don't double up on the needs in those areas, but we only know that if we have the analytical data," Aube said.

Bales said she does keep her own record on file of any absences, when and why they occur, however she agreed there can be a more collaborative approach between First Student and the school

Joseph DeSantis, Director of Finance and Operations for the district, said they requested data from First Student at the end of the last school year which served as a general chart of missed routes and the reasoning. He hopes further data collection can help the district and First Student better predict increased needs and prepare

ahead of time. "This was our

for any shortages

first time collecting that information as a district, so what we plan on doing is utilizing that as our starting comparison point, receiving the data on a monthly basis throughout the year from First Student. and then coupling and utilizing that information together to hopefully come up with some tangible action plans moving forward on how we can close any type of gap between open and missed routes and amount of drivers," DeSantis said.

Another major topic in the update was First Student's implementation of the updated FirstView 1.0, an application utilized by parents to track bus route information but also now utilized by the drivers to record any incidents of poor behavior by students on any given bus. Until this

year there was a written disciplinary card, but the new implementation of FirstView will allow drivers to log incidents in a system that keeps a running log of any situations involving specific buses of students.

As for FirstView as a resource for parents, school officials are asking everyone to keep their ap updated to the new version 1.0. Instructions for the update or how to access FirstView have been made available on the Student Transportation page of the district's Web site, along with other information regarding current bus routes and how any changes or alterations to transportation are communicated and handled within the dis-

State officials confirm second case of West Nile Virus

BY KEVIN FLANDERS

STAFF WRITER

REGION - Area residents are asked to take precautions after the Massachusetts Department of Public Health announced the state's second human case of West Nile virus (WNV).

Officials confirmed that a woman in her 60s contracted the virus in Essex County.

As a result of ongoing evidence of WNV in mosquitoes, risk levels have been elevated to high in several eastern Massachusetts communities. Meanwhile, Worcester County residents are asked to remain vigilant and take steps to avoid mosqui-

"Massachusetts is in peak season for the spread of West Nile virus," said Public Health Commissioner Robbie Goldstein. "While the temperatures have dropped slightly, this is the time of year when most people get exposed to the virus."

The first WNV-positive mosquitoes in the state this year were announced on June 17. Since then, 364 mosquito samples have tested positive for WNV, including samples taken in Worcester and Hampden Counties.

There has also been one animal case of WNV reported this year.

Currently, the risk for WNV is moderate in 183 cities and towns across Barnstable, Berkshire, Bristol, Essex, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester Counties.

In addition to WNV, eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) has also been detected in mosquitoes in Massachusetts this year. There have been 21

EEE-positive mosquito samples, with no human or animal cases reported.

WNV and EEE are generally transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. There were 19 human cases of WNV reported in Massachusetts last year, plus four human cases of EEE, leading to one death.

One of the best ways to protect your family against mosquitoes is to avoid outdoor activities during peak mosquito hours from dusk to dawn. If you must be outside during these hours, be sure to apply insect repellent and maximize clothing coverage of exposed skin.

Residents can also reduce the number of mosquitoes around their homes by draining sources of standing water. Mosquitoes often lay their eggs in small pools, wheelbarrows, rain gutters, and drains. Residents are advised to frequently empty flowerpots and wading pools, in addition to changing the water in birdbaths daily.

It is also important to make sure that window and door screens fit tightly. Screens with holes or openings should be replaced, officials said.

Looking ahead, local leaders will post additional resources and updates on conditions within specific communities throughout the month.

Residents are also urged to take steps to protect their pets from mosquitoes.

Additional information about EEE and WNV, as well as reports of current and historical virus activity in Massachusetts, can be found by visiting: www.mass.gov.

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* Friday's Child



Jaiden **Age 11** Registration #9212

Jaiden is a sweet, loving, and happy young person whose smile can light up any room! He's a big fan of Disney adventures-whether he's singing along to Moana or cheering on Tarzan's jungle swings, he's completely in his element. Jaiden has a bold side when it comes to food, happily diving into spicy flavors and never missing a Taco Tuesday. Social and friendly. he loves spending time with friends and family, but he also enjoys having quiet moments to relax and recharge. With his caring heart, fun-loving spirit, and zest for life, Jaiden is a joy to be around.

https://www.mareinc.org/

child/25964365697

Can I Adopt?

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

The process to adopt a child from foster care includes training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you. These steps will help match you with a child or sibling group that your family will fit well with. To learn more about adoption from foster care visit www.mareinc.org . Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) can give you guidance and information on the adoption process. Reach out today to find out all the ways you can help children and teens in foster care.



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Frank G. Chilinski

PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER

Brendan Berube Editor

Building stronger communities through shared spaces

Across the local community, the start of September often feels like a reset. School is back in session, community calendars are filling up, and town boards are making decisions that will shape the year ahead. From leases on public properties to setting the new tax rate to welcoming new school administrators, these choices share a common theme: how we use and support the spaces that bring us together.

Shared spaces—our schools, libraries, senior centers, athletic fields, town halls, and cultural hubs—are the backbone of community life. They are where we learn, celebrate, gather, and govern. Maintaining them requires careful stewardship, but it also requires participation from the very people who benefit from them most: us.

It's easy to think of these matters as someone else's responsibility, but community health is never built by officials alone. When residents attend a council meeting, stop by a school open house, volunteer at a festival, or simply support a local fundraiser, they strengthen the very places they depend on.

The challenges facing small towns—budget pressures, development debates, questions about growth—are real. Yet the answer is not disengagement. It is doubling down on the civic habits that have always made New England towns resilient: showing up, speaking out, and lending a hand.

This September, as familiar rhythms return, let's remember that the vitality of our towns depends on what we give to them. Our schools, our cultural programs, and even our tax structures are investments in shared spaces. Supporting them ensures that Southbridge, Sturbridge, Charlton, and our neighboring communities remain places where people don't just live, but belong.

Letter submission policy

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

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

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Identity, fellowship and whose we are

BEYOND

THE

PEWS

By Dr. RB

McFee

CHARLTON

CITY UMC

The other day, I heard a sermon on the radio. The minister offered this powerful thought – "If we increasingly see God resembling us, we are in trouble."

Consider the pulpits where clergy proclaim with enthusiasm that Jesus would be a liberal or conservative, a democrat or a republican. They then do some intellectual jiu jitsu trying to fit scriptures to bolster their assertions, as if the Gospel writers were press secretaries for ideologies and political parties.

To put it mildly, I cringe when I hear such notions and want to shout "STOP!"

In a life of faith, making Jesus resemble our identity is a fool's errand, and a whole lot of other uncomplimentary descriptions. We should try to be like Him.

Sadly, Jesus has too often become a mascot and not a mentor. Unfortunately mankind has tried to make God in our image, when greater effort could be expended to become more in His likeness of character, kindness and

Now that's not to say we shouldn't envision our Creator in a relatable form. After all we are made in His image for a reason. Plus, Jesus frequently invited us to know Him personally and left a lot of reminders throughout the New Testament; He gave us lots of examples how to be more Christ-like.

Thankfully, in the Charlton area, we hearts of those we encounter. have lots of churches that know where their Identity comes from and do their best to live it and share it with others - congregants and strangers alike. People who entertain strangers, feed the hungry, care for the poor, stand with the lonely, the marginalized, being kind even when it would be easier to be otherwise.

Houses of worship not only host many outreach programs that can fulfill Jesus' mission for His followers - visiting shut ins, having free food, clothes and other necessary items (Twice Blessed Thrift Shop at CCUMC), youth programs, Biblical education and opportunities for fellowship with neighbors - regardless of religious affiliation – to share a nice evening over a good meal.

Speaking of which, if you are looking for good fellowship and good food, Charlton City United Methodist Church (CCUMC) 74 Stafford St. (near Routes 20 and 31) is starting their fellowship dinners again, beginning Saturday, Sept. 20th from 5:30 – 7 p.m. Family friendly rates for this chicken

bar b q dinner with several side dishes, beverage and dessert. Take out available. Call for reservations (508-248-7379), although drop ins welcome. On-site free parking, handicap accessible. Proceeds go towards local ministries, including the Food Pantry at CCUMC, because feeding those in need is vitally important as a reflection of Christ's love.

But it's not just the church or media partners such as Christian Radio Q90.1; it is the people who comprise these faith families that make a profound difference, trying to reflect Christ's image and do His work.

But it isn't merely through works; it is through giving of ourselves beyond

our time, talent, and treasure. To borrow lyrics from the musical "Wicked," when one witch said to the other, "you've placed your handprint

on my heart." Perhaps the greatest gift Jesus gave to all who met Him, even beyond the miracles, the healings, was the feeling deep inside each person's spirit that they mattered in a very real way from a place of love. He placed His handprint

on their hearts. We don't need to walk on water or cure the blind to make others feel they matter; to really see them instead of looking beyond them... The homeless vet on the street, the lonely widow, the single parent struggling with kids, the friend who is now a shut in.

We can leave our handprint of love, caring, compassion, concern on the

But it starts with our identity Whose are we? Who are we following reduce spending later to balance things and Who or who do we want to resem- out. ble? It is a choice.

If we start making God in our image, or try to fit God into our identito resemble, to reflect God in a world needing His love, we have entered the danger zone.

Thankfully, Jesus left a detailed report of Himself for us to reflect upon and learn from regardless of religious tradition. And because of this, we can enter a zone of goodness starting with ourselves - being the Goodness of God in daily life, making the world, the workplace a better place because we entered it, not because we left.

grow by being with others who are seeking an identity resembling God, so that together we leave no doubt to anyone who meets us Whose we are and what Identity really matters. Come hang out with Christ's identity seekers.

Does the 4 percent rule still make sense for your retirement?

You may have heard of the "4 percent rule" when it comes to retirement. The idea is simple: After you retire, you withdraw 4 percent of your investment portfolio each year. In theory, this helps ensure your savings last for your lifetime. While this rule can be a helpful



FINANCIAL Focus

> **TREVOR** NIELSEN

starting point, it's not a one-size-fits-all and it's definitely not a substitute for a plan tailored to your specific needs, wants and wishes.

The truth is, how much to withdraw in retirement depends on factors like when you retire, if you'll work part time, how long you expect retirement to last, your lifestyle goals, inflation and whether you want to leave a financial legacy to heirs. So, the 4 percent rule should be viewed as more of a guide than a strict rule.

Let's start with age. The 4 percent rule is often based on someone retiring at 65 and expecting to live until about 92. But if you retire earlier, you may want your portfolio to stretch further. In that case, you might need to start with a lower withdrawal rate, maybe closer to 3 percent. And if you retire later, you might safely withdraw a little more perhaps 4.5 to 5 percent — depending on your financial situation.

Your retirement lifestyle also plays a big role. Are you planning to travel the world or spend more time at home? If you expect higher spending in the early years of retirement, you may need to adjust your withdrawal rate or plan to

Your financial flexibility matters too. If you have less wiggle room with your expenses, rely heavily on your portfolio for income or want to preserve wealth ty, instead of we increasingly trying for your heirs, a more conservative approach might be wise. In this conservative scenario, your portfolio withdrawals may be met from interest and dividends. Think of your withdrawal rate as existing on a spectrum from more conservative to less conservative, with your personal situation determining where you land.

Then there's inflation. A well-built strategy usually includes small annual increases in withdrawals to keep up with rising costs — about 2.75 percent per year. But you don't need to take a raise just because the calendar says so. And this journey in goodness can If the markets have had a tough year or you don't need the extra income, it might be smart to skip an increase. Being flexible can improve the chances your money will last.

It's also important to understand what's known as your "portfolio reliance rate" — how much of your retirement income comes from your investments versus other sources like Social Security or pensions. The higher this percentage, the more conservative you may want to be with withdrawals.

And don't forget the IRS. If you're drawing from a traditional IRA or 401(k), you'll need to take required minimum distributions (RMDs) once you reach age 73. Your RMD for any year is the account balance as of the end of the prior calendar year divided by a life expectancy factor according to the IRS. These RMDs need to be accounted for in your strategy.

The bottom line? The 4 percent rule is a useful starting point, but it's just that — a starting point. A good financial advisor can help you build a strategy that reflects your age, your goals and your full financial picture. By revisiting your plan regularly and staying flexible, you'll give yourself the best shot at turning your savings into a secure, fulfilling retirement.

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

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Plan B!

Remember that time you were about to jump into something big—a new business, a major life change, a dream you finally decided to chase? At first, your mind lights up with excitement. You see the vision, you make the plans, you picture the success. But then, almost like clockwork, the thought creeps in: "So, what's your Plan B?"

Of course, having a backup plan makes sense. If Plan A falls apart, you've got to have a Plan B, right?

It almost feels a bit controversial writing about not having a Plan B. I think that's because the idea is often misunderstood.

When I say "Plan A," I'm not talking about a single project or a business idea—I mean your overarching mission. The bigger picture. The thing that gives your life direction and meaning. It's the north star you measure everything else against. That's what I'm getting at when I speak about Plan A-not the small detours or adjustments, but the core mission that defines where you're

When I talk about Plan B, I don't mean little adjustmentslike taking the side streets when the freeway's jammed. That's just flexibility.

What I mean is the bigger Plan B: the alternative to your overarching mission, the backup life you keep in your back pocket "just in case." That kind of Plan B, as neuroscience shows, doesn't just sit quietly in the background—it actively drains energy from Plan A, it slowly eats away at Plan A until it's gone!

prefrontal cortex. The responsible for planning and decision-making, works best when the outcome really matters. Think of an athlete in a championship game—they find a level of focus and creativity they never had in practice, because, in this scenario, Plan A equals winning and Plan B equals losing.

Think of a life-or-death scenario. If you're facing a grizzly bear in the forest, Plan A is to survive. Plan B is...not. And while Plan A can fail, having no Plan B forces every ounce of focus and energy into survival—dramatically increasing your chances of success.

When there's only one shotno backup—the brain ramps up dopamine, sharpening focus and creativity. But when you create a Plan B, dopamine drops—and so does motivation. In other words, the moment you create a Plan B, you're signaling to your brain, "Relax, no need to give it everything," and your effort slips.

Studies from the University of Pennsylvania, Zurich, and Wisconsin all point to the same conclusion: people with backup plans perform worse on their main goals. Even thinking about a Plan B reduces persistence and creativity.

Why? Because the brain is built to save energy. The moment it realizes it can relax, it will relax.

Take Howard Schultz, the man behind Starbucks. When he first tried to raise money to expand the company, investors laughed him out of the room. Banks turned him down more than 200 times. He could have walked away, gone back to a "safe" job in corporate America, taken a Plan B. But he refused. Starbucks was Plan A. Period. He doubled down, kept pitching, and eventually found a handful of believers. Today, Starbucks is a household name around the world.

The science explains the story: when your brain knows there's no escape hatch, it goes all in. Dopamine spikes, focus sharpens, and creativity ignites. You start to see options you'd never notice otherwise. Pressure forces breakthroughs. That's the hidden

POSITIVELY SPEAKING

TOBY

MOORE

gift of burning the boats. That's the real danger of Plan B. Most of the time, it isn't strategy—it's fear in disguise. It feels responsible, but really, it's a quiet permission slip to play smaller, to quit when things get uncomfortable.

The science is clear, and the stories back it up: extraordinary results only come when you stop keeping one foot out the door. So burn the boats, shut the exits, and commit like there's no other option.

Because that's the moment your full potential wakes up. Don't plan for escape—plan for victory. That's how you find out what you're really capable of.

Toby Moore is a columnist, the star of Emmy - Nominated A Separate Peace, and the CEO of Cubestream Inc.

Wolperdinger: A fantasy-horror haven



Katie Billington with just a few of the things available at Wolperdinger Bookstop.

BY GUS STEEVES CORRESPONDENT

Ever heard of a wolperdinger?

I hadn't until I walked Wolperdinger Bookstop in Putnam, where a cuddly rabbit with horns and wings named Wolpy is the mascot and hero of owner Kathy Newman's children's book series.

"We're trying to promote him," said assis-

tant manager Katie Billington, noting the store is "kind of like the face of" Newman's 58 Publishing House. Beyond that, they aim to be "a safe place for people self."



The store's mascot Wolpy is a much cuddlier version of the Germanic wolperdinger than myths would suggest.

One aspect of that is the upstairs "journaling section," where visitors are encouraged to jot down thoughts. Some of them have ended up on the wall leading up those stairs.

For the most part, Wolperdinger is a store that focuses on science fiction, fantasy, horror and Wolpyrelated merchandise. (The first book of the series should be out later this year.) When it comes to selecting

titles, Billington said

she likes "to follow book bloggers and book talkers [online], and see what a lot of people are talking about" to get ideas. Sometimes, she added, they simply scroll through recent releases and

READER'S

JOURNEY

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STEEVES



The store from outside, on Main Street in Putnam.

see what strikes their fancy. Last month, the store celebrated its one-year anniversary with a week of events. One involved Scholastic, the large kids-book publisher, who promoted "Wings of Fire" in which several young people showed up in costume. Billington said they also host "tot spot" bookreadings, a few author events for older audiences, do book events at Rectory School, and are reaching out to other schools, among other things. Their front door posts flyers for various events they host, including the monthly "Horror Seeker" writers' group, which is not just for horror, but for "all walks" novels, stories, poetry and script-

Although Wolperdinger has a Main Street storefront in the Montgomery Ward building that's been beneficial during public events, Billington noted the building is full of services (a yoga studio and real estate firm among them) that don't create a lot of daily foot traffic. Originally, they wanted "that big space upstairs" to host events, and "we have a fantasy of expanding into some of the stores behind us" over the next few years, to include a cafe and more books, she said.

'We've had a lot of people come in and say they don't want to support Amazon and want to do local first, which we really appreciate, obviously, she noted.

The theme came from Newman's German husband, as did the fact there's a shelf of German-language books upstairs. But the original wolperdinger was not a cuddly creature; Billington described it as "a scary being in the Bavarian forest."

According to Wikipedia, the first references date to the 17th century and "No two Wolpertinger [sic] look alike because they are supposed [to be] the result of crossbreeding between animals in the area such as foxes, roebucks, hares, ducks, and pheasants." The concept can be found in various forms around the world, identified as jackalopes in the US southwest, al-miraj in Arabia, and by other names. All of them "might be images of rabbits infected by the Shope papilloma virus, which causes tumors that can resemble horns or antlers," the webpage states.

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

Beautify and expand your indoor garden

Keep your houseplants looking their best with a bit of pinching, trimming and cleanup. A few well-placed snips can improve a plant's appearance and create cuttings to start new plants.

Start by removing any dead stems and leaves. Improve the overall beauty of spider plants, dracaenas and palms by trimming away the brown leaf tips caused by fluoride from tap water accumulating in the leaves. Avoid the problem by using rainwater, well water or water treated by reverse

osmosis. Trimming to improve the plant's growth habit and size can provide immediate and long-term benefits. Removing a small or large portion of the stem tip encourages the plant to form more branches and compact growth. When you remove the stem tip you reduce the amount of the growth hormone auxin that promotes upward growth and discourages branching.

Encourage more branching without greatly reducing the plant's size with a soft pinch. Remove just the uppermost portion of the stem where new leaves are developing. Use a hard pinch to remove the tip and several inches of the leafy stem when you want to reduce the overall size and promote fuller growth on leggy plants.

Make a clean cut using sharp micro snips or pruners like Corona's houseplant pruners (coronatools.com). The rust proof, stainless steel blades can cut up to a quarter inch in diameter and are shaped to make it easier to cut the intended leaves and stems. Your plant will look better, and the wound will close more quickly.

Avoid leaving stubs and keep the plant looking its best by making cuts above a set of healthy leaves or a node, the place where leaves once grew. Pruning elsewhere distracts from

the plant's appearance and the stubs create entryways for insects and disease.

When you finish pinching and pruning, do a bit of cleanup. Use a dry or damp soft cloth to wipe away any dust that accumulates on the leaves. Use a cosmetic brush to clean fuzzy leaved plants like African violets. Or give your plants a gentle warm shower in the sink or tub. Wrap the pot in a plastic bag if needed to keep soil out of the drain and plumbing. Removing the dust allows more light to reach the leaves for photosynthesis which is essential for plant growth.

Use the trimmings from heirloom and non-patented plants to expand your houseplant collection. It's easy to start new plants from leaf stem cuttings of various houseplants like inch plants. philodendron, pothos, dieffenbachias, dracaenas, and many more. Use a sharp knife, snips or bypass pruners to cut three- to sixinch-long pieces from firm, mature non-woody stems.

Remove the lowest leaf or two from the stem where roots will form. Stick the cut-

in a small container filled with vermiculate, perlite or a well-drained potting mix. Loosely cover the potted cutting with a plastic bag left open at the top to increase the humidity around the cutting while it forms roots. Set the container in a bright location out of direct sun for



GARDEN MOMENTS MELINDA MYERS

pot it up and place it in a space that receives the sunlight it prefers.

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op. Once

rooted,

You'll be amazed at how a bit of grooming and propagating can perk up a tired indoor garden. Share or trade extra rooted cuttings with family and friends so each of you can grow your indoor garden and memo-

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the Midwest Gardener's

Handbook, 2nd Edition and Space Small Gardening. hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" instant video series and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden radio Moment program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and was commissioned by Corona Tools for her expertise to write this article. Her Web site is www. MelindaMyers.





Courtesy

Trimming with a sharp houseplant pruners or micro snips will improve a houseplant's growth habit and size.



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Faith in Film Series continues at Charlton Federated Church

C H A R L T O N tributed at each movie Crucible" (1996) – Arthur The Faith in Film series continues this autumn at Federated Church of Charlton (FCC) with a four-movie series exploring the theme of community. On the third Friday of each month at 6:30 p.m. members of the congregation and the public can view and discuss movies. All are invited to join in the Faith in Film series at no charge. A handout with pertinent and informainteresting tion, key concepts and discussion questions about each film is dis-

night. Refreshments are also served.

Faith The Film Series this autumn include the following:
Sept. 19 –"The

Englishmen Who Went up a Hill and Came Down a Mountain" (1995) - Hugh Grant leads the cast in this charming and quirky film about English surveyors in 1917, who discover that a beloved mountain is only a hill, causing great consternation in the local village that is very proud of its mountain.

Oct.

in 1953. This film version stars Wynona Ryder, Paul Scofield and Daniel Day Lewis. As with the play, the story is based upon the Salem Witch Trials of the 1690s and examines how a community grapples with perceived evil. "Rear Nov. 21 Window" (1954) – Jimmy

Miller wrote the screen-

play based on his own

classic play of the same

name which premiered

Stewart and Grace Kelly star in this masterpiece by director Alfred Hitchcock. Stewart plays a photographer who while recovering from a broken leg spies on his neighbors and discovers a possible murderer

Dec. 19 – "It Happened on Fifth Avenue" (1947) A clever and wise vagrant (Victor Moore) moves into the vacated Manhattan mansion of a millionaire while he winters in Virginia. The vagrant forms a community of veterans and their families as well as, unknowingly, the millionaire and his family, in this heartwarming Romantic Comedy set during the Christmas holidays. This Academy Award nominated film directed by Roy Del Ruth also stars Don DeFore, Ann Harding, Charles Ruggles, and Gale Storm.

Movies in the Faith in Film program explore religion and theology broadly and may include films that explore various denominations and The films also faiths. explore Christianity, and the ethics and morals found in the teachings of Jesus Christ. While some films may showcase historical and Biblical characters and events, others may take a more abstract approach to faith and how people respond to and interact with God and the teachings of Christ.

Whenever possible the series showcases a variety of genres, tones and periods. Thus, it explores silent films, foreign cinema, classic films, wellknown and obscure works all with the aim to entertain, enjoy and

enlighten. Faith in Film screenings take place in the Fellowship Hall of the

Church at 64 Main Street in Charlton. For further information please call the Church at 508-248-5550 or email Pastor Shannan Hudgins at pastor@fedchurch.org.

About the FCC

The Federated Church of Charlton is a federation of the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalist Association in Christian worship together. The Church descends from several churches active in the Charlton community over the centuries starting in 1761. Worship services are held on Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. The church also has an active Sunday School and youth program.

The Overlook Senior Living to celebrate ribbon cutting

CHARLTON — The Masonic Health System of Massachusetts and The Overlook Health & Rehabilitation Center will mark an important milestone on Friday, Sept. 12, with a private ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the renovation and expansion of its Short-Term Rehabilitation Unit.

The addition features 13 new patient rooms, bringing the total number to 40 private suites. Along with beautifully refreshed common areas, state-of-the-art culinary spaces, and enhanced therapy services, the expansion reflects The Overlook's ongoing commitment to providing exceptional care, comfort, and wellness to the surrounding community.

Tameryn Campbell, President and CEO of Masonic Health System of Massachusetts, shared "This expansion reflects our dedication to high-quality health care and the individuals we serve each day. These new private suites and refreshed spaces — including dining and gathering areas — provide a more modern, welcoming environment that offers greater comfort, choice, and dignity for our Overlook Residents and citizens in the surrounding

area, who turn to The Overlook as a trusted resource." Building on this momentous occasion, The Overlook's Ribbon Cutting Ceremony also marks the completion of The Overlook's Master Planning Phase 1, which comprises a much larger and ambitious Master Planning Project designed to reposition and modernize the Charlton Campus.

About The Overlook

For nearly 115 years, The Overlook has provided a continuum of care and services for Massachusetts Residents and their families. Today, The Overlook tailors its services to older adults with a wide variety of needs - from independent living to skilled nursing, and recently has enhanced its Campus offerings beyond health care, hospitality and housing,

with retail and commercial businesses that provide for even greater enrichment. Learn more at Overlook-Mass.org.

Sturbridge Historical Society presents tour of Old Burial Ground

STURBRIDGE — Join local historian Bill Barnsley on a walking tour of the Old Burying Ground in Sturbridge on Saturday, Sept. 20 at 10 a.m., covering 170 years of early Sturbridge history. Through 24 stones, we will explore some notable people who shaped our town, and some unique stones that illustrate the development of stone carving and beliefs in the afterlife. Note: We will be "off-trail" on some very uneven surfaces. Wear your sturdy shoes!

Bill Barnsley is a writer, storyteller, and local historian with a lifelong passion for uncovering the stories of the past. In 2018, with the help of his very patient wife, Jude MacDonald, conducted a complete survey of Sturbridge's Old Burial Ground, documenting every gravestone and researching the lives behind them. His work connects early town families, Revolutionary War veterans, and the artistry of New England stone carvers, preserving their history for future generations. When he isn't leading tours, Bill writes children's books, teaches, and volunteers in community projects.

The Old Burying Ground is located at 308 Main St. Parking is available behind the Center Office Building and along the road in front of the Old Burying Ground, as well as behind the cemetery. Registration is requested: sgibquig@gmail.com.

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Charlton City pastor publishes new book

CHARLTON — The pastor of the Charlton City United Methodist Church, Rev. John H.D. Lucy, published his third book this summer, titled "Seminarians Don't Blow Stuff Up: Reflections on a Pastor's Becoming." The Charlton Public Library is hosting a book discussion with Rev. Lucy on Tuesday, Sept. 16,

Asked why he wrote the book, Lucy said, 'When I was going through a difficult period at my church a few years ago, I realized that the hardest part of being a pastor, for me, is managing the expectations of a pastor, of being some superhuman, perfect holy person that won't make mistakes. But we make mistakes all the time. My roommate literally blew something up in seminary.

"Seminarians Don't Blow Stuff Up" is an inside look at seminary life with a target audience of, first, seminarians, but also for any and all lay persons, regardless of whether they attend church. What can we learn from seminary that can apply to how we live well together in our church families or communities? Ultimately, the hope is that pastors and lay persons can develop a deeper, more authentic and genuine relationship with one another by accepting our humanness and limitations, and trusting in God together. Or, for non-churchgoers, to learn how to be more generous with ourselves and one another so that we can get along more peacefully.

You can purchase your copy of the book from Rev. Lucy at the book discussion on Sept. 16 or on Amazon.

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Presentation examines motives for Mars exploration



Dino Tata with a model of the Curiosity rover 3D-printed by Bay Path students.

BY GUS STEEVES CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — Why go to Mars?

In recent years, that's been a question floating around the internet and elsewhere, often spearheaded by various tech tycoons for their own interests.

But much closer to home, local NASA Ambassador Dino Tata has a fairly simple answer: "Ensuring our survival."

Last week at the Senior Center, he argued Mars is a necessary project because we will eventually face extinction if we remain "one-planet species." He points to the fact it's happened before - five major extinction events (defined as killing 70 percent of life or more within two million years) have marked Earth's geological history, and some argue we're in the middle of (and partly causing) the sixth. All but one were caused by massive climate change, usually triggered by very long and large volcanic episodes spewing a lot of CO2, SO2 and other

The exception was 65 million years ago, at the end of the Cretaceous Era, when an asteroid estimated at the size of Mt Everest plowed into the Yucatan Peninsula, leaving a crater 20 miles wide and 9 miles deep. Its fiery debris covered much of North America and some sources say it ignited massive fires globally, killing 76 percent of all life. Tata noted there's some evidence it hit during a volcanic era (some sources say it may have triggered the volcanism) in India's Deccan Traps.

Traps.

To Tata, those incidents and our current issues with climate change, pollution, deforestation and other practices make space exploration crucial. But he also notes it'll help us "answer the question 'Are we alone?," develop new technology, and "advance science in general."

On the other hand,

Gus Steeves
Curiosity rover 3D-printed by

Mars is not a very inviting place to live. It has a deadly atmosphere just 10 percent as dense as ours, almost entirely made of CO2; about a third of our gravity; no magnetic field protecting from celestial radiation; and an average temperature of -76 degrees that often drops to -195.

(He didn't mention this,

but it also has occasional

planet-wide dust storms

that last for months.)

Astronauts in low gravity are already seeing various health effects - including weakening of bones and organs, and effects on eyes and brain – from a few months in orbit. He noted the journey to Mars takes at least seven months one way, and any sojourn there would require living underground or building very thick-walled habitats. Because of the way the two planets orbit, a launch can only happen every 17 months, so a round trip will last at least two or three years.

Despite all those factors, humanity has had a presence on that world since the Viking 1 orbiter left its lander there July 20, 1976. According to Wikipedia, the lander ran for 6.25 years before a Mission Control attempt to reprogram its failing battery accidentally overwrote its antenna commands, cutting off contact.

Since then, Tata said, "the world has had a 53 percent success rate of landing on Mars," with the US having a higher

rate – 21 successes and six failures. Three missions are now active there – the US-owned "Curiosity" and "Perseverance" projects and China's "Zhurong." The last two both landed in 2021,

but Curiosity has been there since 2012.

The missions have different goals. Perseverance is collecting samples hoping to find microbes and testing surface chemistry; Curiosity is assessing water supplies and other geological details. The former had assistance the Ingenuity drone helicopter, which "made 72 flights before it tipped over and broke its propellor. It'll never fly again," Tata said.

The idea of exploring Mars dates back at least a century, and has periodically played a role in popular culture. Italian Giovanni astronomer Schiaparelli (1835-1910) started the modern trend when he drew an published maps of what he called "canali" on Mars in 1877. Although the term actually just means "channels," popular press in English translated it as "canals" and triggered a lot of fantasy about who might have Kinesiology-BS. built such "canals."

As telescopes proved, it became clear they were not intelligently-designed canals, but were very likely evidence of ancient water flowing on Mars. But science fiction took off with speculation. One of the early and most famous examples was HG Wells' War of the Worlds, the Martian invasion tale published in 1897. It got a lot of publicity - and freaked millions out – when Orson Wells turned it into a radio drama in 1938.

"Some people headed for the hills. Some people gathered their guns and hunted Martians," Tata said. "... The whole country panicked and Orson Wells had to leave the country for a few years."

He said NASA already has (joke) boarding passes for human Mars missions, showing those he and his wife have that grant them "33 million frequent flyer miles." But he doesn't expect to actually go there.

"If I'm on a ship going to Mars, I've got nothing to lose anyway," he noted.

He be repeating this talk at Jacob Edwards Library Dec. 4.

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

Gateway Players announce auditions for "A Candle in the Window"

SOUTHBRIDGE — Gateway Players Theatre in Southbridge is hosting auditions for "A Candle in the Window," the final production of our 50th anniversary season. This play is written by L. Don Swartz.

Auditions will be held on Friday, Sept. 19 and Saturday, Sept. 20 at 6:30 p.m. at Elm Street Congregational Church, 61 Elm St., Southbridge.

Auditions will consist of cold readings from the script. Performance dates are Dec. 5, 6 & 7. Presented by permission through special arrangement with Eldridge Plays and Musicals. The cast consists of 5 men ages 20 - 40's and one senior citizen, 4 women ages 20's to 40's, and two seniors, three boys ages eight to 16 and four girls ages eight to 16. Directed by Eric Hart and produced by Lynn Boucher. For more information, please contact Gateway at 508-764-4531

A small group of weary travelers dis-

cover the power of the season while trapped in a lonely train station on Christmas Eve. As a blizzard rages outside, the troubled people are forced to turn to each other for companionship. Trying to make them more comfortable is the old stationmaster, Charlie. When the clock strikes midnight, there is a knock on the station door and seven youngsters appear. They've seen the station lights from the nearby church where, in secret, they've been practicing the story of the nativity which they plan to present at regular service. They offer to perform their play for the travelers and afterward, speak to the travelers individually, giving advice which is seemingly wise beyond their years. The next morning, as a new, younger stationmaster lights a Christmas candle, we realize the mysterious stop in the travelers' journey was more than accidental and has given them a renewed

Anna Hendrikse of Brimfield enrolls at James Madison University

HARRISONBURG, Va. — Brimfield resident Anna Hendrikse had enrolled at James Madison University for the fall 2025 semester. Hendrikse is majoring in Kinesiology - BS.

Founded in 1908, James Madison University is a public university located in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. JMU is one of the nation's leading lights in higher education, where students enjoy engaging relationships with world-class faculty who drive education innovation and support advanced research. With state-of-the art amenities and facilities, students have access to NCAA Division 1 athletics. JMU also has the highest post-graduation job levels of all Virginia colleges.

SOUTHBRIDGE POLICE LOG

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of Sept. 1-8.

A 31-year-old female from Bloomfield, Conn. received a summons in lieu of arrest on Sept. 1 for Operating a Motor

Vehicle after suspension of registration. A 38-year-old male from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on Sept. 1 for Domestic Assault and Battery.

A 63-year-old male from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on Sept. 2.

A 49-year-old female from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on Sept. 2 for Larceny in an amount totaling less than \$1,200.

try panicked and Orson David Armani Adorno, age 19, was arrested on Sept. 2 in connection with a warrant for Assault with a Dangerous Country for a few years."

James L. Bush, age 64, of Southbridge was arrested on Sept. 3 for Trespassing. A 54-year-old female from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on

Sept. 3.

Derik Gerard Hartwell, age 23, was arrested on Sept. 4 for Violation of an

Abuse Prevention Order. Two juveniles, ages 14 and 17, were arrested on Sept. 5 for Larceny of a Motor Vehicle. A third juvenile, age 16, was arrested during the same incident for Larceny of a Motor Vehicle, Reckless Operation of a Motor Vehicle, Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle, Failure to Stop for Police, and driving at a rate of speed greater than was deemed reasonable and proper. A fourth juvenile, age 16, was also arrested during this incident for Larceny of a Motor Vehicle and Nighttime Felony Breaking & Entering into a Vehicle or Boat.

A 26-year-old female from Southbridge

was taken into protective custody for Destruction of Property on Sept. 6.

Nicholas James Harrington, age 31, of Holland was arrested on Sept. 6 for Trafficking in Fentanyl, Conspiracy to Violate Drug Law, and multiple counts of drug possession. Sherry A. Robidoux, age 33, of Holland was arrested during the same incident, also for Trafficking in Fentanyl, Conspiracy to Violate Drug Law, and multiple counts of drug possession. A third male, age 51, from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest for Possession of a Class B Drug.



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SWAP

continued from page **A1**

porate into their future works.

The library collected donations for weeks in anticipation of the event. In only two years, the event has become a popular stop for many, with a sizable line greeting employees as they opened the doors for the event. Library Director Betsy Perry said crafting is a passion for many

and has long been engrained in the library's calendar of programs.

"We're big crafters ourselves at the library. We do crafts every month for all ages, so a lot of our regulars are up there because they enjoy it and don't need to make a mess at home. These people are meeting each other, and helping each other with their projects," said Perry.

The exchange featured sorted tables filled with everything from yarn and paper goods to fabric and wood. There was a bit of everything for anyone looking to put their personal touch on a project. Perry said people enjoy having the chance to add their own bit of creativity, and events like the craft supply swap provide them with access to free material they may have never thought of utilizing be-

"Crafting

Cornucopia: A Nostalgic Nod to Bountiful Harvest

Nothing quite captures autumn's bounty as a classic cornucopia. For generations, a symbol of harvest has been the cornucopia basket overflowing with the fruit (and vegetables) of the season. Once a common centerpiece of the autumn table, it appears the nostalgic "horn of plenty" may be making

dance. Read on for some history, facts, and ideas about cornucopias!

a comeback as backyard

farming celebrates a

return to simple abun-

History: The cornucopia, a.k.a. Horn O Plenty, has a history dating back to ancient Greece. According to legend, when the young Zeus was playing with Amalthea, the goat who had suckled him in a cave on the island of Crete, he accidentally broke off one of her horns. To make amends, Zeus promised that from that day forward, the horn would always be filled with whatever fruit she

desired. In another Greek legend, Heracles broke the horn off of an advisory during a fight over a beautiful maiden. The Naiads treated the horn as a sacred object, filling it with fragrant flowers.

Copia, the goddess of Plenty later adopted the horn, thus named Horn of Plenty, or Cornucopia.

The Cornucopia came to symbolize a plentiful bounty, a tradition that has carried over to the harvest season and onto the Thanksgiving table.

Today, a growing number of people choose to keep the tradition alive by displaying a cornucopia on a mantle or dinner table. The colorful leaves, acorns and pinecones of New England provide the perfect backdrop for a Horn O Plenty overfilled with garden delights. Here are some suggestions to assemble a traditional cornucopia centerpiece:

Cornucopia baskets are easy enough to find at a craft or department store during the harvest season, but if you can't locate

Town-to-Town



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one, a cone shaped basket will do. If you steam the cone end, it can usually be shaped into a curved horn shape.

Fill the inside of the basket with freshly fallen fall foliage, choose the brightest yellow and orange leaves. Sprigs of hay and grape vine also add texture to a display. Place the largest vegetables, such as squash, Indian corn, and sugar pumpkin in the widest part of the basket. Add some interesting gourds.

Next, choose fruits the served Thanksgiving feast, such as plums and grapes, allowing the display to overflow onto the table.

Add a few bright red apples, and sprinkle chestnuts, pinecones and cranberries to finish it off. Use your imagination to create a creative cornucopia that offers interesting eye appeal. For example, artichokes, oranges, and pomegranates all add color and interest. Best of all, your family can enjoy the "fruits" of your labor, as most of it is edible.

A faux cornucopia can easily be created by laying a deep basket or large, shallow door basket on its back. Fill with squash, gourds, miniature pumpkins, Indian corn, apples and other fruits and vegetables of the season, allowing them to spillover onto the table. Provide coordinating light to the centerpiece by boring a hole in a couple of miniature pumpkins to form natural candleholders for tapers in assorted heights.

Did you know?

For centuries, the cornucopia has symbolized gratitude for the many blessings of life.

The term 'cornucopia' actually dates back to the 5th century BC in the form of two words "cornu Copiae",

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which means horn of plenty. The first known English use of the word was in "cornucopia"

The horn shape represents the spirit of endless supply of giving and sharing.

The Horn of Plenty is sometimes used as part of a Fall Equinox ritual, as it is filled with assorted garden vegetables, fruits, nuts, herbs, etc. to represent thanks for the garden harvest,

The cornucopia was prominently featured in ancient Greek and Roman cultures, symbolizing wealth and nourishment, and was used in various art forms and coinage.

The cornucopia is sometimes depicted in body art as it is a symbol of fertility, fortune and abundance.

Win a Three Course Dinner for Two at the Publick House

Your tips can win you a great dinner for two at the historic Publick House Historic Inn in Sturbridge! Simply send in a hint to be entered into a random drawing. One winner per month (or whenever I receive enough tips for a column) will win a fabulous three course dinner for two at the renowned restaurant, located on of St. Anne's Church, Route 131 across the town common in historic loved one, Grieving with 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 Mourning Ministry. The 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.

brings people together. It's a nice, low stress hobby. Sometimes, you have crafts that are prescribed with specific steps, but a lot of times there's room for creativity. It's something people enjoy, but they don't necessarily have the money to spend on it on their own, so we

offer opportunities for them to craft here, and this event allows them to get materials to use at home without spending any money," Perry said.

The leftover materials from the exchange will be used by the library itself for their crafting events or donated to

other libraries for similar swaps. The Charlton Public Library hosts numerous craft events throughout the year which Perry said are very popular. Interested or prospective crafters can join in by registered online at charltonlibrary.org.

39 ELM

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full details of the plan ... if it's not safe, he can deny it" when it goes to the permitting process, which would come after approval, he said. "He's asking us to make the denial."

Before the vote, Loin read the formal conditions they would have sought. The "most important," he said, was requiring the developer to have a structural engineer inspect the parking deck and retaining wall and prove them "structurally sound." If that couldn't happen, they have to return for a modified permit, which, from previous meeting sessions, would likely have meant far fewer apartments and parking

He also noted they'd

want a "proper guardrail or fencing" around the lot for vehicular and pedestrian safety, and a stop signal at the parking lot's north exit for pedestrian safety. There were a few other, largely boiler-plate conditions.

The board formally approved its denial letter in a special meeting Sept. 10, after this paper's deadline.

The rest of its meeting was taken up discussing ongoing business. Mike Colognesi said he's been working through the zoning bylaws' use table and finding "a lot of special permits and a lot of site plan reviews that ought to be 'yes," and will bring his proposed changes forward later. The board also wants to look at merging the "Office Research" zone into other commercial/ industrial zones, with

Colognesi saying several people he's talked to don't understand what that is.

Acly said she'd like to see the board reintroduce some version of a "use variance" akin to the Section 501.1 that once existed. Such a change would enable uses that aren't listed to be applied for by special permit, rather than being prohibited, as they are now. She noted that'd have to be worded carefully "to protect the people who live there."

Loin said variances legally require some kind of demonstrated land-related (not financial) hardship and do not create a precedent.

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

EVENTS

continued from page **A1**

speaks in the quiet of our daily lives. It's a beautiful way to grow in faith together as a parish community," said Fr. Salvator Musande, pastor of St. Anne – St. Patrick Parish.

Grieving Great Hope workshop Also beginning Saturday, Sept. 20, for five sessions, from 9:30 - 11 a.m. in the Lower Level for those who have lost a Great Hope is a Catholic faith-based grief support workshop led by trained facilitators from Good workshop offers prayerful support, practical tools, and fellowship for those journeying through grief. For more information or to register, call the parish office at 508-347-7338 or email Chris Williams at cwkiki@charter.net.

"Grief is one of life's

heaviest burdens, but no one should carry it alone. This workshop offers Christ-centered support and hope for all who mourn," said Fr. Salvator Musande.

Vendors wanted for Christmas Craft Fair St. Anne – St. Patrick Parish and Shrine will host its first ever Christmas Craft Fair on Saturday, Nov. 15, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Parish Center, 16 Church Street, Fiskdale. Local artisans, makers, and crafters are invited to reserve vendor spaces, which include tables and chairs. The event will feature crafts, jewelry, home décor, food, and more. Applications are available at https:// stannestpatrickparish. com/.

"The Christmas Craft Fair is about more than shopping—it's gathering as neighbors to share joy, creativity, and community as we prepare for the Christmas season," said Fr. Salvator Musande. "We encourage all members of the community to join in these meaningful opportunities for prayer, healing, and celebration."

For more information about these opportunities and St. Anne-St. Patrick Parish and Shrine, please visit: https://stannestpatrickparish.com/.

St. Anne St. Patrick Parish is an active parish community. It offers daily Mass for worship, religious education, and community ministries. It welcomes visitors to St. Anne Shrine, the new Memorial for the Unborn, the Hall of Saints, the Russian Icon Exhibit, the Votive Chapel, the Generations Statue, and the Angel of Hope Monument. The Daily Rosary is recited at 3 p.m. in the St. Patrick Chapel, and weekend Masses are celebrated in its outdoor pavilion in the summer. Its religious gift shop is open every day from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Charlton Cultural Council seeks grant funding proposals

Council has set a deadline of Oct. 16 for organizations, schools, and individuals to apply for grants supporting Charlton community cultural activities including community-oriented arts, humanities, and science programs. The online Grant Application form and more information about the Charlton Cultural Council Program are available at https://www.townofcharlton.net/322/ Cultural-Council.

This year, the Charlton Cultural Council will distribute almost \$10,000 in grants. CCC will prioritize partial funding of multiple projects over fully funding fewer projects, therefore allowing more programs for the Charlton community.

According to Charlton Cultural Council Chairperson Angela Casasanto, these grants can support a variety of artistic projects and activities in Charlton, including exhibits, festivals, field trips, short-term artist residencies, performances in schools, workshops, and lectures.

New applicants and new programs will be prioritized over repeat applicants and repeat programs to broad-

CHARLTON—The Charlton Cultural en the variety of cultural events and activities that we are able to bring to our community. Performances that take place in Charlton and are for the general public will be prioritized ahead of target audiences, as the CCC strives to fund projects that will benefit as much of the Charlton community as possible.

The Charlton Cultural Council is part of a network of 329 Local Cultural Councils (LCCs) serving all 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The LCC Program is the nation's largest grassroots cultural funding network, supporting thousands of community-based projects in the arts, humanities, and sciences every year. The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to Mass Cultural Council, a state agency that allocates funds to each community.

For local guidelines and complete information on the Charlton Cultural Council, send a message to Cultural. Council@townofcharlton.net. online Grant Application form and more information about the Charlton Cultural Council Program are available at https://www.townofcharlton.net/322/ Cultural-Council.

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OBITUARIES

Sarah R. 'Sally' Callahan



Southbridge- Sarah R. 'Sally' (Kuntzman) Callahan, 97, passed away on Thursday, September 4th, in the Blackstone Valley Health and Rehabilitation Center,

Whitinsville, after a long illness.

Her husband, John E. Callahan, passed away in 2000. She leaves many nieces, nephews and friends. She was predeceased by her brother, Thomas Kuntzman and her two sisters, Margaret McCorkel and Mary Johnson. Sally was born in Akron, OH the daughter of Conrad and Sarah (Kalaher) Kuntzman. She was a graduate of St. Vincent High School in Akron, OH.

Sally worked in the dentist office of Dr. Alexander M. Neidhardt in Southbridge for 19 years, retiring many years ago. She previously worked as a secretary in an insurance agency in Akron, OH before moving to Southbridge.

After retirement Sally was a longtime volunteer with Catholic Charities in Southbridge. She also served on the Catholic Charities Advisory Board. She was a longtime devoted parishioner of St. Mary's Parish in Southbridge (now St. John Paul II Parish) and was a member of the parish's St. Rita's Society. One of Sally's great joys was spending time with her nieces, nephews and friends.

A funeral Mass for Sally will be 11:00am in St. Mary's Church of the St. John Paul II Parish, 263 Hamilton There are no calling hours.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to St. John Paul II Parish, 279 Hamilton St., Southbridge, MA 01550.

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

www.morrillfuneralhome.com

Stephen Mark Roscioli, 67



Sturbridge: Stephen ("Stevie") M. Roscioli, 67, of Shepard Rd., passed away on Friday, Sept. 5th, in his home after a brief illness.

He was born in Southbridge, the son of the late Romaldo and Marjorie "Midge" (Mc-Cann) Roscioli.

He leaves his sister, Romona P. held on Tuesday, September 16th, at Kirker-Head and her husband Carl of Sturbridge; his three brothers, Daniel M. Roscioli and his wife Virginia of St., Southbridge. Burial will follow Fiskdale, Richard J. Roscioli and his in St. Mary's Cemetery, Southbridge. wife Linda of Berlin, VT, and David F. Roscioli of Brookfield; his nieces and nephews, Kacey Lorenson, Gina O'Callaghan, Nicole Barron, Daniel Roscioli, Michael Roscioli, Sarah Roscioli, William Roscioli, Annie Roscioli, Mackenzie Kirker-Head and Georgia Kirker-Head; many grandnieces and grandnephews; and many cousins. He also leaves his close friend, Eddie Griggs of Auburn and his beloved cat, Oakley. Stephen was a graduate of Tantasqua Regional High School in Sturbridge.

Stephen worked for many years at his family's restaurant, Rom's in Sturbridge and he lived on the family farm, Ross Haven. At the restaurant, Stephen's specialty was making all of the homemade pasta. Stephen's life was centered around the restaurant and his family. He had a great love for his mother, they were best friends.

Stephen's funeral will be held on Monday, Sept. 15th, from the Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge, with a Mass at 11:00am in St. Anne Church, 16 Church St., Sturbridge. Burial in St. Anne's Cemetery, Sturbridge, will be private. Calling hours in the funeral home will be held on Monday, Sept. 15th, from 9:30 to 10:30am, prior to the Mass.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to Meals on Wheels.

www.morrillfuneralhome.com



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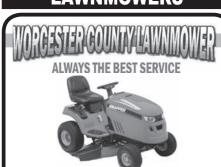
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LEGALS

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Worcester Probate and Family Court 225 Main Street Worcester, MA 01608 Docket No. WO10P3120GD CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR RESINGATION OF A **GUARDIAN OF AN INCAPACITATED PERSON** In the matter of: **Christopher Vetter**

RESPONDĚNÍT Alleged Incapacitated Person To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by

Of: Southbridge, MA

Linda R. LaPlante of Brimfield, MA in the above captioned matter alleging requesting that the court: Accept the Resignation of the Guardian

The petition asks the court to make a determination that the Guardian and/ or Conservator should be allowed to resign; or should be removed for good cause; or that the Guardianship and/or Conservatorship is no longer necessary and therefore should be terminated. The original petition is on file with the court.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of 09/30/2025. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

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

Justice of this Court. Date: September 05, 2025 Stephanie K. Fattman Register of Probate September 11, 2025

In accordance with the Wetlands Protection Act, Chapter 131, Sec 40, a public hearing by the Conservation Commission will be held on Tuesday 09/23/2025 at 6:30 p.m. in the Conservation Commission Room, second floor, in the Holland Town Hall, 27 Sturbridge Rd, Holland, MA. This meeting is to review a Notice of Intent (NOI) filed by Stephen Farrow to demolish existing home and rebuild at 29 Massaconnic Trail, (Map R07-A-3) Holland, MA 01521. To comply with the Open Meeting Law, all public hearings are scheduled for 6:30 PM and, barring unforeseen circumstances, will be taken in the order in which they appear on the agenda. This meeting will be held in person. The application is available for review by at the Conservation Commission Office, Town Office Building on Mondays (1:00 PM – 4:00 PM) and Tuesdays (9:00 AM -4:00 PM).

Conservation Commission Town of Holland September 11, 2025

Public Notice

Notice is hereby given under Chapter 138, Section 12 of Massachusetts General Laws of a public hearing to be held in the George Parent Meeting Room, second floor of the Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, Southbridge, MA, on Thursday, October 16, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. during the regular scheduled Liquor Licensing Board Meeting in regard to an application for a transfer of an All Alcohol Liquor License.

This hearing pertains to Cohasse Golf Club, Inc., d/b/a Cohasse, 393 Eastford Rd., Southbridge, MA, 01550. Anyone wishing to speak will be given the opportunity to be heard.

This notice is also published electronically on www.stonebridgepress.com and on www.masspublicnotice.org Town of Southbridge

Liquor Licensing Board September 11, 2025

In accordance with the Wetlands Protection Act, Chapter 131, Sec 40, a public hearing by the Conservation Commission will be held on Tuesday 09/23/2025 at 6:30 p.m. in the Conservation Commission Room, second floor, in the Holland Town Hall, 27 Sturbridge Rd, Holland, MA. This meeting is to review a Notice of Intent (NOI) filed by Landscape Evolution c/o James Lunig for a Shoreline Retaining Wall Repair at 6 Shore Lane, (Map R01-A9) Holland, MA 01521. To comply with the Open Meeting Law, all public hearings are scheduled for 6:30 PM and, barring unforeseen circumstances, will be taken in the order in which they appear on the agenda. This meeting will be held in person. The application is available for review by at the Conservation Commission Office, Town Office Building on Mondays (1:00 PM - 4:00 PM) and Tuesdays (9:00 AM – 4:00 PM).

Conservation Commission Town of Holland September 11, 2025

CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court

Docket No. WO25P3025EA Worcester Probate and Family Court 225 Main Street

Worcester, MA 01608 (508)831-2200 **Estate of: Michael Roland Robidoux** Date of Death: 07/31/2025

To all interested persons: A Petition for Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Kenneth P. Robidoux of Brookfield, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. Petitioner requests Kenneth P. Robidoux of Brookfield,

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

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before:

10:00 a.m. on the return day of 09/23/2025.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice

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

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A Keamy, First Justice of this Court. Date: August 29, 2025 - Stephanie Fattman, Register of Probate September 11, 2025

TOWN OF CHARLTON **INVITATION FOR BIDS** WINTER WASHED SAND

Bid packages for Winter Washed Sand will be available on Monday, September 8, 2025, and must be obtained from the Office of the Town Administrator prior to the submission of the bid.

Sealed bids appropriately marked "Winter Washed Sand Bid" will be received, publicly opened and read aloud in Meeting Room 1, Charlton Municipal Offices, 37 Main Street, Charlton, MA 01507 on Thursday, September 25, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

The Town Administrator in his capacity as Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to waive any minor informality in the bids and reject any or all bids and to make awards in a manner deemed to be in the best interest of the Town. September 4, 2025

September 11, 2025

In accordance with the Wetlands Protection Act, Chapter 131, Sec 40, a public hearing by the Conservation Commission will be held on Tuesday 09/23/2025 at 6:30 p.m. in the Conservation Commission Room, second floor, in the Holland Town Hall, 27 Sturbridge Rd, Holland, MA. This meeting is to review a Notice of Intent (NOI) filed by Stephen Farrow for demolish existing home and rebuild at 19 Massaconnic Trail, (Map R07-A7) Holland, MA 01521. To comply with the Open Meeting Law, all public hearings are scheduled for 6:30 PM and, barring unforeseen circumstances, will be taken in the order in which they appear on the agenda. This meeting will be held in person. The application is available for review by at the Conservation Commission Office, Town Office Building on Mondays (1:00 PM - 4:00 PM) and Tuesdays (9:00 AM -4:00 PM).

Conservation Commission Town of Holland September 11, 2025

Town of Brimfield Conservation Commission Public Hearing Notice

In accordance with the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act. Chapter 131. Section 40, the Brimfield Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, September 24, 2025, at 6:00 PM to review a Notice of Intent (NOI) submitted by Green Hill Engineering c/o Peter Manzi. The NOI requests Construction of Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), Septic System, and Driveway.

Project Location: 11 Shaw Road (Assessor's Map (5A-B-15)

Meeting Location: Public Participation will be In-Person at Hitchcock Academy at 2 Brookfield Road, Brimfield, MA 01010 on September 24, 2025, at 6:00

Any person(s) interested or wishing to be heard on this request should appear at the time and place designated. A copy of the permit application and plan may be inspected at the Brimfield Town Annex in the Conservation Commission Office, Salisbury Annex Building, 2nd Floor, 23 Main Street, Brimfield, MA 01010 or contact the office at 413-245-4100 ext. 1101.

Roger deBruyn & Joseph Venezia Co-

September 09/03/2025 September 11, 2025

In accordance with the Wetlands Protection Act, Chapter 131, Sec 40, a public hearing by the Conservation Commission will be held on Tuesday 09/23/2025 at 6:30 p.m. Conservation Commission Room, second floor, in the Holland Town Hall, 27 Sturbridge Rd, Holland, MA. This meeting is to review a Notice of Intent (NOI) filed by Corey Brodeur c/o Janice Kocher for a replacement of a septic system and associated work at 6 Marcy Road, Holland, MA 01521. To comply with the Open Meeting Law, all public hearings are scheduled for 6:30 PM and, barring unforeseen circumstances, will be taken in the order in which they appear on the agenda. This meeting will be held in person. The application is available for review by at the Conservation Commission Office, Town Office Building on Mondays (1:00 PM - 4:00 PM) and Tuesdays (9:00 AM

Conservation Commission Town of Holland September 11, 2025

(SEAL)

COMMONWEALTH **OF MASSACHUSETTS** LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL **COURT**

> 25 SM 002570 **ORDER OF NOTICE**

TO:

Stephany Diaz-Rentas; James Konie and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act: 50 U.S.C. c. 50 § 3901 (et seq): Guild Mortgage Company LLC

claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Southbridge, numbered 27 Douty Street, given by Stephany Diaz-Rentas and James Konie to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Mortgagee, as nominee for Guild Mortgage Company LLC, dated November 30, 2021, and recorded at Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 66644,

Page 1, and now held by the plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the abovementioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108 on or before October 13, 2025 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the grounds of noncompliance with the Act.

Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of said Court on August 26, <u>2025</u>. Attest:

Deborah J. Patterson Recorder September 11, 2025

TOWN OF CHARLTON Request for Qualifications for

Architectural Services and Interior Design **House Doctor Services**

The Town of Charlton, acting through its Town Administrator, is seeking qualified architectural firms to provide on-call "House Doctor" design services for the Town of Charlton. The Town of Charlton will award contracts for various projects over a three year period.

The scope of work will generally involve but not limited to improvements to Senior Center Facilities, Public Safety Facilities, Recreational Properties, and Administrative Facilities, on Town property or property being considered by acquisition by the Town on an as needed basis accessibility and minor interior renovation to offices.

Applicants must have experience in, and be fully licensed or registered for, all these types of work by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and must list the names of the licensed consultants that will be used.

Construction costs for applicable projects are estimated to be in the range of \$35,000 - \$1,000,000.

Designer fees will be negotiated for each separate project.

Copies of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Instructions will be available in the Town Administrator's Office at 37 Main Street, Charlton Ma. 01507 on and after September 10, 2025, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Monday through Thursday. The Request for Qualifications may be requested electronically by emailing Assistant Town Administrator Mary

Proposals Sealed Qualification submitted in accordance with the RFQ Instructions will be received in the Office of the Town Administrator, 37 Main Street, Charlton MA, 01507 until 2:00 PM on Wednesday, October 1, 2025.

Devlin at Mary. Devlin @ townofcharlton.

Qualification Proposals must be sealed and marked "Request for Qualifications for Architectural and Interior Design House Doctor Services" with the Applicant's name and address clearly

TOWN OF CHARLTON Andrew M. Golas Town Administrator September 11, 2025

In accordance with the Wetlands Protection Act, Chapter 131, Sec 40, a public hearing by the Conservation Commission will be held on Tuesday 09/23/2025 at 6:30 p.m. in the Conservation Commission Room, second floor, in the Holland Town Hall, 27 Sturbridge Rd, Holland, MA. This meeting is to review a Notice of Intent (NOI) filed by Corey Brodeur c/o Jennifer Willard for a replacement of a septic system and associated work at 4 Heritage Drive, Holland, MA 01521. To comply with the Open Meeting Law, all public hearings are scheduled for 6:30 PM and, barring unforeseen circumstances, will be taken in the order in which they appear on the agenda. This meeting will be held in person. The application is available for review by at the Conservation Commission Office, Town Office Building on Mondays (1:00 PM – 4:00 PM) and Tuesdays (9:00 AM -4:00 PM).

Conservation Commission Town of Holland September 11, 2025

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2 -FAMILY offers 2,354 SF of living area! 2 Large Apartments, 5 Spacious Rms, 2 BRs, 1 Bath each. Beautiful grand front entry foyer with the charm of yesteryear! double French doors & other unique features. Plenty of Natural light that flows into these apartments! 2nd flr apt has a private enclosed rear entry with it's own outside covered porch. Updates were done to electric & roof to accommodate Solar Panels. Property was family occupied \$415,000.

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

AUBURN -**634 OXFORD ST S** OPEN HOUSE! SAT. 11-1 / SUN.

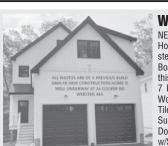


CHARMING 1930s Era Farm House w/Farmer's Porch, Offering all the Upgrades & Amenities of a Newer Home! Features: 1573 SF+-, 8 Rooms, 3 BRs, 2-1/2 Baths, a Main BR Suite w/Private Bath & walk-in closet, Updated Harvey Replacement Windows, Roof, Vinyl Siding, Plumbing, Electric, FHA Furnace by Propane Heating, Central AC, Well & More! 11'x12' Rear Deck & 12'x50' Paver Block Patio. 1 car garage under. All on an Acre of Land with 158' Frontage \$499,000

Snug Harbor Villa! **WEBSTER LAKE WATERFRONT SUNDAY OPEN HOUSE 11-2**



WEBSTER LAKE WATERFRONT LIVING AT IT'S FINEST! ** THE VILLA'S AT SNUG HARBOR! ** END UNIT** IS TRULY A RARE FIND! ONE of ONLY 6 UNITS > Custom Built THIS 4000+/- SF w/Special Features & Upgrades. Offers 4 BRs - 3 are Primary BR Suites w/private baths, 4-1/2 Baths Total!! The Outstanding direct lakefront location provides exceptional Southern panoramic views across Middle Pond, a boat dock, & full recreation activities like swimming, fishing, kayaking, paddle boarding - - whatever Floats Your Boat ;-)! Perfect setup for entertaining family, friends & guests! Enjoy All 4 Spectacular Seasons! It's more than a home - it's a Life Style!



WEBSTER - 24 COOPER RD

NEW CONSTRUCTION Craftsman Style Home! Tucked away on Cooper Rd, Webster Lake w/Access at Lakeside Beach/ Boat Ramp. 3rd of 4 Homes being built at this Site. Offers 2,155 SF+/- of Living Area, 7 Rms, 4 BRs, 2-1/2 Baths, 9' Ceilings. Wood Flooring Throughout w/Ceramic Tile Floors in the Baths. Spacious Main BR Suite w/Walk-in Closet & Private Full Bathr, Double-Sink Vanity! Lower level walkout w/Slider. Basement-rough plumbed Cen-\$649,900. tral AC! Garage.

WEBSTER- 4 PERRYVILLE RD



On the shores of Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg

RE/MAX



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

Webster Lake - 53 Colonial Rd



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Webster Lake Waterfront 8 Long Island



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32 Scenic Dr \$455,000

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Friendship and lifesaving
The Smiths' journey from Bay Path to nursing excellence



CHARLTON When Bobbiejo and Katelyn enrolled at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, both were seeking a new path. What they found, in addition to rigorous training and a shared passion for healing, was a deeper connection to each other and a profound understanding of what it truly means to care. Although both share the last name Smith, they are not related by blood. Today, both are proudly Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), having passed their NCLEX-PN on the very first attempt – a testament to their dedication and Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy's comprehensive pro-

Their story is a powerful reminder that while the science and skill of nursing are vital, it's the human element, the quiet strength of kindness, that leaves the most indelible

'What makes nursing so powerful isn't always the science or the skill," stated Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, Academy Director. "It's the way kindness leaves a mark long after the moment has passed. The patients may not always remember every word you said, but they'll remember how you made them most vulnerable. That quiet comfort, that steady calmness. Kindness doesn't fade; it settles quietly in the lives touched, in the moments you've shown up when no one else did.'

Indeed, "showing up when no one else could" seems to be a motto for the Smiths. Katelyn, an alumna of Path Regional Vocational Technical High School's Class of 2018 Cosmetology shop, brings a remarkable background of compassion and community involvement to her nursing studies. She holds certifications in Dementia Care, Mental Health First Aid, and Stop The Bleed, and has received training in Domestic Violence awareness. Her dedication to service is demonstrated through her volunteer work at the Charlton Senior Center Blood Pressure Clinic and her receipt of a Random Act of Kindness Award (RAK Foundation). She is an active member of the UNICEF Club and participated in the JAK-L Foundation's Strides for Mental Health event. Katelyn has also been honored with prestigious scholarships, including the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc., and the Greater Worcester Community Foundation's

Scholarship.

Bobbiejo has pursued a similarly broad range of certifications and volunteer experiences, embodying the same spirit of compassionate care. She is certified in Dementia Care, Mental Health First Aid, and Stop The Bleed, and has completed training in Domestic Violence awareness and Narcan administration. Bobbieio's academic excellence is highlighted by her induction into the National Technical Honor Society and her perfect score of 100% on the Medication Calculation Test. She actively participated in numerous Bay Path workshops and events, including Summer Workshops I & II and Accepted Students Night Art Therapy.

Additionally, Bobbiejo advanced her career through the DSW to LPN Certificate Program. Her commitment to community service is reflected in her volunteer work at the Charlton Senior Center Blood Pressure Screenings. Like Katelyn, she was honored with a Random Act of Kindness Award.

The Smiths' shared journey through Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy not only

> equipped them with the clinical expertise to save lives but also reinforced their belief in the transformative power of human connection. As they embark on their careers as LPNs, they carry with them not just their certifications, but the profound truly the most powerful medicine. Their success illustrating that dedication, kindness, and a commitment to showing up can lead to extraordinary achievements.

Agawam South Rehab promotes Bay Path alum to Assistant Director of Nursing



CHARLTON — Agawam South Rehabilitation is proud to announce the promotion of Isabella Boateng, RN, to the position of Assistant Director of Nursing & Infection Control Nurse. In her new role, Boateng will help lead the facility's nursing department, ensuring the continued delivery of high-quality, patient-centered care.

Boateng will be responsible for overseeing daily nursing operations, supervising and mentoring nursing staff, and leading the facility's vital infection prevention and

control initiatives. She will collaborate with interdisciplinary teams to develop and implement comprehensive care plans, serving as a key liaison between administration, healthcare providers, residents, and their

'Isabella is a natural leader whose dedication to patient-centered care is evident in everything she does," said Dr. Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, Academy Director at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, where Boateng graduated from with a Certificate in Practical Nursing in 2021. "Her clinical expertise, calm demeanor under pressure, and com-

passionate approach have made her an invaluable asset. I am thrilled to see her step into this leadership role and confident she will excel in advancing the mission of care at Agawam South Rehab.'

Boateng's journey to this leadership position is marked by continuous professional growth. She Science in Nursing from Capital Community College and became a Registered Nurse in June 2025. Her career includes valuable experience as a Clinical Nurse Liaison with Stern Consultants, where she honed her skills in care coordination and patient advocacy, and as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) with Genie Healthcare.

Boateng shared her excitement and feelings of being honored for the opportunity with Dr. Bolandrina, who recognized Boateng's focus on

providing compassionate, high-quality care and advocating for patients even as a PN student. Boateng looks forward to supporting understanding that in Agawam South Rehab's exceptional nursing nursing, compassion is team and contributing to their continued success in serving the community.

With a strong foundation in geriatric treatis a shining example to ment, dementia care, and regulatory complithe Bay Path community, ance, Boateng brings a wealth of knowledge and a resourceful, energetic approach to her new role. Her promotion reflects Agawam South Rehab's commitment to recognizing and fostering talent from within its commu-

BBQ chicken supper at

CHARLTON — Saturday, Sept. 20, Charlton City United Methodist Church will be recently earned her Associate of preparing their delicious chicken barbecue supper. Come and enjoy delicious food and fellowship with friends and neighbors

> Supper is served from 5-6:30 p.m., and as always, there will be continuous serving and take-out available. Adults \$15, children six to 12 \$7, children five and under free. Family maximum: \$50. Tickets may be purchased at the door although reservations are appreciated. Call the church office at (508) 248-7379 for information and reservations. The building is handicap accessible with plenty of parking. Invite the whole family and friends for a nice Saturday out in a in a family friendly place.

Tantasqua golf team notches three wins

FISKDALE — The Tantasqua varsity golf team travelled to Heritage C.C. on Tuesday afternoon, Sept. 2 to play the Oxford Pirates. The final score was 146 to 217 in favor of the visiting Warriors. Medalist honors went to junior Andrew Weeden who shot a 1 under par 34, followed by junior Andrew Radebaugh with a 36, senior Sam Pieczynski with a 37, and Tyler Phillips with a 39. With this win, Tantasqua improved to 3-0.

The team hosted Bartlett on Thursday afternoon, Sept. 4 at Hemlock Ridge. The final score was 159 to 234 in favor of the host Warriors. Medalist honors went to senior Keegan Blood and junior Andrew Weeden, who both carded 3-over par 39s. Tantasqua improved to 4-0 with this win.

The Warriors closed out the week by pulling off a big win against Wachusett at Bedrock Golf Club on Friday afternoon, Sept. 5. The final score was 195-199 in favor of the visiting Warriors. Medalist honors went to senior Sam Pieczynski, who shot an even par 36. Other Tantasqua players counting included Tyler Phillips with a 38, Wyatt Fay with a 39, and Keegan Blood and Andrew Radebaugh contributing with 41s. Tantasqua now improves to 5-0.



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