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Friday, March 6, 2026

Whitin Community Center breaks ground at historic Aldrich School Building



WHITINSVILLE — February 19th, 2026, The Whitin Community Center (WCC) is proud to announce the official groundbreaking of the historic Aldrich School Building at 14 Hill St. in Whitinsville.

Joined by Congressman James McGovern on

Executive Director Heather Elster led an official groundbreaking ceremony in front of the school. Key speakers included Northbridge Town Manager Adam Gaudette, Jonathan Austin of Austin

Architects, and James DiGiorno of Rubicon Builders.

The audience was comprised of over 60 people including community partners, supporters, members, and elected officials. The highlight of the event was the

BVCP children having the honor of a first dig in the dirt.

A cornerstone of the community for 103 years, WCC has served generations of families through its robust programming, including the Blackstone Valley Children's Place

(BVCP), which has provided high-quality early education and care for 50 years. With current operations at capacity—serving 237 children across four locations and maintaining a growing waitlist—the expansion

Turn To WHITIN page A11

Northbridge Public Schools celebrates success of Adult ESL Program, announces Spring Session

NORTHBRIDGE — Northbridge Public Schools is proud to celebrate the successful completion of its volunteer Adult English as a Second Language (ESL) program for beginner-level learners. Designed for adult family members of students in the district, the program brought families together for ten Wednesday evening sessions at Northbridge Elementary School, running from November through last week.

Over the course of the program, participants built foundational English skills to support everyday conversations, school communication, and workplace interactions. From learning practical vocabulary to practicing real-life dialogue and strengthening basic literacy skills, learners made meaningful progress in a supportive and encouraging environment. An initial placement assessment allowed instruction to be tailored to individual language

Turn To ESL page A10

Pandemonium in the Pines

WINTERRÄDEN 2026 REDEFINES WINTER RACING
AT ZIG ZAG TRAILS



U X B R I D G E — Traditional cross-country loops were nowhere to be found this past Sunday, Feb. 22 as participants descended upon the private Zig Zag Trails for Winterräden 2026. Hosted by trail visionary Chris Nichols, the event

successfully ditched the “status quo” of winter cycling for a high-intensity, feature-rich format that participants described as “total mayhem on wheels.”

Chaos by design The morning kicked off at a crisp 27 degrees Fahrenheit, eventually

warming to 36 degrees—conditions far kinder than local racers had feared. However, the atmosphere was anything but calm. The timed race began with riders pedaling off into the snow-covered woods.

The field was a diverse medley of cycling subcultures. From high-powered e-Fat Bikes to “analog” Fat Bikes, and from professional racers to those Joseph Bolandrina of Athol, described as “medicinal participants,” the event welcomed all dojos and denominations.

The Truck Jump and the dreaded Heckle Pit

According to Bolandrina, the course, crafted by Nichols and

Turn To WINTERRADEN page A10

BVT biotech students benefit from grant-funded tools

UPTON — Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) has been awarded a grant from the National Anti-Vivisection Society (NAVS) through its BioLEAP Classroom Grant program. The competitive grant allowed the school to purchase 10 life-size rat models for its Biotechnology program, eliminating the need for traditional animal dissection and equipping students with modern educational tools.

The male and female rat models are detailed anatomical replicas designed specifically for educational dissection. Each model features interchangeable reproductive systems, detachable organs—



Courtesy

Biotechnology students (left to right) Ella Drumheller, MacKenzie Moran, and Fiona Comeau.

including the heart, lungs, liver, and intestines—and a numbered key to support student learning. These tools allow students to explore anatomy thoroughly without the use of real animals.

“The reusable models are cost-effective, humane,

and easy to manage,” said BVT’s Biotechnology Instructor Zoë Army, M.S. “Introducing our students to the accessible rat models allows them to gain early exposure to animal anatomy without the pressure

Turn To BIOTECH page A10

\$15*
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per show

The WCC's Winter Youth Theatre Presents

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www.WhitinCommunityCenter.com

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Small Stones Festival, Grafton Public Library and Grafton High School present art exhibit

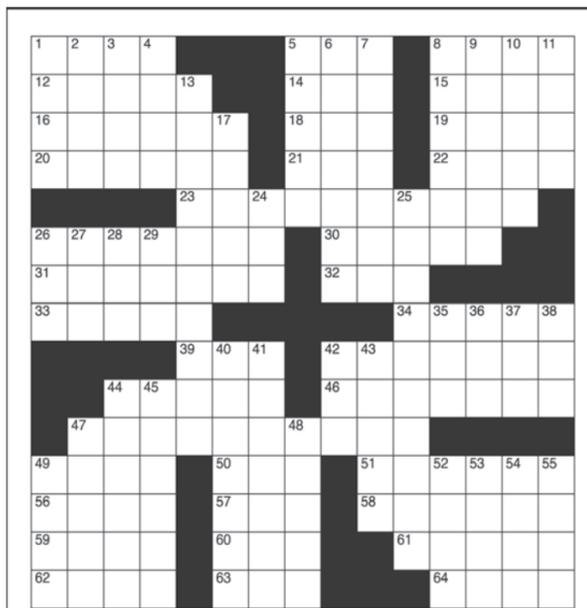


GRAFTON — Join the celebration of National Youth Art Month at a juried fine art exhibit, a collaboration of the Small Stones Festival of the Arts, Grafton High School (GHS) and the Grafton Public Library, held March 9 – April 3 at the Grafton Public Library, 35 Grafton Common, Grafton. The public is invited to the

opening reception March 9, 6 – 8 p.m. The art exhibit is open during library hours. Carolyn Kinloch-Winkler, co-chair of the Festival and committee members worked with GHS art teacher Nathan DiPerri to organize the event with the assistance of Katrina Ireland-Bilodeau, library director of the Grafton Public

Library. The artwork of GHS students will be displayed in a gallery setting in the beautiful historic reading room. Ribbons and cash prizes for first, second and third place will be awarded. This year a People's Choice award will be voted on by the public and announced at the end of March. The mission of the

Small Stones Festival of the Arts is to elevate the practice and appreciation of fine art and photography in the region and beyond. The Festival is under the aegis of fiscal sponsor Grafton Arts, Inc., a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. For more information, visit <https://smallstones-festival.org>.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Unit of dry measure
- 5. One who defies authority
- 8. Social media giant
- 12. Render holy
- 14. "Much __ about nothing"
- 15. Computer manufacturer
- 16. Creed
- 18. Immoral act
- 19. Mountain pass
- 20. Winged nut
- 21. Don't know when yet
- 22. Elected officials
- 23. Corrupt tendencies
- 26. Popular adult beverage
- 30. Made a mistake
- 31. Morally correct
- 32. Type of whale
- 33. Portable conical tent
- 34. Native people of the Congo
- 39. More (Spanish)
- 42. Classroom implements
- 44. Cognizant of
- 46. One who tells
- 47. Free from bondage
- 49. Thick piece of something
- 50. Containing two adjacent nitrogen atoms
- 51. Removed from the record
- 56. Legendary singer Turner
- 57. Broke up the earth
- 58. Hunting expedition
- 59. Contributes
- 60. Unit of work or energy
- 61. Wreckage on the sea bed
- 62. Affirmative! (slang)
- 63. Witness
- 64. Scrape (Archaic)

CLUES DOWN

- 1. " __ and flows"
- 2. Humble request for help
- 3. A position of leadership
- 4. Continent
- 5. Adherent of a particular religion
- 6. Things that can be eaten
- 7. Self-governing Netherlands territory
- 8. Long-tailed crow
- 9. Repeated
- 10. Bluish greens
- 11. Humanities
- 13. Someone who serves in the armed forces
- 17. Labor (Spanish)
- 24. Zero
- 25. Shared by involving three parties
- 26. Queens ballplayer
- 27. Consumed
- 28. Rest here please
- 29. Men's fashion accessory
- 35. American time
- 36. Sound unit
- 37. They __
- 38. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 40. Places to play video games
- 41. A sudden attack of illness
- 42. When you hope to arrive
- 43. Charges
- 44. Actress Seyfried
- 45. A tributary of the Ohio River
- 47. Omit when speaking
- 48. Armored fish
- 49. Remain
- 52. From a distance
- 53. Adventure story
- 54. Geological times
- 55. Eat dinner

Asa Waters Mansion presents Clover Meets Contraband: A Speakeasy at the Mansion

MILLBURY — The historic Asa Waters Mansion exclusively invites you to an unforgettable evening of hushed passwords, Irish flavors, with a Prohibition-era feel. Clover Meets Contraband: A Speakeasy Supper at the Mansion, will take place on Saturday, March 14; doors will open with secret password only at 5 p.m. at Asa Waters Mansion, located at 123 Elm St., Millbury. Guests are invited to step beyond the gates, past the velvet rope, and into the shadows of the Mansion for a unique dining experience inspired by the intrigue of the Roaring Twenties, with the warmth

of Irish hospitality. This unique evening will feature an Irish-inspired buffet supper, coffee and sweet indulgences, live entertainment throughout the evening, a speakeasy-style cash bar and more! Guests are encouraged to embrace the spirit of the evening by dressing in vintage attire; tweed, flat caps, lace, and timeless glamour are all welcome! "This exclusive event is designed to transport our guests," said Traci Parath, Executive Director, Asa Waters Mansion. "Clover Meets Contraband blends history, mystery, and hospitality in a way that only Asa Waters

Mansion can. It's more than a supper, it's an experience you won't want to miss!" Register online at <https://unipay-gold.unibank.com/transactioninfo.aspx?TID=37072> or scan the QR code on our flyer. The cost to attend is \$65 per person, with limited seating available, and advanced ticket purchase is required. Receive your secret password for entry upon booking! For more information, please contact Traci Parath at 508.865.0855 or email Traci at tparath@millburyma.gov.

WCMS Drama Club presents "The Snow White Variety Show"

WHITINSVILLE — The Middle School Drama Club at Whitinsville Christian School is looking forward to two upcoming performances of their spring show. "The Snow White Variety Show" combines the fun of just about every TV-show genre into this wild and fast-paced comedy! You won't want to miss being a part of the live studio audience as the story of Snow White is brought to life. Performances are March 6, at 7 p.m. and March 7, at 2 p.m. Tickets are available at whitinsvillechristian.org.

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BLACKSTONE VALLEY TRIBUNE PUBLISHED BY STONEBRIDGE PRESS

PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER
FRANK C. CHILINSKI
FRANK@SALMONPRESS.NEWS

BUSINESS MANAGER
RYAN CORNEAU
860-928-1818 EXT. 102
ryan@salmonpress.news

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR
JIM DiNICOLA
508-764-6102
jim@stonebridgepress.news

EDITOR
BRENDAN BERUBE
508-909-4101
news@stonebridgepress.news

PRODUCTION MANAGER
JULIE CLARKE
508-909-4105
julie@villagernewspapers.com

The Blackstone Valley Tribune (USPS 024-873) (ISSN 0745-8673) is published weekly by Stonebridge Press, 25 Elm St., Southbridge, MA 01550. Periodical postage paid at Southbridge, MA and additional mailing office(s). POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Blackstone Valley Tribune, P. O. Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550.



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BVCC invites community to 26th Annual Home & Community Expo!

WHITINSVILLE — The Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce (BVCC) is thrilled to announce the return of its highly anticipated 26th Annual Home & Community Expo, to be held on March 14 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Northbridge High School Fieldhouse, 427 Linwood Ave, Whitinsville.

Presented by UniBank, this signature community event welcomes more than 1,200 guests each year and features more than 75 local and regional exhibitor booths, making it one of the largest and most anticipated gatherings in the Blackstone Valley.

Admission is free with a physical ticket, digital ticket (available online and via the event flyer QR code or shown on your phone), or with a donation of a non-perishable food item to benefit Peace of Bread. Guest without a ticket may attend for a \$3 admission fee.

The BVCC Home & community Expo offers something for everyone, including:

The “Best of the Valley” Chowderfest Competition – Sponsored by ALLCare, Sample and vote for your favorite!

The crowd favorite Mascot Dance-Off

The expanded Pot of Gold Scavenger Hunt, with a chance to win incredible prizes!

Live Entertainment and interactive demonstrations throughout the day

Performances by Murphy’s Irish Step Dancers

A showcase by H&H Dance

A K9 demonstration by the Massachusetts State Police K9 Unit, courtesy of Massachusetts Vest-A-Dog

A performance by Family Karate Center

An Animal CPR demonstrations presented by What’s Up With Your Pup

Giveaways, prizes, and exclusive exhibitor specials

New! This year, in partnership with the Autism Alliance Program of Advocates, Inc.,

the Expo will debut a dedicated Autism Welcoming Room, providing a supportive, inclusive environment to ensure all families can comfortably enjoy the event.

“The Expo is a true celebration of the Blackstone Valley,” said BVCC Executive Director, Liz O’Neil. “It brings together businesses, families, non-profits, and community partners for a day filled with connection, fun, and local flavor.”

Free digital tickets are available at: www.blackstonevalley.org/events.

For more information about this event, please visit our website, www.blackstonevalley.org/events or contact BVCC Executive Director, Liz O’Neil at 508-234-9090 or email Liz at lonel@blackstonevalley.org for more information.

The Mission of the Blackstone

Valley Chamber of Commerce is to preserve and enhance the economic vitality of the Blackstone Valley by addressing the needs and concerns of businesses and

providing leadership, support and resources in connection with issues which impact commerce and the quality of life in the Valley.



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Don't miss a two for one experience on March 14

UXBRIDGE — Snow is piled high, but customers still travel from far and wide to browse the Plant Land wonders displayed at 125 North Main St. in Uxbridge. An endless variety of plants for indoors and out occupy racks, tables, even the ceiling. Tropical fish swim in tanks, large and small; Koi and crayfish (five dif-

ferent colors!) in ponds. Also, at Plant Land, you will find a unique selection of gifts, of non-plant and aquatic variety, perfect for soon-to-arrive holidays- St. Patrick’s Day, Easter, and Mother’s Day.

Add to your shopping pleasure on Saturday, March 14 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Aldrich Bakehouse, located in South Uxbridge, will

visit Plant Land. A wide selection of its most popular baked goods will be offered for sale. Come in out of the cold to enjoy a two for one experience; bask in springtime greenery and munch on something yummy, too. See you at Plant Land soon, because what’s not to like?

Regis Men’s Basketball concludes 2025-26 season in GNAC quarterfinals

WESTON — The Regis Men’s Basketball team completed its 2025-26 season.

The Pride’s season came to an end in the Great Northeast Athletic Conference (GNAC)

quarterfinals, with an overall record of 14-12 and 5-7.

“As our winter seasons come to a close, I want to congratulate our student-athletes on their hard work and determination,” said Dean of Athletics Pam Roecker. “The growth they’ve achieved through competition, discipline, and

teamwork will stay with them well beyond the season.”

Student-athletes on the team included:

Raymond Johnson, of Douglas, who is studying Exercise Science
Nikolas Hayes, of Whitinsville, who is studying Business Management

Local students named to Holy Cross’ Fall Dean’s List

WORCESTER — College of the Holy Cross congratulates the students named to the Fall 2025 Dean’s List for outstanding academic achievement during the spring semester of the 2025-26 academic year. The following local students made the list:

Christian Brown of Uxbridge
Madeline Kay of Uxbridge
Hannah Ostroff of Northbridge

To qualify for the Dean’s List, students must pass four or more letter-graded courses with no failing grades during the semester and earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

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Time to Make Easter Reservations



Friday’s Child



Jeycen
Age 9
Registration #8755

Jeycen is a happy and friendly child who brings joy wherever he goes. He enjoys getting out into the community — even everyday outings like going to the grocery store are exciting adventures for him. Jeycen thrives when he has opportunities to explore his surroundings and engage with the world around him. He loves hands-on activities and learning through play. Swimming is one of his favorite activities, and he also enjoys counting cubes and stacking blocks, showing his growing curiosity and problem-solving skills. Jeycen likes to play a variety of games, including peek-a-boo, Marble Run, and building with LEGO, where he can create and experiment in fun, creative ways. Jeycen has a special interest in drawing and especially loves building roadmaps and highways. He is fascinated by how roads connect and enjoys designing his own imaginative routes and pathways. With his bright smile, playful spirit, and creative mind, Jeycen continues to discover and explore the world in his own unique way.

<https://www.mareinc.org/child/21181580424>

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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EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Transparency builds trust at the local level

In small communities like ours, trust is everything.

Residents trust that tax dollars are spent wisely. They trust that decisions about zoning, schools, and public safety are made thoughtfully. They trust that when concerns are raised, they will be heard.

That trust is built — or weakened — through transparency.

Across the Blackstone Valley, boards and committees meet weekly to make decisions that affect daily life. Planning boards review development proposals. Finance committees examine budgets. School committees weigh staffing and curriculum matters. Select boards debate contracts and policies.

These meetings are public for a reason. Massachusetts' Open Meeting Law is not merely a formality. It exists to ensure that residents can observe how decisions are made and understand the reasoning behind them. Transparency is not about spectacle. It is about clarity.

When agendas are posted clearly and on time, residents can prepare. When meeting materials are accessible, citizens can follow along without confusion. When discussions happen in open session rather than drifting into executive session unnecessarily, confidence grows.

None of this implies wrongdoing. In most cases, local officials are volunteers giving their time to serve their neighbors. But even well-intentioned boards can unintentionally erode trust if communication falters.

In recent years, the demand for clearer communication has grown. Residents expect meeting recordings to be available online. They expect timely updates about major projects. They expect explanations when tax bills rise or when a bylaw change is proposed.

These expectations are reasonable. Transparency does more than prevent suspicion. It encourages participation. When people understand what is happening, they are more likely to attend meetings, offer constructive input, and contribute ideas.

In turn, stronger participation leads to better decisions.

The Blackstone Valley benefits from engaged citizens. We have seen thoughtful debate over development, school spending, and environmental protections. That debate is healthy when it is rooted in shared facts and accessible information.

Local government will never satisfy every viewpoint. Nor should it try to. But it can ensure that the process is open, understandable, and respectful.

Trust is not built in a single meeting. It is built over time, through consistent transparency and clear communication.

In communities where neighbors still greet one another by name, that trust is worth protecting.

Letter submission policy

Letters to the Editor must include the author's name, address, and a daytime phone number for purposes of verification in order to be considered for publication. Only the author's name and the town in which they reside will be published. Letters submitted without all of the required information will not be accepted. It is the sole prerogative of the Editor to determine whether a submission satisfies our requirements and decency standards, and any submission may be rejected at any time for any reason he or she might deem appropriate.

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Blackstone Valley and beyond

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Upon further examination...

To the Editor:

Thanks to Walter McQuiston of Douglas for providing alternate statistics regarding the cost to American taxpayers of undocumented immigrants. While I try to be diligent and accurate in all my writing, the amount of information, and misinformation, on the Internet makes it a daunting task. My quest is always to learn as much as possible, and relay what I have learned to people who would benefit from this information, but not have the time or inclination to pursue it. Along the way, I have learned that it is possible to find a supporting reference to any bias you start with. Here is a perfect example, utilizing Mr. McQuiston's information:

- his data was provided by the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), a group whose one stated mission is to severely limit immigration into the United States.

- according to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), FAIR is an anti-immigration group that has been branded a hate group.

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I suggest we start a gofundme to help Bev pay for her U-Haul and enough gas to get to Arkansas or Alabama, where she will be much happier away from Massachusetts Communists. Before she departs this fair land, I would like her to explain how Massachusetts taxation policy fits within the generally accepted definition of 'communism' as an economic ideology aiming to establish a classless, stateless society based on common ownership of the means of production, and seeking to eliminate private property and profit-driven markets to achieve social equality and shared prosperity? 'Splain it to me, Bev!

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RIK BEVILACQUA
WHITINSVILLE

Harkening back to "Star Trek" and Y2K

To the Editor:

First up, a confirmation of the obvious for trivia fans. Yes, it is true.

The words that were first beamed to us all from deep within the liberal heartland of Whitinsville in regards to undocumented workers and their financial contributions to the US are indeed a verbatim "Star Trek" quote.

Is that a totally cool, futuristic financing model for illegal aliens or what? Oops... I mean "undocumented" workers.

Thus, all remaining die-hard supporters of the Obama administration should immediately reset their interstellar decoder caps to Romulan to better get the gist of it. Meanwhile, for the rank and file science fiction fans, you might want to ignore any of that AI generated "Deep Space 9" balderdash for the obvious reasons.

All of which, and more, traces back to the mid-to-late 1990's Y2K problem. As well as the absolutely infamous Prudential Whole Life Insurance fiasco of that very same time period.

The scuttlebutt of the time, and a decade or so thereafter, was that the Prudential had hired themselves three of four "Star Trek" fanatics to insert into their Y2K programming fix a rather pernicious set of "Genesis

Code" subroutines. Something that none of the rest of us could spot on our best day, even when staring straight at them. Where, even if detected and absolutely obliterated bit-by-bit, those codes would somehow magically resurrect themselves over time. Very much like the "Genesis Planet" behaved in the first installment of the "Wrath of Kahn" movie trilogy.

Which means a far larger crew was likely involved in that bit of artful programming. The sort of thing that insurance underwriters and the like might still be able to confirm by some means or other.

Meanwhile, that ridiculous bit of modern-day financing that was touted as great works out like this. Undocumented workers paid in less than 100 billion dollars in taxes. Which then works out, according to the applicable federal tax tables and popular accounting methods, to be a combined net income of \$1.2 trillion. That then works out via simple arithmetic to be a "deportation" of US cash that well exceeds a trillion bucks.

Of course, the real kicker is that the bulk of that allegedly earned income came from US government backed loans that were taken out at a ridiculously high interest rate.

STEPHEN GAMBONE
NORTHBRIDGE

Financial considerations when changing jobs



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Are you changing jobs soon? If so, you'll obviously be interested in your new salary — but you'll also want to look at other financial considerations.

Here are some of the most important ones:

401(k) — If you had a 401(k) plan through your previous employer, you'll need to decide what to do with it once you've joined a new employer. You could just cash it out, but you'd pay taxes and possible penalties. You could leave your 401(k) with your previous employer, if allowed, and if you have been happy with your plan's performance. Or you could move your 401(k) into your new employer's plan, which might be a good choice if the new plan has lower fees and attractive investment options. You'd also want to ask whether the new employer offers matching contributions. Finally, you could roll over your old 401(k) into a traditional IRA, which would give you more investment choices.

HSA/FSA — If your new employer offers a health savings account (HSA) as part of a high-deductible health plan, you may want to take advantage of it. Your contributions are made with pre-tax dollars, your earnings generally grow tax deferred and your withdrawals are tax free, as long as they're used for qualified medical expenses. Plus, you can carry unused funds through retirement, when you can still use them for qualified medical expenses. Your employer might also offer a flexible spending account (FSA), which can pay for a variety of health care costs, such as deductibles, co-payments and co-insurance. Generally, if you're contributing to an HSA, you can't fund an FSA in the same year, except for a limited purpose FSA.

Waiting period for health benefits — You'll want to ask your new employer if there's a waiting eligibility period to enroll in its benefits plan — health insurance, dental, vision, and so on. If so, you may need to get COBRA coverage for a few months to stay in your old plan, unless you can be added to a spouse's plan. When you go on your new employer's health care plan, make sure you know what it covers. Depending on your situation, you might want to add supplemental health insurance.

Life insurance — When you leave a job, your employer-sponsored life insurance will end, unless you have the option to convert your group term life policy into an individual permanent cash value policy. So, you'll want to be sure your new employer offers at least the same insurance coverage as your old one. But you should also determine whether the group policy offered by your employer is sufficient for your needs. Depending on several factors, such as your income, spouse's income and family size, you may need to supplement your employer's policy with an individual term life insurance policy.

Other benefits — Review your new employer's benefits package carefully to see what's available. Many employers offer tuition reimbursement for their employees, and some even provide college planning assistance for employees' children. For example, your employer might offer matching contributions to a tax-advantaged 529 education saving plan, which can be used for college, some K-12 expenses and some trade/vocational school programs.

Changing jobs can provide you with an opportunity to expand your career, learn new skills and broaden your social network. And it can certainly be financially rewarding, too — so make sure you know all the benefits involved.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Dennis Antonopoulos, your local Edward Jones Advisor at 5 Albert St., Auburn, MA 01501 Tel: 508-832-5385 or dennis.antonopoulos@edward-jones.com. Edward Jones, Member SIPC

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Upon further examination...

To the Editor:
 Thanks to Walter McQuiston of Douglas for providing alternate statistics regarding the cost to American taxpayers of undocumented immigrants. While I try to be diligent and accurate in all my writing, the amount of information, and misinformation, on the Internet makes it a daunting task. My quest is always to learn as much as possible, and relay what I have learned to people who would benefit from this information, but not have the time or inclination to pursue it. Along the way, I have learned that it is possible to find a supporting reference to any bias you start with. Here is a perfect example, utilizing Mr. McQuiston's information:
 - his data was provided by the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), a group whose one stated mission is to severely limit immigration into the United States.
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 RICK BEVILACQUA
 WHITINSVILLE

The sound of a real conversation

LANTERNS
 ALONG
 MAIN
 STREET
 By CHARLES

The other morning, I found myself at a local diner, the kind of place where the coffee arrives before you've fully settled into the booth. The waitress called everyone "hon," and nobody seemed to mind. The grill hissed, forks clinked against plates, and someone near the window was explaining, in great detail, how to fix a snowblower carburetor.
 It was a symphony of ordinary life.
 At the table behind me sat a father and his teenage daughter. He had the newspaper folded in quarters. She had her phone propped against the sugar dispenser, eyes fixed on the screen, thumbs moving at a speed that suggested great urgency.
 The father tried.
 "So, big game Friday?" he asked.
 "Mmm-hmm," she said, not looking up.
 "You starting?"
 "Probably."
 He sipped his coffee. Cleared his throat. "That's good."
 I felt for him. I've been on both sides of that exchange over the years. I've been the distracted one, and I've been the one hoping for a few more words than "probably."
 After a moment, the waitress came by and refilled their cups. She looked at the girl and said, "You playing shortstop again? You made that great throw last week."
 The girl's head came up. "You saw that?"
 "Of course I did. Whole place was talking about it."
 And just like that, the phone went face down on the table.
 For the next five minutes, the girl described the play in full color. The slow

roller. The scoop. The throw to first. Her father leaned in, smiling in a way that made him look ten years younger. The waitress nodded like she was reviewing game tape.
 What changed? Not the setting. Not the menu. Just attention.
 There is something powerful about being noticed. Not in the loud, public way that comes with likes and shares and digital applause, but in the quiet, steady way that says: I saw you. I remember. It mattered.
 In small-town Massachusetts, we still have the advantage of proximity. Our towns are not so large that we disappear entirely into anonymity. The librarian may know what you read last summer. The clerk at Town Hall may recognize your signature. The barber may remember how you like the back trimmed.
 These details are not accidents. They are the result of paying attention.
 And attention, these days, feels like a scarce resource.
 I understand the pull of the phone. It offers news from around the globe, weather updates down to the minute, photos from family miles away. I am grateful for that. I like knowing my daughter made it home safely. I like being able to check in with my son without waiting for the long-distance rates to drop after 9 p.m., as we once did.
 But I sometimes wonder whether we are trading depth for volume. We hear from more people than ever before, yet speak less to the ones sitting across from us.
 I remember when conversation had a certain rhythm. You asked a question, and

you waited. You listened long enough to hear not only the answer but the tone behind it. If someone paused, you didn't rush to fill the silence. Silence had a purpose. It let thoughts settle.
 Now, silence seems to make us nervous. We reach for a device at the first lull, as if quiet were something to be avoided.
 My mother, God bless her, had a way of making you feel like the only person in the room. When she asked how you were, she meant it. You could not slip by with a quick "fine." She would tilt her head slightly and wait. That small gesture told you she had time for your answer.
 Time is another thing that feels squeezed thin.
 Yet I suspect we have more control over it than we admit. We may not be able to slow the news cycle or quiet the endless stream of notifications. But we can choose, in a diner or a market or on a walk down Main Street, to look up.
 The father and daughter at the diner left a little while later. As they stood to go, he put his hand briefly on her shoulder. She was talking animatedly now, phone forgotten in her jacket pocket. They stepped out into the cold morning together, still mid-conversation.
 The diner returned to its usual soundtrack: dishes, laughter, the scrape of chairs. Nothing dramatic had happened. No speeches were made. No lessons announced.
 Just a girl who felt seen. A father who got more than one-word answers. A waitress who took the time to remember a throw from last week.
 Sometimes, the sound of a real conversation is the most hopeful thing you can hear.

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First-ever Active Agers Health Fair held at Plummer Place

NORTHBRIDGE — Plummer Place, Home of the Northbridge Senior Center, proudly hosted its first-ever Active Agers Health Fair, a community-focused event designed to empower older adults with resources, screenings, and information to support healthy, vibrant living.

The event brought together local health professionals, wellness experts, and community organizations for a day dedicated to senior health and well-being. The Active Agers Health Fair featured: free health screenings and wellness checks, information on fitness, nutrition, and preventive care, local vendors specializing in senior services, and giveaways and free raffles.

Kelly Bol, Director of the Northbridge Senior Center, said, "We were proud to host our first Active Agers Health Fair and to see such a strong turnout. Events like this showcase the power of collaboration and our shared commitment to supporting older adults. By offering direct access to valuable health resources in one convenient location, our Active Agers Health Fair promoted proactive, informed approaches to aging well."

Program and Volunteer Coordinator Amy Cowen shared, "We were thrilled to see so many smiling faces, engaged conversations, and community connections being made. From informative vendors to fun activities and valuable resources, the energy in the room was amazing, and it was certainly clear that events like this truly make a difference in the lives of our seniors and older adults! We look forward to building on this momentum in the future!"

Plummer Place extends its sincere thanks to the many volunteers, vendors, healthcare providers, and community organizations whose participation and support made the inaugural Active Agers Health Fair an overwhelming success!

For more information about future programs and events at Plummer Place, Home of the Northbridge Senior Center, please call (508) 234-2002.



First-ever Active Agers Health Fair held at Plummer Place



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LEGALS

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Worcester Probate
and Family Court
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Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO26P0435EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION**
Estate Of:
Stephen D. Britt
Date of Death: 12/30/2025

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Lisa A. Oosterman of Uxbridge MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that:
Lisa A. Oosterman of Uxbridge 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 03/24/2026**.

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

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

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

WITNESS, Hon. Kathryn M. Bailey, First Justice of this Court.

Date: February 26, 2026

Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
March 6, 2026

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain Commercial Mortgage Deed and Security Agreement and Collateral Assignment of Leases and Rents (the "Mortgage") given by RSR Investment and Construction, LLC to D'Amico Lending, LLC dated January 10, 2025 and recorded with the Worcester County Registry of Deeds (the "Registry") in Book 71515 at Page 189, of which Mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said Commercial Mortgage Deed and Security Agreement and Collateral Assignment of Leases and Rents and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction at 11 o'clock A.M. on the 30th day of March, 2026 at 95 Church Avenue, Northbridge, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,

To wit:

The land with the buildings thereon situated on the northeasterly side of Church Street in the Village of Rockdale, in the Town of Northbridge, in the County of Worcester, containing 11,131 square feet of land, more or less, and being a part of parcel 1 in deed to Landry Realty Corporation which deed is recorded in the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Book 4083, Page 108. Premises to be conveyed are more particularly bounded and described as follows:

BEGINNING at the most westerly corner thereof at a brass pipe set in concrete sidewalk in the northeast line of Church Street and land of Choquette, which point is southeasterly a distance of 160.00 from Cross Street; THENCE by land of Choquette N. 32

degrees 25' E. 102.60 feet to a stake; THENCE by remaining land of Landry Realty Corporation passing by the garage, S. 55 degrees, 36' E. 26.37 feet to a stake; THENCE by Land of Landry Realty Corporation S 53 degrees 20' E' 68.33 feet to a stake;

THENCE by land of formerly of Paul Whitln Mfg. Co., following retaining wall S. 31 degrees 06'30" W. 132.81 feet to a cooper pipe set in concrete sidewalk.

THENCE by Church Street N 37 degrees 15"W. 104.05 feet to the place of beginning.

Premises to be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed.

Terms of sale: A deposit of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by certified or bank check at the offices of Clavell & Associates, P.C., 355 Union Street, New Bedford, MA 02740 within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. In the event of an error in this publication, the description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control.

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

D'Amico Lending, LLC

35 Fly Jib Court

Jamestown, RI 02835

Present holder of said mortgage

By its Attorney,

Clavell & Associates, P.C.

355 Union Street

New Bedford, MA 02740

March 6, 2026

March 13, 2026

March 20, 2026

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Jack Alexander and Mary Alexander to Financial Freedom Senior Funding Corporation, a Subsidiary of IndyMac Bank F.S.B., dated February 23, 2006, and recorded with the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 38584 at Page 273, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder by an assignment of mortgage from Financial Freedom Senior Funding Corporation to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Financial Freedom Acquisition LLC, dated October 18, 2009, and recorded at said Deeds in Book 45082, Page 131; by an assignment of mortgage from Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Financial Freedom Acquisition LLC to Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, dated May 2, 2023, and recorded at said Deeds in Book 69156, Page 296; and by assignment of mortgage from Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, dated May 2, 2023, and recorded at said Deeds in Book 69156, Page 296; and by assignment of mortgage from Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, dated May 2, 2023, and recorded at said Deeds in Book 69156, Page 296; and by assignment of mortgage from Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, dated May 2, 2023, and recorded at said Deeds in Book 69156, Page 296. For breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction at 11:00 A.M. on the 27th day of March 2026, at 27 Heritage Dr. a/k/a 27 Heritage Dr., Whitinsville, MA 01588, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,

To wit:

Unit 14 (the "Unit") in Building 2C (the "Building") in the Heritage Park Estates Condominium (the "Condominium") created pursuant to a Master Deed dated January 18, 1985, recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds, Book 8533, Page 320 and the First Amendment to the Master Deed, dated February 10, 1985, recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds, Book 8574, Page 165.

The mailing address of said Unit is 27

Heritage Drive, Whitinsville, Massachusetts.

Said Unit No. 14 contains 2,225.9 square feet, more or less, said is shown on the Floor Plans and Site Plans filed with said First Amendment to the Master Deed and on the copy of the portion of said plans attached hereto and made part hereof, to which is affixed a verified statement in the form required by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 183A, Section 9. Together with an undivided interest of 2.58532 percent in common areas and facilities described in Heritage Park Estate Condominium Master Deed, and First Amendment thereto.

Premises to be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed.

Terms of sale: A deposit of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by wire transfer to Demerle & Associates P.C., 10 City Square, 4th Floor, Boston, MA 02129 within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. In the event of an error in this publication, the description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control.

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

Insource East Properties, Inc.,
Present holder of said mortgage,

By its Attorneys,
Demerle & Associates P.C.
10 City Square, 4th Floor
Boston, MA 02129
(617) 337-4444

March 6, 2026

March 13, 2026

March 20, 2026

(SEAL)

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT

Docket No.26 SM 000572

TO:

Linda M. Barry

ORDER OF NOTICE

and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq):

Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., as Trustee for Asset Backed Securities Corporation Home Equity Loan Trust, Series OOMC 2005-HE6, Asset Backed Pass-Through Certificates, Series OOMC 2005-HE6 claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in **Uxbridge, numbered 206 Hazel Street**, given by **Linda M. Barry and Paul R. Barry to H&R Block Mortgage Corporation**, dated **April 25, 2005, and recorded in Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 36189, Page 325**, and now held by the Plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before 04/06/2026

or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act.

Witness, GORDON H. PIPER Chief Justice of this Court on 2/19/2026

Attest:

Deborah J. Patterson Recorder

March 6, 2026

MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain Mortgage dated December 2, 2020 from Mark J. LeBoeuf and Jeanine M. LeBoeuf to UniBank for Savings recorded with the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 63917, Page 323, the undersigned UniBank for Savings being the present holder of said mortgage, for breach of the conditions of said Mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction at:

1:00 P.M., Tuesday, March 24, 2026

upon the hereinafter-described premises, known as and numbered as 72 Mumford St, Douglas, Worcester County, Massachusetts, all and singularly the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

A certain lot or parcel of land being shown as Lot 2 on a plan entitled "Plan of Land in Douglas, Massachusetts owned by Paul P. & Chloe B. Kurtyka, Scale 1" = 100', dated March 27, 1990 by Lavallee Brothers, Inc., 497 Central Turnpike, Sutton, Massachusetts" said plan being recorded in the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Plan Book 634, as Plan 59.

Beginning at a point on the westerly side of Mumford Street, it being the northeasterly angle of the parcel herein described and the southeasterly angle of land of one Landry;

THENCE S. 12° 59' 05" W., 29.14 feet to a point;

THENCE S. 20° 28' 22" W., 133.97 feet to a point;

THENCE S. 28° 46' 38" W., 54.89 feet to a point;

THENCE N. 82° 52' 45" W., 591.15 feet to a point on a wall;

THENCE N. 00° 55' 27" E., 160.86 feet to a point;

THENCE N. 00° 32' 28" E., 250.42 feet to a stone monument set in the wall;

THENCE N. 00° 46' 49" E., 172.40 feet to a point;

THENCE S. 77° 53' 54" E., 142.27 feet to a point on a wall;

THENCE S. 01° 29' 54" E., 106.98 feet to a drill hole in the corner of the walls;

THENCE S. 05° 30' 09" W., 200.57 feet to an iron pin;

THENCE S. 77° 32' 44" E., 549.36 feet to the point and place of beginning.

Said Lot 2 containing 4.523 acres of land, more or less.

For title see deed recorded herewith.

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

TERMS OF SALE: The highest bidder shall be required to make a deposit of \$10,000.00 to the holder of said Mortgage, in cash or by certified or bank cashier's check at the time and place of said sale of said premises. The balance of the purchase price is to be paid to said holder in cash, by certified check or bank cashier's check, and thereupon the deed shall be delivered, in thirty (30) days from the date of sale at the firm of Cunningham, Machanic, Cetlin, Johnson, Harney & Tenney, LLP, Attorneys for said holder, 220 North Main Street, Suite 301, Natick, Massachusetts. The successful bidder shall be required to sign a Memorandum of Terms of Sale. The description of the premises contained in said Mortgage shall control in the event of an error in publication. Other terms, if any, to be announced at the time and place of sale.

UniBank for Savings,
By its Attorneys,
CUNNINGHAM, MACHANIC, CETLIN,
JOHNSON, HARNEY & TENNEY, LLP
220 North Main Street, Suite 301
Natick, MA 01760
(508) 651-7524
February 20, 2026
February 27, 2026
March 6, 2026

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OBITUARY

Karen J. Wielsma



Whitinsville - Karen J. Wielsma, a cherished wife, mother, grandmother, sister, and friend, was called home to be with her Lord on February 23, 2026. She passed peacefully with her devoted husband of 54 years at her side and her loving family nearby. Her life was a beautiful symphony of faith, love, kindness, and music.

Born on June 21, 1946, in Uxbridge, Massachusetts, Karen was the daughter of the late Oliver and Edith (VanderBrug) Plantinga. She graduated from Northbridge High School in 1964 and went on to earn her nursing diploma from Memorial Hospital School of Nursing in 1968. Though trained as a nurse, Karen's lifelong passion was music—especially the organ, whose rich tones became her signature gift to countless congregations.

Karen shared a deep and abiding love with her husband, Earl J. Wielsma. Together they built a home grounded in faith and filled with music, hospitality, and devotion to family. She was the beloved mother of Vonda J. Wielsma of Madison, Wisconsin; Holly J. Britt and her husband Timothy of Sturbridge; and Jason T. Wielsma and his wife Christina of Whitinsville. Her joy multiplied with the arrival of her treasured grandchildren, Derek and Jared Wielsma.

She is also survived by her brother, Harold Plantinga and his wife Barbara of Whitinsville; her sister, Helena Bloem and her husband Glen of Whitinsville; and her sister-in-law, Roxie Plantinga of Franklin. She was predeceased by her brother, Ronald J. Plantinga of Northbridge.

Karen's musical gifts blessed many communities. She served as organist in churches in Rochester, NY; Phoenix, AZ; Fall River, MA; and throughout the Blackstone Valley.

Her dedication to excellence led her to earn the Colleague certificate from the American Guild of Organists, and she was a longtime member of its Worcester chapter. In addition to her church ministry, Karen taught piano and organ, inspiring generations of students. She also faithfully served as accompanist for the strings program at Whitinsville Christian School and played an instrumental role in its founding.

For 45 years, Karen was a devoted member of Fairlawn Christian Reformed Church, where her music and fellowship enriched the life of the congregation. Beyond her musical pursuits, she cherished camping trips to Maine, delighting in the quiet beauty of nature and time spent with family.

Visiting hours were held on Tuesday, March 3, from 4:00–7:00 p.m. at Fairlawn Christian Reformed Church, 305 Goldthwaite Road, Whitinsville. A funeral service was held on Wednesday, March 4, at 11:00 a.m. at the church.

A private burial will follow at a later date in Pine Grove Cemetery.

The family extends heartfelt gratitude to the Salmon Hospice team, especially Nurse Julie, PCA Shelley, and Chaplain Brian, for their compassionate care. They also wish to thank their Fairlawn Church family and the many friends and loved ones who visited, prayed, and provided meals during Karen's illness.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Whitinsville Christian School, 279 Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville, MA 01588, or online at www.whitinsvillechristian.org.



Send all obituary notices to Stonebridge Press, PO Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550, or by e-mail to obits@stonebridgepress.news

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WINTERRADEN

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Jared, was a “bobsicle” of ice and packed snow. The undisputed highlight of the lap was the Truck Jump, a high-flying feature for the boldest riders. For those choosing the safer “B-Line,” the price was steep: The Heckle Pit.

Armed with a bullhorn and a contagious level of enthusiasm, Bolandrina as the MC, also served as the “Hype Man” for the pit. Spectators and volunteers in the pit were armed with inflatable balls and pool noodles, creating a human “automatic car wash” that pummeled any rider who bypassed the main jump. Laughter and pandemonium reigned as fans heckled with high energy and good humor.

Beyond the race: Community and innovations

While the racing provided the adrenaline, the festival atmosphere at the Zig Zag basecamp provided the soul. The event featured:

The debut of Wickid Weiners: The local food truck made its first appearance, keeping the masses fed.

The Zig Zag Bar &

Blazing Bonfire: Providing warmth and a place for countless reunions and future trail planning.

Unique Tech: A special highlight was the appearance of Adam from Home ACES, who brought a Snowdog—a tracked towing vehicle. Bolandrina, after being towed in a sled, was given a solo spin on the machine, an experience he noted left a “huge grin plastered to my face.”

A smashing blast Winterräden 2026 was made possible by a wide coalition of supporters, including J.F. Cove Insurance Agency, Scituate Lumber, Avison, NEMBA, Geezers MTB, and Boston Women MTB, among many others.

As the bonfire dimmed and the last of the fat tires left the Uxbridge woods, the consensus among the tired, sore, and grinning participants was clear: the “Urban Assault” style of winter racing is here to stay.

“I am still glowing gratefully,” Bolandrina reflected. “Winterräden 2026 was a smashing blast, and I look forward to spending another Sunday in the snow-covered woods with all y’all soon!”

BIO TECH

continued from page A1

of a full dissection. This approach supports student learning and engagement, while fostering curiosity in career paths where lab animals are important components.”

Fiona Comeau of Millbury, a sophomore in BVT’s Biotechnology program, recently used the model in class.

She said, “I liked them a lot more than if we had an animal dissection, which I think is rather off-putting. I think we got a lot of useful information about identifying rat anatomy via the dissection model.”

“The dissection model made learning anatomy less stressful and more interactive, and it encouraged more discussion and participation,” said MacKenzie Moran of Grafton, also a Biotechnology sophomore. “I would recommend that we continue using them for future classes.”

As part of the grant agreement, recipients are required to submit a video of the models in use. This requirement created an opportunity to collaborate with students in BVT’s Multimedia Communications program, who are producing a professional video for NAVS highlighting the benefits of the grant-funded models.

Logan Didio of Upton, a senior in the program, assisted with video production.

“It was exciting to be part of this grant-funded initiative and see how our multimedia skills support humane science education,” he said.

Joseph Bache of Hopedale, also a senior in Multimedia Communications, participated in planning and filming interviews with Biotechnology students.

“It was a great experience attending meetings, selecting equipment, and preparing interview ques-

tions to clearly communicate the purpose of the grant while keeping students comfortable on camera,” he said. “We used a Canon cinema camera on a tripod, an external clip-on microphone for clean audio, headphones for sound monitoring, and LED lighting to ensure consistent, well-lit shots.”

“The on-camera interview gave me a chance to reflect on what I learned using the rat model and how it applied to our biotechnology work,” said Ella Drumheller of Douglas, a sophomore in the Biotechnology program. “The model reduced the anxiety of traditional dissection while building my confidence and understanding of rat anatomy, which will support my future labs, animal-based co-ops, and science fair projects.”

Once completed, the video will be shared with NAVS and available on the school’s website.

The BioLEAP Classroom Grant is awarded by NAVS to help teachers purchase humane, non-animal models that replace the use of specimen dissection. The goal of the grant is to support excellence in science education without harming animals.

About Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT)

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School serves the towns of Bellingham, Blackstone, Douglas, Grafton, Hopedale, Mendon, Milford, Millbury, Millville, Northbridge, Sutton, Upton, and Uxbridge. Located in the heart of the Blackstone Valley, BVT creates a positive learning community that prepares students for personal and professional success in an internationally competitive society through a fusion of rigorous vocational, technical, and academic skills. For more information about the school, visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us.

[www.Stonebridge Press.com](http://www.StonebridgePress.com)

Local Emmanuel College students make Dean’s List

BOSTON — In recognition of their outstanding academic achievement, Emmanuel College has named more than 950 students to the Dean’s List for the Fall 2025 semester. The following local students were named to the Dean’s List:

Izabella Oum, of Douglas. Oum is majoring in Biology - Health Sciences.

Joseph Mazzarelli, of Northbridge. Mazzarelli is majoring in Double Major; Political Science;

Economics.

Ava Haire, of Douglas. Haire is majoring in Nursing.

To earn a spot on the Dean’s List, Emmanuel students must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 or higher for a 16-credit semester.

With more than 80 majors and areas of study, Emmanuel College combines outstanding classroom instruction and real-world experience to prepare students for lives of professional achievement,

lifelong learning, and purpose. Voted the #1 college location in America in 2025 by Niche.com, Emmanuel offers ready access to world class medical, cultural, and business orga-

nizations in the Heart of Boston, all with a tight-knit 17-acre campus and 13:1 student-to-faculty ratio. Learn more at Emmanuel.edu.

PLUMMER PLACE

Home of the Northbridge Senior Center

The following events will take place at Plummer Place, Home of the Northbridge Senior Center. We are located at 20 Highland St. in Whitinsville. Telephone: (508) 234-2002. Northbridge residents have priority for all programming and events.

Medical Drivers

We are in need of medical drivers for out-of-town medical appointments. This is a very important service that we provide for seniors who cannot drive themselves to their medical appointments. If you are interested and can spare any time, it would be most appreciated. Drivers are reimbursed for their mileage. For more information, please call the main office.

Regular Programs:

Mindful Meditation with Kelly
Every Thursday at 9:30am
S c r a b b l e
Monday, March 9th and 23rd at 9:30am
Bereavement Group
Monday, March 9th at 1pm
Women’s Collective
Thursday, March 12th at 10:00am
Topic: Medication Management
Bookclub
Wednesday, March 18th at 10:30am
Call Kelly to find out what book we are reading!
Dull Men’s Club
Tuesday, March 24th at 9:30am
Guest: Rod Lee, Author
Writing Your Way with Lori
March 26th at 2pm

Special Events and Programs:

A Conversation with Rod Lee, Author of his newest book, *The Poison Pen Club*
Tuesday, March 24th 11:00am-12:00pm
This compelling, timely, and commercially strong novel covers the political tensions, small-town dynamics, and a media-driven conflict with a cast of characters! You won’t want to miss this one! Books will be available on that day for \$21 by cash, check or Venmo. Sign up in the main office.

Howie Newman Musical Baseball Program

Thursday, March 26th 1:00pm-2:00pm
Newman’s musical baseball show blends classic baseball songs, fun trivia, and memorable stories from his years as a sportswriter which creates a lively and interactive audience experience. The show also includes a free raffle for a baseball CD and a display of his personal baseball memorabilia. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Northbridge Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Medicare Supplement vs. Medicare Advantage: Which is Best for Me?

Tuesday, March 31st 10:00am-11:00am

Come and compare Medicare Supplement and Medicare Advantage coverage through real-life examples and helpful resources. Ideal for those new to Medicare or considering a change during enrollment periods. Presented and sponsored by Blue Cross Blue Shield.

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DOUGLAS ADULT SOCIAL CENTER

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Hours of operation: Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; Friday 9 a.m.-noon

DAILY ACTIVITIES: All our daily activities are free of charge.

Monday: Painting class 9:45am to 11:45am, Balance & Strength Exercise 12pm, Mat yoga 2pm

Tuesday: Walking club 9am, Cribbage 9:00am, Lunch & Bingo 11:30am, Technology class 1pm (call to make an appt.), Line dancing 2pm

Wednesday: Balance & strength 10am, Darts 11:30am, Mahjong 12:45pm, Dominoes 1 to 2:30pm

Thursday: Walking club 9am, Chair Yoga 9:30am, Pitch 9:00am, Hand and Foot card game 12:30pm

Friday: Balance & strength 10am, Zumba 11:30am

Newsletter Mailing: Due to the increase in postage we will no longer be mailing the newsletter out of town. The newsletter can be found at the center, on our Facebook page, & the town website. If you would like a copy emailed to you please provide us with your email address.

Tuesday & Thursday lunch club, please call the Friday before to sign up. Lunch is \$4.00 per person. If you would like to attend we offer free rides to and from the center and are willing to waive the lunch fee is necessary.

March Lunch Menu:

Tuesday 3/3: Baked chicken, mashed potatoes, carrots & pudding

Tuesday 3/10: Chicken gnocchi soup, grilled cheese & ice cream

Thursday 3/12: Corn beef & cabbage (sign up by 3/2)

Tuesday 3/17: Kielbasa, rice, green beans & pudding

Thursday 3/19: Lunch & learn w/ Cornerstone (sign up by 3/12)

Tuesday 3/24: Salad bar & fruit

Tuesday 3/30: Sloppy joes, tater tots & Jell-O

Friday Shopping Schedule: Please call 48 hours in advance to schedule your ride. Grocery shopping pick up starts at 9:30.

Hannaford: 3/27

Walmart: 3/6 & 3/20

Price Chopper: 3/13

MARCH EVENTS:

WELLNESS CLINIC DATES: Monday March 9th & Tuesday March 24th. Clinic is open from 10 am to 12 pm.

Thursday March 5th @ 11:00: FREE craft day: Micro Green Clover Planting, learn about the health benefits of this plant and take one home to grow your own. Refreshments will be served. Sign up by 3/4.

Thursday March 12th @ 12:00: St. Patrick’s Day Luncheon with live musical entertainment. Corn beef & cabbage lunch is \$6.00 per person, and must be paid for when you sign up. Sign up by 3/2.

Thursday March 19th @ 12:00: FREE lunch & learn with Cornerstone of Milford. Healthy eating & eating for brain health is the topic of the discussion. Sign up by 3/12.

Thursday April 2nd @ 11:30: FREE craft day, we will be making sticker art photos. Refreshments will be served. Sign up by 3/30.

PLEASE CALL (508) 476-2283 TO SIGN UP FOR PROGRAMS & CLASSES

Check our website for events that may not be listed here

<https://www.douglas-ma.gov/202/AdultSocial-Center-Senior-Center>

ESL

continued from page A1

levels, ensuring that each participant received targeted, personalized support.

Beyond language learning, the program fostered connection. By hosting the sessions at Northbridge Elementary School, families became more familiar with the school setting and strengthened their ties to the broader school community. The welcoming atmosphere helped build confidence—not only in speaking English, but also in engaging more actively in school events and their children’s educational journeys.

When parents and care-

givers gain language skills, entire families benefit. Improved communication empowers families to better support their children’s learning, deepening partnerships between home and school and strengthening the community as a whole.

Building on this success, Northbridge Public Schools is excited to announce that a Spring Session of the Adult ESL program will begin soon. Additional details will be shared in the coming weeks.

For more information or to express interest in the upcoming session, please contact Mrs. Caterina Kennedy at ckennedy@nps.org.

WHITIN
continued from page A1

into the Aldrich Building will significantly increase childcare access in the region.

Following the Town of Northbridge's approval of the sale of the Aldrich School Building in October 2024, WCC submitted a successful proposal through an RFP process in February 2025. The sale to the WCC was officially finalized on June 27, 2025. The expansion project will transform the vacant Aldrich School into a vibrant childcare center, adding 20 new preschool

slots and 65 additional school-age care slots—nearly doubling BVCP's capacity. More than 50 percent of current BVCP children rely on public subsidies, including state vouchers. The expansion will increase access to affordable and subsidized care for working families, and create 12-15 new jobs in the community, further supporting the local workforce and economy in a post-COVID landscape.

"By renovating this historic building, we are not only preserving a vital piece of our town's heritage—we are opening doors to families and supporting local

business," said Heather Elster, Executive Director of the Whitin Community Center. "Expanding access to childcare in this space reflects our deep commitment to building a stronger community in the Blackstone Valley."

WCC's vision has garnered widespread support from the local community, including endorsements from the Northbridge Historical Commission, Whitinsville Downtown Crossroads Historic District Commission, municipal leadership, legislators, the local police and fire departments,

area schools, the local Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) Network, and the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce. The initiative blends historic preservation with urgent community needs.

Constructed in 1890 by the influential Whitin family and named in honor of beloved educator Ella W. Aldrich, the building has been a fixture of community life for more than 130 years. Once one of Whitinsville's first schools, the Aldrich School symbolizes a proud legacy of learning and civic responsibility—values that WCC

is honored to continue.

The renovation of the Aldrich School Building is part of WCC's \$10 million Legacy Capital Campaign, launched to commemorate the organization's centennial. To date, the campaign has secured 85 percent of its goal, with a majority of funds coming from federal, state, and local government sources.

For more information, or to contribute to the Legacy Capital Campaign, please visit www.WhitinCommunityCenter.com or call 508-234-8184.

The Whitin Community Center is committed to enhancing the health and

well-being of individuals and families and building a strong community in the Blackstone Valley. We offer social, recreational, educational, and outreach programs that bring community members of all ages and backgrounds together. The Whitin Community Center is the Blackstone Valley's most complete family and recreation center with two swimming pools, a gym, fitness center,

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Webster Lake Waterfront Listing!! On Indian Point # 10 "Private Rd"

Astounding Panoramic Views across mid-section of Webster Lake! Sun drenched from early morning sunrise till sunset! View the lake from all windows. Located on a peninsula providing 2 Shorelines. Fireplaced Living Room! Recent Kitchen & Bath! Primary Bedroom w/ walk-in closet. Hardwood Floors. 2 Baths. FHW Oil Heat! Central Air. Garage. **\$ 900,000.**

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

Impressive view!
Spencer - 86 Jolicoeur Ave.

SORRY, SOLD!
Impressive view! 1/2 acre overlooking Cranberry Meadow Pond! Nicely appointed Colonial, better than new! 3 bedrooms, 2-1/2 Bath! Master Bedroom Suite. 2 car garage Howe State Park close by. Deeded Beach Rights! a Must See! assisted sale **\$545,000**


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Webster - 24 Cooper Rd
New Construction - Craftsman Style home

Tucked away on Cooper Rd. Webster Lake with access at Lakeside beach/boat ramp. 3rd of 4 homes being built at this site. Offers 2,155 sq. ft. +/- of living area, 7 rms, 4 bns, 2 1/2 baths, 9ft ceiling, wood flooring throughout with ceramic tile baths. Spacious main BR Suite w/ walk-in closet, and private full bath, double sink vanity, finished lower level walk-out w/ slider. Central AC, garage **\$649,900.00**

DUDLEY 13 OXFORD AVE

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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 **\$379,900**

On the shores of Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg

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Webster Lake - 302 Killdeer Island

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

Webster Lake Waterfront - 31 Bayview!!

SORRY, SOLD!
Panoramic View, from this absolutely lovely home. 2600 +/- SF, 3+ Beds, 2 full baths, 2 car detached garage! 63' +/- waterfront. .37 Acres! Sandy Waterfront! **\$1,100,000**

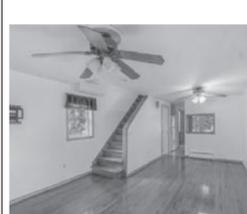
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