

SPENCER NEW LEADER

Free by request to residents of
East Brookfield, West Brookfield, North Brookfield, Brookfield, Leicester and Spencer

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Friday, March 1, 2024

Community reflects on local actor's screen legacy



Decorated actor Paul D'Amato, of East Brookfield (left), recently passed away following a lengthy battle with illness. Pictured, he celebrates a Springfield hockey history event with guests.

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

EAST BROOKFIELD — Area residents are celebrating the life and legacy of actor Paul D'Amato, best known for his role as the antagonist of the movie "Slap Shot."

D'Amato, 76, of East Brookfield, passed away last month at his home following a four-year battle with progressive supranuclear palsy, a rare brain disorder.

Born in Worcester, D'Amato grew up in Spencer before graduating from Framingham North High School and Emerson College. He later served in the Massachusetts Army National Guard.

His acting career of 50-plus years was highlighted by his role portraying Tim "Dr. Hook" McCracken in the beloved 1977 hockey comedy "Slap Shot." In a cult classic dominated by puck-shooting pugilists, line brawls, and thuggery, D'Amato's presentation helped cement the movie's place in the memories of hockey lovers and film buffs alike.

"RIP, Paul D'Amato. Sending heartfelt condolences to family and fellow friends, actors," read a statement posted to social media by "Slap

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Snowmobile crash claims life of North Brookfield woman

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

NORTH BROOKFIELD — New Hampshire officials have identified the victim of last month's fatal snowmobile crash as a woman from North Brookfield.

New Hampshire Fish and Game Conservation Officer Glen Lucas announced that Shawnee Hollis, 39, of North Brookfield, was killed in the Feb. 16 crash.

The wreck occurred on a trail in Milan, New Hampshire, at approximately 4:30 p.m.

"A call was placed reporting that a female had sustained serious injuries after being involved in a single vehicle snowmobile crash," read a statement released by Officer Lucas. "Due to the crash location in Milan, close to the Berlin town line, many agencies responded to the call."

Responding agencies included the Berlin Police Department, Berlin Fire Department, Berlin EMS, Milan and Dummer Ambulance, and Milan Fire and Rescue.

Additionally, a conservation officer responded to the call from Lancaster. The remote location of the northern New Hampshire accident added to the challenges facing responders.

"The conservation officer plotted the GPS coordinates that were received from 911 on the New Hampshire Snowmobile Association (NHS) snowmobile trail map phone app to get a better idea of the exact location," Lucas's statement read. "This phone app showed that the closest access to the crash scene was from the end of Spruceville Road in Milan."

The conservation officer met with two Berlin officers and hiked to the scene from the end of Spruceville Road, officials said. The three officers joined rescue crews in transporting Hollis from the scene aboard Berlin Fire's tracked rescue UTV.

"Hollis was riding with a group of three friends at the time of the crash, all operating their own individual sleds. Hollis was second in the group of four on her own individual sled," Lucas's statement read. "Investigation at the scene showed that Hollis failed to navigate a downhill left turn while traveling east on Primary Trail 109. The snowmobile that Hollis was operating struck a tree approximately 13 feet off the right side of the trail."

Hollis was transported from the scene to a Milan and Dummer ambulance that was staged at Spruceville

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State leaders to study benefits, risks of AI

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — As artificial intelligence technologies continue their rapid rise, officials from throughout the state will evaluate the benefits and risks of AI.

Gov. Maura Healey recently signed an executive order establishing the Artificial Intelligence Strategic Task Force to study both AI technologies and generative artificial intelligence (GenAI).

The primary goal of the task force is to assess the impacts of AI on state agencies, private businesses, higher education institutions, and residents, among others. The task force will conduct multiple outreach efforts and collect input from stakeholders and experts.

Task force members were chosen from institutions and agencies statewide, including here in Worcester County.

"Massachusetts has the opportunity to be a global leader in AI—but it's going to take us bringing together the brightest minds in tech, business, education, healthcare, and government," Healey said. "Members of the task force will collaborate on strategies that keep us ahead of the curve by leveraging AI and GenAI technology, which will bring significant benefits to our economy and communities across the state."

The task force will eventually create specific recommendations for how the state can best support businesses in leading sectors around AI adoption.

"Our administration acknowledges AI as a transformative technology set to influence various aspects of our nation's economy," said Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll. "This task force will position Massachusetts as a hub for talent and business excellence."

Recognizing that for every advantage of AI, there is a risk for negative uses of the technologies, the task force will also study issues related to public safety, potential threats to jobs, and ways to sustain equitable practices in the era of AI.

"Artificial intelligence is already changing aspects of daily life and the world around us, which is why it's critical that we ensure that the Commonwealth's businesses are well prepared for that transition," said House Speaker Ron Mariano.

The task force will have subject-specific working groups that will create recommendations to leverage AI in leading sectors. These include education, healthcare, life sciences, robotics, and financial services.

The task force consists of 26 individuals representing the business community, higher education institu-

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Local landscaping company's work wins photo contest



Courtesy

Monette Landscaping and Construction recently won a photo contest for its submission featuring a project in Spencer.

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

SPENCER — Fresh off a major contest victory, the Monette Landscaping and Construction team is eager to help make your outdoor design dreams a reality.

Family owned and operated for more than 77 years, Monette Landscaping and Construction recently completed a project that was selected by Genest Concrete as a winner of its 2023 Contractor Photo Contest.

"Over the years, we have been incredibly blessed with customers who have allowed us to flex our creative muscles while delivering outdoor living spaces to meet

their needs. This was no exception," said company owner Jason Monette, who lives in Spencer. "We truly enjoyed working on this project from beginning to end, and we couldn't be happier that the finished product received this award."

The project submitted for the photo contest was installed and photographed on Sugden Reservoir in Spencer. Materials were supplied by Lindgren Lumber, based in Holden.

"We have a long-standing relationship with Paul Lindgren. He is an incredibly reliable supplier and friend. He was the one who recommended we submit this project for the competition," Monette added. "The

entire project was a collaboration. We're excited that it will be featured alongside the impressive projects submitted by other award winners."

For Monette and his team, the contest victory is an exciting showcase for their business and the many specialties it delivers for customers throughout central Massachusetts. These include excavation and drainage projects; outdoor kitchens; landscape lighting; rock water features; irrigation projects; patio and walkway installations; and commercial ground maintenance.

The business also handles several other facets of landscaping and exterior design, helping to transform residents'

visions into scenic yard spaces.

"We take great pride in the work that we do, and we're honored that this installation will be featured in the 2024 paving and wall stone catalog," Monette said.

Genest Concrete, a family-owned company based in Saford, Maine, has been manufacturing concrete products since 1927. The company's annual photo contest recognizes installers who create exceptional pieces featuring Genest Concrete products.

To learn more about Monette Landscaping and Construction, or to contact business leaders about your project ideas, visit www.monettelandscape.com.



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Cornerstone Bank promotes three employees to leadership positions

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank, a community bank with locations throughout Central Massachusetts, recently promoted three employees to leadership positions. Rachel Briggs of Spencer was promoted from vice president to senior vice president, commercial loan operations. Kyle Hill, a resident of Brimfield, was promoted from vice president to senior vice president, retail loan operations. And Warren resident Jacqueline Croft was promoted from assistant vice president to vice president, Bank Secrecy Act (BSA), risk and security officer.

“We are committed to providing our employees with career growth opportunities, which makes these three promotions especially gratifying,” said Todd Tallman, CEO of Cornerstone Bank. “Rachel, Jacqueline and Kyle are incredibly valuable to us, and we look forward to seeing their impact grow in their new roles.”

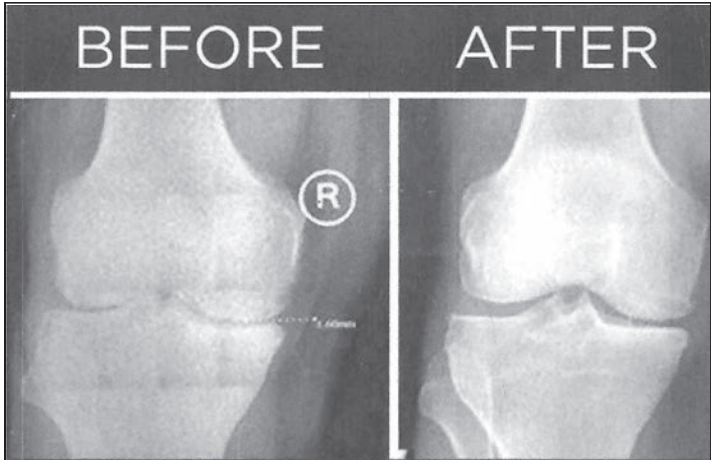
Briggs has been a Cornerstone Bank employee for 24 years. In her new role as senior vice president, commercial loan operations, she will oversee the operations and administration of the Commercial Lending Department, service the commercial loan portfolio and ensure compliance with regulatory and internal audits. Briggs has a B.S. in business administration from Worcester State University, and a certificate in banking and financial support services from the New England School of Financial Studies. As a community

volunteer, she provides financial literacy education through Cornerstone Bank, works with local food banks and participates in Habitat for Humanity Playhouse Build projects.

Hill has worked at Cornerstone for 25 years. As senior vice president, retail loan operations, he will oversee and support the production, processing, underwriting, closing and servicing of residential loans. He is responsible for ensuring compliance with federal, state and local regulations, as well as internal policies and procedures, and collaborates with other departments and external partners to achieve the strategic goals of the organization.

Croft has 14 years’ experience in the banking industry, with the last two at Cornerstone. In her new role as vice president, BSA, risk and security officer, she is responsible for managing the bank’s compliance with all aspects of the BSA, Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC) and the USA PATRIOT Act. She maintains and implements the BSA/Anti-Money Laundering (AML) compliance program and security policies and procedures, and her team performs financial crimes investigations across the bank. Croft is a Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialist (CAMS) and a volunteer educator, providing financial literacy programs focused on fraud prevention for students and seniors.

tomers with opportunities, through a broad range of deposit and loan products, and services. Built on Trust is not just a tag line, but also one of our guiding corporate values. Whether a business or personal partnership, Cornerstone stands on the foundation that relationships are built on trust. To learn about Cornerstone Bank’s personal and business banking offerings, please visit [cornerstonebank.com](https://www.cornerstonebank.com) or call 800-939-9103.



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About Cornerstone Bank
Cornerstone Bank was formed in 2017, born of a long history of supporting the community, and providing a strong foundation to help people and businesses thrive. Serving Worcester County, Massachusetts, Cornerstone Bank’s local presence and community-based banking model enables a unique ability to deliver outstanding service, with a personal touch. Cornerstone provides the highest level of service and expertise for individuals, businesses, and community organizations with branch locations throughout Central Massachusetts. Cornerstone works to connect cus-

“Celebrating the Figure” at ArtWorks Gallery

WARE — ArtWorks Gallery invites artists from throughout the northeastern US to celebrate the human figure in the upcoming Third Annual Celebrating the Figure exhibition. As in previous years, this show focuses on the realistic interpretation of the human figure and is open to all forms of applied mediums, sculpture, and printmaking. Photography and electronic media are not accepted mediums for this exhibition.

The deadline for entry is Thursday, March 7, by midnight. The entry form and full details can be found on workshop13.org. ArtWorks Gallery is located at 69 Main St. in Ware. The Third Annual Celebrating the Figure exhibition will be on display from April 6 through April 28, opening with a reception on Saturday, April 6, from 3-5 p.m. Gallery hours are Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 p.m. Currently on display at ArtWorks Gallery is “BLUE,” which is on display through February 25th. Next up is All Things Animal, which is on display from March 2 through March 30 and opens with a reception on Saturday, March 2, from 3-5 p.m.

The juror for the Third Annual Celebrating the Figure exhibition is Jeff Stauder. Jeff Stauder was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts and raised in eastern Connecticut. He received a BA in Art from the University of California at Santa Cruz and an MFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, where he won the 1996 Dana Pond Painting Award. Following graduate school Stauder moved to New York City where among other things, he created the Artists Theoretical Racing Circuit, a collaborative conceptual art project. He moved to western Massachusetts in 2008, where he finally indulged his true nature by reveling in imagistic historicism. That work has been exhibited widely in New England, including a solo exhibition at the University of Massachusetts. In 2022 he was awarded a Massachusetts Cultural Council Artist Fellowship Grant in Painting.

About ArtWorks Gallery and Workshop13
ArtWorks Gallery is Workshop13’s gallery on Main Street. This space features numerous art exhibitions each year and is also available to rent for individual or group shows. Workshop13 Cultural Arts and Learning Center is a rural non-profit arts innovator located in Ware, and devoted to increasing the appreciation and accessibility of the arts, strengthening the creative life of our community through instruction, collaborations, and arts-based initiatives.

P.E.T. of the Week

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Friday's Child

Hi! My name is Jozyah and I want to be a mechanic!

Jozyah is a kind, sensitive and loyal friend. He is athletic and enjoys being physically active. Jozyah is described as a “sports kid.” He likes to play basketball and other sports with his friends. Jozyah has participated in various community sports leagues and wants to continue to have this kind of community involvement.

Jozyah is outgoing and likes to engage with staff and peers at school. Jozyah also enjoys spending time with his friends outside of school.

Jozyah will benefit from a family of any constellation. He should be either the youngest child or the only child in the home. Jozyah can take his time forming strong, trusting relationships, so a family should be patient and supportive during the transition. The right family for Jozyah will be supportive of his relationship with his sister and two brothers.

<https://adopt.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/child/7957>


Jozyah
Age 15

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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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LaPorte recognized during SRO Appreciation Day



SPENCER — School and police officials recently celebrated National School Resource Officer Appreciation Day by thanking SPD Officer Todd LaPorte for his services in the town's schools.

"Officer LaPorte handles three schools in Spencer and is always there to support the Spencer-East Brookfield School District," read a statement released by the police department. "Thank you, Officer LaPorte, for your dedication and hard work."

Police and school leaders in surrounding communities also took the time to recognize their school resource officers last week.

Courtesy
Spencer Police School Resource Officer Todd LaPorte was recently recognized for his daily services in the town's three schools.

DA's office receives grant to combat gang-related crime

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — Worcester County District Attorney Joseph Early, Jr., recently announced that his office has received grant funding to combat gang-related crime.

The DA's Office received a \$100,000 grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS). A portion of the funds will go directly into the central Massachusetts community to support youth programming.

"The key mission of our office is to prevent crime," Early said. "Gangs are one of the main drivers of violence and drugs in our communities. We want to support our at-risk youth, preventing their introduction to gang life and the inevitability of ending up in the criminal justice system."

The grant funds were awarded to the DA's Office through the EOPSS Project Safe Neighborhood Program. The award marks the third time the state has provided funds to the DA's Office to augment gang intervention efforts.

"By supporting these kids, we can prevent crime, keep the numbers down in the jails, and guide our youth to brighter, happier futures," Early added.

A portion of the grant funds has been designated to support prevention and intervention programming through a community organization. To that end, the DA's Office will continue its partnership with the Boys and Girls Club by allocating grant funds to youth programming.

The club supports youngsters from across the region.

"The Boys and

Girls Club is doing such amazing work on prevention and intervention in the community. They are a great partner for this grant," Early said.

The Boys and Girls Club offered programming to 250 local kids in 2023 thanks to grant funding. The monies supported 122 boys participating in a program called Passport to Manhood, as well as 128 girls participating in the S.M.A.R.T Girls program.

"This grant supported our gender-specific programs that address violence prevention, the building of self-esteem, and anti-bullying techniques," said Liz Hamilton, the Executive Director of the Boys and Girls Club of Worcester. "The curriculum was facilitated by professional club mentors, which allows our kids to be their authentic selves and discuss issues they may not feel comfortable sharing outside of our safe space."

Added Hamilton, "The post-evaluations indicated that kids who participated in this funded program were better prepared for the future and had the tools they need to make healthy and safe choices."

In the coming year, the Boys and Girls Club plans to offer

driving education and job training courses with the grant funding.

The Healey-Driscoll Administration awarded \$1.9 million statewide this year through the Project Safe Neighborhood Program. The funds will be used by officials across the Commonwealth to address specific goals.

"This grant program fosters the partnerships and supports the collaborative solutions that make a meaningful difference in our communities," said Gov. Maura Healey. "By investing in these efforts, we're empowering community partners to deliver vital services to at-risk youth while promoting safe, thriving communities across Massachusetts. We're grateful to the Legislature for their partnership in making this critical funding available."

To learn more about various state grants designed to assist young people, visit www.mass.gov.



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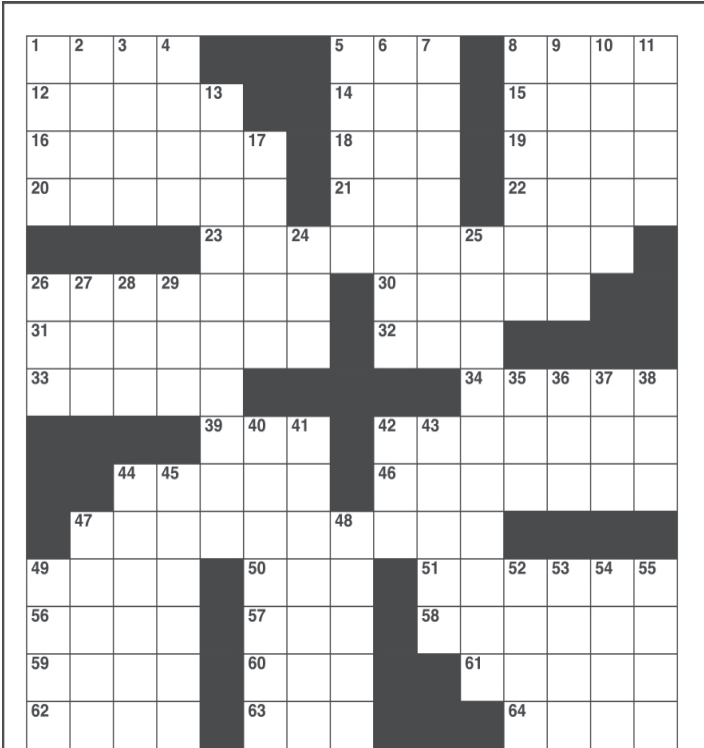
Lauren Gay joins EXIT Real Estate Executives in Spencer

SPENCER — EXIT Real Estate Executives is pleased to announce that Lauren Gay has joined its growing team of dedicated real estate sales professionals.

EXIT Real Estate Executives, located at 130 W. Main St., Spencer, is a proud member of EXIT Realty New England's rapidly expanding network of independently owned and operated brokerages across the region.

About EXIT Realty

EXIT Realty is a company founded and built on human potential. A full service, forward-thinking, real estate franchisor with offices across North America, EXIT has to-date paid out more than a half a billion dollars in single-level residual income to its associates. A portion of every transaction fee received by EXIT Realty Corp. International is applied to its charitable fund, and to-date, \$7 million has been allocated to charity. For more information, please visit www.exitrealty.com and www.joinexitrealty.com.



- CLUES ACROSS
1. Home of Iowa State University

5. ___-fi (slang)

8. Mottled green and yellow fruit

12. Capable of thinking and expressing oneself clearly

14. Sports broadcaster Eagle

15. Midday

16. Kinsmen

18. Cable network

19. Simpleton

20. Brunch beverage

21. Fed

22. European capital

23. Native inhabitants

26. Mechanical device

30. Rare geese native to Hawaii

31. Bedroom furnishing

32. The products of human creativity

33. Mass transit option

34. Made a mistake

39. Sacred sound symbol

42. Large N. American reindeer

44. Dull and flat

46. Partner to huffing

47. Written works

49. Monetary unit of Serbia

50. Midway between east and southeast

51. Peninsula of southwestern Asia

56. Widely used multiuser OS

57. Aggressive dog

58. Varnished

59. Hindu queen

60. Time units, abbr.

61. Farm animals

62. Capital of Latvia

63. Where golfers begin

64. Takes to civil court

- CLUES DOWN
1. One who graduated

2. An inspired holy person

3. Electronic counter-countermeasures

4. A place to store things

5. Indian instrument

6. Spanish saloon

7. Whole number

8. Not fastened

9. Gives a boost

10. Lounges about

11. Interested in

13. Remove salt

17. Type of sword

24. Naturally occurring solid material

25. Gets involved without being invited

26. Feline

27. Bobby ___, NHL champ

28. "Kill Bill" actress Thurman

29. Hawaiian dish

35. Moroccan coastal region

36. Baseball statistic

37. Long period of time

38. Moved earth

40. Central Netherlands city

41. Take stock of

42. Central processing unit

43. Distinctive qualities one generates

44. Getting stuck

45. Loss of bodily movements

47. Veranda

48. Abrupt

49. What cats do

52. Expresses pleasure

53. Type of cheese

54. Professional STEM organization

55. Automatic data processing systems



Justin Howard named to American International College Athletic Director's 3.0 Club

SPRINGFIELD — American International College (AIC) congratulates student-athlete Justin Howard of W. Brookfield, MA for induction into the Athletic Director's 3.0 Club for the Fall 2023 semester.

In a ceremony held at the Butova Gymnasium on February 14, 2024, Athletics Director, Jessica Chapin, honored Howard as among more than three hundred student-athletes who have achieved a commendable cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher during their tenure at AIC.

Howard is majoring in Exercise Science. The primary objective for these students is to stand as academic role models, inspiring

fellow student-athletes with their achievements and dedication!

The substantial number of inductees is impressive and reflects the dedication of our student-athletes to both academic and athletic excellence.

Founded in 1885, American International College (AIC) is a private, co-educational, doctor-

al granting institution located in Springfield, Massachusetts, comprising the School of Business, Arts and Sciences, the School of Education, and the School of Health Sciences. AIC supports and advances education, diversity, and opportunity for its students and the community.

Spencer Democrats to elect delegates to state convention

SPENCER — On Saturday, March 2 at 11 a.m., Democrats will convene in the Miriram Mccourt Hall on the lower level of the Spencer Memorial Town Hall 157 Main St., Spencer, to elect five delegates and four alternates to represent Spencer at the 2024 State Democratic convention.

Registered and pre-registered Democrats in Spencer 16 years of age by Thursday, Feb. 15 may vote and be elected as delegates or alternates during the caucus. Youth (age 16 to 35), people with disabilities, people of color, veterans, members of the LGBTQ+ community not elected as delegates or alternates are encouraged to apply to be add-on delegates at the caucus or by visiting massdems.org/massdems-convention. The 2024 Convention will be inperson at the DCU Center in Worcester on June 1.

Those interested in getting involved with the Spencer Democratic Town Committee should contact William Shemeth at youthscommission2000@yahoo.com or (508) 885-2485.

Brookfield Democrats to elect delegates to state convention

BROOKFIELD — Democrats in Brookfield will meet on Saturday, March 2 at 10:30 a.m. in the Brookfield Town Hall to elect two delegates and an alternate to represent the town at the 2024 Massachusetts Democratic Convention.

“For those interested in the 2024 elections, your local caucus is a great way to learn about the political process and meet candidates and activists at the grassroots level,” said Brookfield Democratic Town Committee Chair Danielle Kane.

All registered and preregistered Democrats in Brookfield who are at least 16 years old by Feb. 15, 2024 are eligible to vote and run for the seats. Youth (ages 16-35), people with disabilities, people of color, veterans, members of the LGBTQ+ community not elected as delegates or alternates at the caucus are encouraged to apply for add-on seats by visiting massdems.org/massdems-convention.

The convention, which will vote to endorse its US Senate candidate and to amend the party's charter, will be held June 1 at the DCU Center in Worcester.

For more information about this and future events, please visit brookfielddtc.org or email brookfield.dtc@gmail.com.

WEBSTER-DUDLEY VETERANS SERVICE

PART TIME CLERK POSITION

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The Town of Dudley is seeking a qualified professional to serve as the Veterans' Services Clerk. This position falls under the direction of the Director of Veteran Services.

Candidate must have excellent organizational skills with the ability to manage time effectively, computer proficiency is required along with writing ability. Knowledge of departmental operations and exercise judgment in responding to the needs of our veterans. Attend veterans-oriented trainings and educational courses as required, assists with community events such as Memorial Day and Veteran Day parades, and helps veterans in completing applications for State and Federal Veteran benefits.

A high school education or GED is required with one year of office experience. Salary is \$20.28/hour.

Please send a cover letter and resume to townadmin2@dudleyma.gov.

Resumes will be accepted until the position is filled.

SPENCER NEW LEADER

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BROOKFIELD
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EAST BROOKFIELD
\$142,500, 126 Pleasant St, E Brookfield Town Of, to Amoako, Barbara.
\$113,892, 110 Bridge St, Davidson, Paul A, and Davidson, Denise T, to Davidson, Paul A.

LEICESTER
\$475,000, 61-A& B Sargent St, Colebrook, James A, and Colebrook, Sherrie L, to Amero, Sean, and Kong Jr, Richard.
\$470,000, 33 Hyland Ave, Wyllie, Sarah, to Gallant, Katharine, and Gallant, Benjamin.

NORTH BROOKFIELD
\$639,900, 9 Brickyard Rd, Lashaway Homes LLC, to Sanclemente, William, and Sanclemente, Patricia.
\$315,000, 19 Lakeview Rd, Lachance Louis A Est, and Lachance, Daniel L, to Burton, Patricia A.
\$190,000, 19 Oakham Rd, 1st Landing Invs LLC, to Ironforge Renovations LLC.
\$175,000, 19 Oakham Rd, Everlasting Hm Slnk LLC, to First Landing Invs LLC.

SPENCER
\$350,000, 5 Cornfield Rd, Clifford, Deborah E, to Erickson, Shanna.
\$250,000, 41 William Casey Rd, Osper, Margaret J, to Turning Pt Hm Buyers LLC.

WARREN
\$320,000, 7 Ramsdell St, Round, Norman S, and Round, Barbara A, to Stearns, Zachary R, and Stearns, Grace E.

WEST BROOKFIELD
\$339,900, 12 Allen St, Jones, Sharon M, and Giguere, Brian J, to Kemp, David, and Kemp, Erin.

West Brookfield Democrats to elect delegates to Democratic State Convention

WEST BROOKFIELD — A caucus, open to any Democratic voter registered in West Brookfield, will be held at the West Brookfield Town Hall on Monday, March 4 at 6:30 p.m., in order to choose delegates to attend the Democratic State Convention on June 1 at the Worcester DCU Center. Our purpose is to voice support for our nominee for the United States Senate as well as to elect Democrats across the Commonwealth and the nation.

Any member of the community may attend, but only registered Democrats may vote. Youth (age 16 to 35), people with disabilities, people of color and members of the LGBTQ+ community not elected as delegates or alternates, are encouraged to apply to be add-on delegates at the caucus or by visiting <http://massdems.org/massdems-convention>. Registered, but unenrolled town voters are welcome to change registration ahead of the caucus and fully participate upon enrollment verification.

Voter registration information will be provided. If you would like to attend the Democratic Caucus for West Brookfield and/or need further information, please feel free to send an email to wbdtc01585@gmail.com, or call Eric von Bleicken at 212-316-5349.

Nominations welcome for Meritorious Service Award

SPENCER — The Board of Selectmen is accepting nominations for the town's Meritorious Service Award. Established in 2002 by the Select Board, the Meritorious Public Service Award honors members of the community who have demonstrated an exemplary commitment to bettering the town. Annually, the Select Board chooses one individual to receive the award. To nominate someone for this award, please visit www.spencerma.gov and access the nomination form. Please complete the form by March 5 and email it to bsavoie@spencerma.gov. You can also mail your materials to the Office of the Town Administrator, Memorial Town Hall, 157 Main St., Spencer, MA 01562. The deadline to submit all materials is March 5.

www.Stonebridge Press.com

East Brookfield Library invites public to informational session

EAST BROOKFIELD — The East Brookfield Public Library invites you to join us for an important information session March 5 at 10 a.m.! The topics will cover various programs and services that are out there to help you, as well as details on how to access them. The Town Treasurer will present on the Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit program – a great opportunity to save for those who qualify. The Town Assessor will cover various tax exemptions that can lower your tax payments as well as what documentation you will need to file. Interested in social services such as SNAP, MassHealth, internet/phone discounts, or in-home services? Tri-Valley Elder Services will be covering these and more! We will also have information on using Libby (access to ebooks and audiobooks, all with your library card!) and as well as Talking Books - great options for folks who are blind or have limited vision. Light refreshments will be served. We look forward to seeing you!

Bryant University students named to Dean's List

SMITHFIELD, R.I. — Bryant University is pleased to recognize the students named to the Fall 2023 Deans' List. To earn a place on the Deans' List, students must have a GPA of 3.4 or better for at least 12 semester hours of work. Congratulations on this outstanding achievement! Timothy Moore of Leicester Jared Peterson of E Brookfield Corey Roberts of Spencer About Bryant University For over 160 years, Bryant University has been at the forefront of delivering an exceptional education that anticipates the future and prepares students to be innovative leaders of character in a changing world. Bryant delivers an innovative and uniquely integrated business and liberal arts education that inspires students to excel. With approximately 3,700 graduate and undergraduate students from 38 states and 49 countries, Bryant is recognized as a leader in international education and regularly receives top rankings from U.S. News and World Report, Bloomberg Businessweek, Forbes, and Barron's. Visit www.Bryant.edu.

Local students named to Assumption University Dean's List

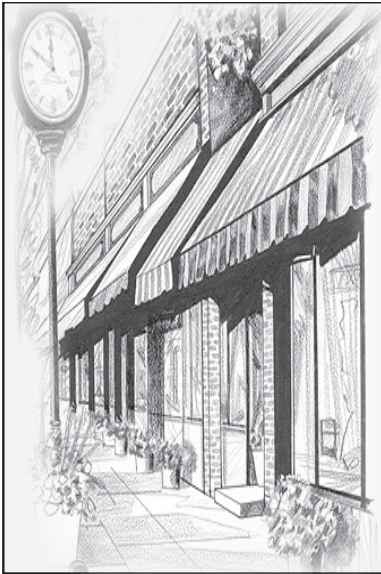
WORCESTER — Assumption University has announced those who have been named to the University's Dean's List for the fall 2023 semester. Students named to the Dean's List must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 for a five-class, 15-credit semester to be included on the prestigious list, which is announced at the completion of the fall and spring semesters. The following local students were named to the Dean's List: Kya Birtz of Leicester Catherine Brouillard of Leicester Breana Escobar of Rochdale Hailey Gershman of East Brookfield Madeline Johnson of West Brookfield Angelina Riendeau of North Brookfield Lindsey Soter of Spencer Assumption University, founded in 1904 by the Augustinians of the Assumption, is New England's premier university for high-quality education, integrating career preparation and education of the whole person, drawing upon the best in the rich and centuries-long tradition of Catholic higher education. Assumption, located in Worcester, Massachusetts, seeks to provide students with a transformative education that forms graduates who possess critical intelligence, thoughtful citizenship, and compassionate service. The University offers 34 majors and 49 minors in the liberal arts, sciences, business, nursing and professional studies; as well as master's and continuing education degrees and professional certificate programs. For more information about Assumption University, please visit www.assumption.edu.

Local residents named to Clark University Dean's List

WORCESTER — The following local residents were named to Clark University's Fall 2023 Dean's List: Miranda G. Bartley, of Brookfield was named to first honors. Abigail E. Gahagan, of Leicester was named to second honors. Ashley D. Leighton, of Spencer was named to second honors. Autumn H. Powers, of Leicester was named to second honors. Ana G. Ruggieri, of Leicester was named to first honors. Founded in 1887, Clark University is a liberal arts-based research university that prepares its students to meet tomorrow's most daunting challenges and embrace its greatest opportunities. With more than 45 undergraduate majors and major tracks, more than 30 advanced degree programs, a growing number of professional certificate programs and nationally recognized community partnerships, Clark University fuses rigorous scholarship with authentic world and workplace experiences that empower our students to pursue lives and careers of meaning and consequence.

Local residents named to RIT Dean's List

ROCHESTER, N.Y. — The following students were named to the Dean's List at Rochester Institute of Technology for the fall semester of the 2023-2024 academic year. Full-time degree-seeking undergraduate students are eligible for Dean's List if their term GPA is greater than or equal to 3.400; they do not have any grades of "Incomplete", "D" or "F"; and they have registered for, and completed, at least 12 credit hours. Brendan Metz of Brookfield, who is in the biotechnology and molecular bioscience program. Ingrid Rossetti of Brookfield, who is in the computer science program. Patrick Kenyon of Brookfield, who is in the mechanical engineering program. Ryan Wilson of W Brookfield, who is in the industrial engineering program. Rochester Institute of Technology is home to leading creators, entrepreneurs, innovators, and researchers. Founded in 1829, RIT enrolls more than 20,500 students in 200 career-oriented and professional programs, making it among the largest private universities in the U.S. With 145,000 alumni worldwide, the university is internationally recognized and ranked for its leadership in technology, the arts, and design. RIT also offers unparalleled support services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The cooperative education program is one of the oldest and largest in the nation. Global partnerships include campuses in China, Croatia, Dubai, and Kosovo. For the latest news, go to rit.edu/news. To follow RIT on social media, go to rit.edu/social-media.



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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

How about this weather?

“How about this weather?”

If ever there was an easy, non-challenging conversation opener, this is it. You can be in line at the grocery store, serving jury duty or pushing papers around at work – it doesn’t matter where you are - this line never fails.

Everyone seems willing to talk about the weather. It’s a built-in, slam-dunk, easy topic that allows complete strangers to either commiserate or celebrate, depending on the daily meteorological situation.

So, what is it with the weather? Why do we love to discuss, comment and re-hash it?

Weather is complicated, frustrating and ultimately uncertain. Weather breaks our hearts and lifts our moods and forces daily choices for everyone. Weather drives our decisions, affects our attitudes and makes fellow survivors out of strangers.

Weather is our most true common denominator. No matter what our life circumstances - student, professional, retiree – when you live in the same geographic area, you and your fellow community members have the weather in common.

Weather doesn’t care about politics or sports teams or vacations or the date on the calendar. It is an equal opportunity annoyer and a great equalizer – everyone has to drive in snow, or dash to the car in the rain, or stand in long lines at the fair in the hot sun. Almost everyone has had a picnic cancelled, a vacation spoiled or a ball game rained out.

But weather is also the unexpectedly warm, sunny, sweet-smelling spring morning that causes smiles and banter with co-workers. It’s the light snow flurries that add sparkle to early December and prompts holiday greetings between shoppers. It’s the crisp, snappy feel of fall football games and the slow, sultry, humidity of summer evenings spent on backyard patios. It’s the backdrop of every day of our lives.

So, what is it with the weather? Maybe we love the topic because it’s universal. Maybe we love the excitement of something that will change – either for the good or the bad. Maybe it’s that it is temporary and fleeting and some- thing to either be withstood or enjoyed, knowing that it will not last. Maybe it’s simply because weather is always with us... whether we like it or not.

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.

VIEWPOINT

OPINION AND COMMENTARY FROM SPENCER, LEICESTER AND THE BROOKFIELDS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A general knowledge quiz

To the Editor:

In conversation with my wife, she mentioned that conversing with her sister in Philadelphia, she knew that Donald Trump had bankrupted casinos in Atlantic City, and [refused to compensate] several of the contractors there, because her husband worked in the building trade, but being regular Fox News viewers, they had never heard of Trump University, his being banned due to grift of the Trump Charity, the multiple bankruptcies of Trump ventures gone bad, like Vodka, an airline He did try to accept credit for Trump Airlines planes bringing troops home, but the bank he screwed sent them.

MAGA is trying to make the case that all of his court issues are politically motivated. Courts only actually prosecute a small number of cases, and only when they believe them to be a slam dunk. Federal prosecutions run in the 90 percent conviction range. when juries are involved, the case needs to be very convincing. That said, if you were running for president and innocent, wouldn’t you think proving that would be high priority?

If, on the other hand, you think becoming POTUS and being able to have your justice department drop all charges, is your only and best option, then trying to delay all judgements, might be your plan.

E. Jean Carroll, who won her defamation case about him sexually assaulting her, has been awarded a total of \$88 million by two juries.

Of course, part of that package, until appeal is settled, is having her life threatened daily, living off the grid and in a secure setting.

This is a like scenario to the two election workers that Rudy Guilliani has been ordered to pay \$150 million to.

To give you an idea how far into the handbasket we are, Fani Willis, the Georgia AG prosecuting the Jan. 6 conspirators under RICO, did not first choose an ex-boyfriend to work the case. That only came to be after others, unwilling to put their lives and families through the mafia style abuse that has become de-rigor for either being involved in legal action against or even working the polls where GOP does not win.

Was the hard negotiated border deal that Trump just ordered the GOP Congress to kill, because he believes that will help elect him, the first one since Reagan was president? Answer — no, it was not. Trump had one on his desk and ready to sign during his first year in office. Someone a Fox talked him out of signing it.

When did the mass northern migration to our southern border start? Obama had already seen the beginnings of it when the cartels got so powerful. Only our aid sent south to finance troops and provide some small order had any impact. One of the first acts of Trump’s presidency was cutting off the aid, those troops then headed here immediately, cutting off funding to the pandemic response office, we saw how well that worked out, repealing Obama era rail safety rules (Palestine, Ohio paid bigly for that).

I hope nobody is still flying a Ukraine flag beside a Trump flag, because that would be like a Nazi flag beside a Star of David Israel flag.

We have literally lost thousands of our warriors fighting communism, in

Korea and Vietnam. We had been funding Ukraine’s valiant defense mainly by providing American made ordinance. Putin is working to recreate the USSR. If Ukraine falls, how soon will Latvia, Estonia, or Poland be next.

The Orange Jesus claims that we will not defend countries not paying their dues (In reality, their dues are 2 percent of GNP to defense spending.) The attack we suffered on Sept. 11, 2001 may have slipped your memory, but these allies were there for us-post haste- the Polish battalions in Iraq and Afghanistan arrived and stayed.

Now that we are dropping the ball on Ukraine aid, our NATO allies are stepping up, but consider this, where do you suppose those displaced Ukrainian refugees are going? Not many come here. While complaining about our southern border, what do you suppose is happening there? The southern European states have large Muslim populations. Where do you think Palestinian, Syrian refugees are going?

Joe Biden has known most world leaders for decades. Many have privately confided that if Trump and his right wing radicals win, our democracy will likely fall. Trump’s answer to Ukraine will be abandoning them and NATO, just like he did with the hard negotiated Iran nuclear deal, and the Paris environmental accords. Only US leadership can impact world issues.

Joe Biden may be old, but knows more than Trump ever will. Even if he died, the competent structure now in place will keep a steady hand on the tiller. Trump is a loose cannon, a grifter, con man and a clear and present danger to democracy (he has already tried to override it). Having kept like zero campaign promises, I am appalled that he continues to find conning so many so easy, while convincing or exposing the con carries so little weight.

Today, we are the world’s top producing oil/fossil fuel country. Our stock market, that Trump left in a shambles, is soaring, unemployment lowest in 50 years (he left us closed). Inflation is down, and will reach the 2 percent target this year. Much remains to be done. Biden has made the pitch to let him finish the job. The GOP house is a complete clown show. Under Trump’s direction, impeachments and investigations that remind me of “The Apprentice” — entertaining, but with no practical purpose. Do you believe Alabama is now seizing frozen embryos to protect them, because implanting them they might die. I wish I was kidding, but I am not.

Trump claims that the stock market and Taylor Swifts success are both his fault. Want to buy a bridge? We need a blue wave. Roe would get codified into law and women would regain a right stolen from them. Ukraine would survive and win (if they last long enough), at a bare minimum, you would need to be 21 to own an assault rifle and sane, NATO, and security oof Taiwan would be strengthened, environmental issues would get more help. Instead of threats to Social Security and Medicare, wealthy would pay their fare share Health care costs would continue to be addressed. Unlike Trumps blather, there is no better cheaper coverage than Obamacare. If there was, everyone would sign up.

KEN KIMBALL
BROOKFIELD

We should all have a home our children want to come back to

To the Editor:

It is with great humility that I present myself as a candidate for Select Board.

I was raised in North Brookfield. I remember being “poppy girl” one Memorial Day, wearing my first communion dress as I placed flowers in a wreath on the Haston Library lawn. On summer days, I trekked into the woods with my friends to finally find the smallpox cave. I donned my blue apron as I started my first job at Victory Supermarket. In Gene Caille’s U.S. History classes, I learned the importance of community involvement and civic responsibility. This led me to run for and secure my first office: President of NB High School Class of 1990.

When I entered the “adult world,” it was with stability, common sense, and the open-mindedness that comes from being raised in a small town. I went to Clark University on the Worcester County Alumni Scholarship. My experience at NBHS was so impact-

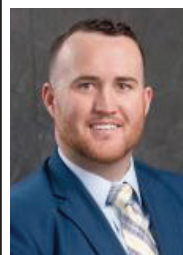
ful that my senior year at Clark, I nominated my former history teacher, Leslie Munns, for their prestigious “Outstanding Secondary Educator of the Year” award. And you know what? She won. We won — Ms. Munns, NBHS, and North Brookfield.

Though I moved to a city out-of-state for several years for graduate school and to pursue a career in education, I chose to move back to North Brookfield to raise a family. I missed small-town culture, in which community and family are at the heart of our home. As I watched my daughter Julia’s confidence bloom on Tabby LeBlanc’s basketball team and my son Gavin’s self-assurance grow as a youth soccer referee, I was reminded why I came home.

My experience as a K-12 public educator and nonprofit university professor for the past twenty-eight years has taught me many things. Most importantly, I have learned the value of being an independent ear who enters conver-

Turn To **LETTER** page **A7**

How can women bridge the retirement gap?



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March 8 is International Women’s Day, a day for celebrating all the accomplishments of women around the globe. But many women still need to make up ground in one key area: retirement security.

Women’s challenges in achieving a secure retirement are due to several factors, including these:

Pay gap – It’s smaller than it once was, but a wage gap still exists between men and women. In fact, women earn, on average, about 82 cents for every dollar that men earn, according to the Census Bureau. And even though this gap narrows considerably at higher educational levels, it’s still a source of concern. Women who earn less than men will likely contribute less to 401(k) plans and will ultimately see smaller Social Security checks.

Longer lives – At age 65, women live, on average, about 20 more years, compared to almost 17 for men, according to the Social Security Administration. Those extra years mean extra expenses.

Caregiving responsibilities – Traditionally, women have done much of the caregiving for young children and older parents. And while this caregiving is done with love, it also comes with financial sacrifice. Consider this: The average employment-related costs for mothers providing unpaid care is nearly \$300,000 over a lifetime, according to the U.S. Department of Labor — which translates to a reduction of 15 percent of lifetime earnings. Furthermore, time away from the workforce results in fewer contributions to 401(k) and other employer-sponsored retirement plans.

Ultimately, these issues can leave women with a retirement security deficit. Here are some moves that can help close this gap:

Contribute as much as possible to retirement plans. Try to contribute as much as you can afford to your 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan. Your earnings can grow tax deferred and your contributions can lower your taxable income. (With a Roth 401(k), contributions aren’t deductible, but earnings and withdrawals are tax free, provided you meet certain conditions.) At a minimum, contribute enough to earn your employer’s matching contribution, if one is offered, and try to boost your contributions whenever your salary goes up. If you don’t have access to a 401(k), but you have earned income, you can contribute to an IRA. Even if you don’t have earned income, but you have a spouse who does, you might be eligible to contribute to a spousal IRA.

Maximize Social Security benefits. You can start taking Social Security at 62, but your monthly checks will be much bigger if you can afford to wait until your full retirement age, which will be around 66 and a half. If you are married, you may want to coordinate your benefits with those of your spouse — in some cases, it makes sense for the spouse with the lower benefits to claim first, based on their earnings record, and apply for spousal benefits later, when the spouse with higher benefits begins to collect.

Build an emergency fund. Try to build an emergency fund containing up to six months’ worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid account. Having this fund available will help protect you from having to dip into your retirement accounts for large, unexpected costs, such as a major home or car repair.

It’s unfortunate, but women still must travel a more difficult road than men to reach retirement security. But making the right moves can help ease the journey.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

End game

To the Editor:

Isn't it great that for years, we have heard that the European countries have a better health system than the US. That their governments provide free health care, while we don't. Now, thanks to Trump, we know why.

For years, America has been subsidizing the NATO countries by picking up the costs of membership in NATO. They had no problem with America picking up the bill while they gave free services to their residents. They forced the US to pay for bases on their soil. All the while, the American taxpayer being taxed to the hilt to pay for it. Now that they have a problem over there, they want more of your taxes to fix their problems. With friends like that, who needs enemies? We have already given Ukraine \$60 billion. We have no accountability where these funds went or were used. There are reports of generals diverting millions to finance vacation villas. I am sure a lot of it goes to family members of our US politicians who have kids working for companies involved over there. Biden and Romney, to name a few. Currently, the situation is a stalemate with over 200,000 dead. What is the end game there? Who is going to rebuild the country after the fighting is over? Ukraine is similar to the US in one way. The top 5 percent control the money and government. So, it's this top 5 percent that are jockeying things around so that they can maximize their greed. The other 95 percent who are doing the dying would live the exact same lives under Zelensky or Putin. They would be forced to work and pay taxes to whoever controls the country. It's basically the same bosses at the top. That's why there is no overture for talks and peace. The 5 percent are fighting over what spoils they will win from the fighting.

Now Biden and our corrupt politicians want 60 billion more to continue fighting. Their being paid by the defense lobby groups so they can continue building shells and arms. Big profits in there and plenty of your tax monies to spread around. New US tech companies building armed drones and US companies

Biden has this octogenarian's vote

To the Editor:

Gas is so high. Eggs cost a lot. These seemed to be the complaints of high inflation costs. But let's remember, inflation was worldwide and much higher elsewhere than in the United States. And President Biden has admirably brought it down from 8.9 to 3.7 percent. And it is still a challenge to deal with shopping at the supermarket. I get it. As retirees my husband and I have had to make adjustments to our grocery budget and on a "fixed" income at that.

Be patient. There was a saying in my growing up years. It was "Rome wasn't built in a day." It seems in these days many want things to happen instantly. Life doesn't happen that way. And when we were first married gas cost 25 cents a gallon. Yes, I am old but not senile.

And we can have differences of opinion. I find it troubling that if there is a disagreement, threats of violence often follow. There is a "rule of law" that should protect us. Such a "rule" not only protects our right to free speech, it should also protect us not to be threatened for using free speech. When someone disagrees with us, is it okay for that person to threaten us or worse to accost us violently? Maybe with a gun?

It seems that one person's rhetoric can seemingly allow others to use violence as okay. Aren't laws made to protect us, not take away our rights? We don't automatically do the right thing. We need laws to guide us to respect the rights of all. If there were no "rule of law" and people generally made up their own law wouldn't there be the danger of chaos? I wonder when a former president appears to have no respect for the "rule of law" when that very law gives him the right to free speech which he uses to denigrate others.

A Trump spokeswoman, Karoline Leavitt, recently said that small donors are sick and tired of "Crooked" Joe Biden's high inflation, open borders, crime and chaos. She also says they don't want four more years of misery and destruction. Oh my, Ms. Leavitt has learned the "art of projection" from her

using Artificial Intelligence technology to advance the designs in new efficient killing technology. Ukraine is the perfect Research and Development grounds for these companies. They can perfect them while getting paid handsomely by your tax money. At some time when the war is over, these same companies will be part of the companies using your tax money to rebuild Ukraine. It's a never-ending source of money for them. Your money! The playbook is the exact same we saw with Vietnam war. We got involved in a regional conflict where our CIA and corrupt politicians monkeyed around in the country's politics. We at first supplied support and arms for the US supported government to fight on its own. The reason was that if we did not support them, then China would take over all the countries. The Domino effect. The same bunch of malarky we hear now from the corrupt Senators. The ones that have been in office for over 30 years and feed off America like a tick in a dog. Their entrenchment in the system is fueled by payments from defense industry lobbyists and kickbacks from those receiving the aid. Their family and children enjoy the millions sucked off the American taxpayer. Instead of negotiating an end to the war they want to extend it so that they and their family members can continue to feed off the public trough.

It's time to get a man that isn't beholden to lobbyists, defense contractors, and not compromised by our CIA or FBI (Epstein tapes!). It's time to get the man in there who can, and will, fight back against the institutionalized corruption of the D.C. swamp. The man who will broker peace on day 1 and stop killing. It's time to get the guy who talks mean but carries a big stick! The man who stops the killing of war. The man who builds our nation and will have Zero illegal immigration. Vote Trump 2024 and herald in a new age of peace on earth. Then we can all say Hallelujah, praise the lord!

MARK ROBILLARD
SPENCER

MAGA leader!

And what rock has she been hiding under? President Biden brought high inflation down, as I mentioned above. The Infrastructure Bill is backing many projects across the country and creating many jobs in the process. Unemployment is down. A bipartisan bill was created in the Senate to speak to the border "invasion," but the Speaker and House Republicans wouldn't even read it. Democrats compromised to include many things Republicans have wanted for years and President Biden said he would sign it. But the orange former guy wants to have border complaints for a campaign tactic so the House Speaker said it wouldn't even be considered. And how can Ms. Leavitt call President Biden's tenure as crime and chaos when TFG has been convicted of two indictments and has four more indictments hanging over his head? And the TFG has expressed admiration for the dictator tactics of a certain Russian leader whom he has called a smart guy for invading Ukraine and believed instead of the United States Intelligence Agencies regarding interference in the 2016 election. And TFG has said he wants to be a dictator. Ms. Leavitt seems to follow the lead of TFG of having no shame. How she "keeps a straight face" with such bizarre claims is beyond me.

I just heard Trump say that Blacks like him because he has been discriminated against, just like them. It is always all about him. He doesn't really care about discrimination of others. And now he wants to sell \$400 sneakers to Blacks because he says they like sneakers. How condescending! While I dislike what he says and does, I feel sorry that he is so shallow and uncaring. I am an octogenarian who is 100 percent in support of President Biden for all he has done for the country, and as a candidate for re-election.

PATRICIA JACKMAN
NORTH BROOKFIELD

LETTER
continued from page A6

sations and considers issues with an open mind. In town government roles, impartiality and non-partisanship are crucial. As a Select Board member, I would take this approach to gain your trust and respect.

From our early history in shoe manufacturing and rubber products to our Town House Renovation and Restoration project, NB serves as an example of ingenuity and resilience. As we hire our first Town Administrator, this is an exciting time. We have the opportunity to tap into our Administrator's expertise and build a future that is both fiscally stable and socially responsible. I would very much like to be part of that effort.

As part of a community with such a rich history, my goal is to respect our

past while helping build a future that makes Julia and Gavin want to raise their families here, too.

My goal as a select person is to offer an even-keeled, independent voice to our community. I have been a lifelong independent thinker, and enter this opportunity wanting to hear different perspectives. My mission as your select-person will be to represent and promote what is best for the people of North Brookfield. We should all have a home our children and grandchildren want to come back to.

I humbly ask for your vote on May 6.

With gratitude,

JOAN WILKINSON BURKHARDT
NORTH BROOKFIELD

What people in Houston, Texas have just read because "It Says It All"

To the Editor:

What follows is a shortened version (with my comments) of an editorial in the Houston Chronical.

"Now that the Kansas City Chiefs have triumphed in the Super Bowl ... we can turn attention to another winning team. We have in mind the Biden Administration. Under the leadership of the oldest and arguably the most experienced president in America's history, the team in the White House for the past three years has performed remarkably well, despite the rancor and divisiveness that have affected this nation for nearly a decade.

The accomplishments of an administration dedicated to governing, one that believes in the power of government to make life better for the American people, is a key reason we heartily endorse the reelection of Joe Biden. The other reason, equally important, is to fend off the chaos, corruption and danger to the nation that would accompany the return of Donald Trump to the White House.

The President has his shortcomings, to be sure, but what his administration has managed to get done during the last three years is a potent reminder to his fellow Democrats, to independents and to those Republicans who have somehow resisted Trump's cultish appeal that the nation has a viable alternative. Here is a sampling (of these Biden administration accomplishments);

The Economy:

One of the clear advantages of a president as experienced as Biden is the wisdom to get the heck out of the (Federal Reserve Bank's) way as it masterfully applied the breaks to what could have been runaway inflation.

The economy...is now healthier than any advanced nation

With unemployment approaching a 50 year low companies need more workers,

Inflation is trending downward... without the bitter medicine of a recession of high unemployment. Food prices are still high...but gas prices have fallen ...(and)

The stock market is percolating along and hitting record highs.

'Infrastructure week' became a punch line during the inept Trump adminis-

tration, but the Biden Administration, in its first year managed to pass a bi-partisan infrastructure Investment and jobs Act that's expected to add an estimated 1.5 million jobs per year for the next 10 years. This administration ...is investing clean water and high speed internet, it's repairing roads and bridges. upgrading air and seaports, modernizing our power infrastructure, investing in public transit and passenger rail, and clearing up Superfund and brown field sites.

(Regarding Health Care), steadily growing reliance on the Affordable Care Act during this (Biden) administration has made coverage more affordable and accessible for millions of Americans. (Likewise)The Biden White House has given Medicare the power to directly negotiate with "Big Pharma" thereby lowering drug prices (on medicines like insulin).

Another attribute of the Biden Administration is its normality ... a former GOP operative put it this way: 'One of the greatest gifts of a democratic civil society is the freedom not to think about government, to wake up and not worry about the mood of a leader. Joe Biden has made governing boring and predictable. both fundamental rights of people in a healthy democracy.'

Accounts (and medical opinions) other than the Special Council Hur's suggest that Biden remains focused, engaged, and in command on the vital issues that occupy a president. Experience counts.

We are reassured in large part because Biden has restored the tradition of a capable tram running the White House, trampled by Trump's deeply flawed scheme to run a one man show. Like Reagan, Johnson, and Franklin Roosevelt, Biden's deft management has made him arguably the most productive president in over 50 years.

(To end Biden) has, as they say, forgotten more than (Trump) will ever know. That's not saying much, and at the same time, it says it all."

KEVIN KANE
SPENCER

Stocking Wallum Lake



Courtesy

This week's picture shows this writer's two dogs Molly the beagle and Twig the yellow Lab. Molly is 13, and Twig is 14 years old. Plenty of exercise and a good brand of dog food has kept them in good physical shape! Twig was still hunting this past fall and my hopes are high for another pheasant season.



THE GREAT
OUTDOORS
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TRUE**

on, which added to the excitement of catching trout during the springtime fishing season.

Wallum Lake went through numerous changes over the years, some for the better and some not so good. Wallum Lake was poisoned by the state many years ago, and was part of the state's reclamation of numerous ponds in the state.

They were hoping to make Wallum Lake a trout and salmon fishery, but soon realized it was not possible. Acid rain was one of the major problems with the lake.

Mass. & Rhode Island tried to make Wallum Lake a trophy brown trout pond, and it was working well for a number of years. Both states worked to get a smelt population going at Wallum as a good food source for the brown trout. Catching four & five Brown trout was a blast at Wallum for a number of years, but the hopes of establishing a good population of smelt at the lake as a forage fish was not working because of acid rain. Their last effort to provide Wallum with a good population of smelt was dropped, and shoal spawning smelt were introduced into the lake. It was a big success, and their populations are still there. This writer worked with MFW to secure a company called Living Lakes to spread tons of lime into the lake to reverse the acid rain problem, and it worked but the state gave up on the trophy brown trout idea, just when the problem was solved.

Now Mass. is only interested in stocking trout, with no program to have local lakes produce large hold-over trout. More on Wallum Lake in the coming weeks!

The Whitinsville Fish & Game Club is holding trap shooting for members and non-members starting at 10 a.m. every Saturday. Pistol Clay shoots under the lights Wednesday's and they have opened their membership to 49 new members, for a total of 299 members. If you want to join a fast growing club with all of the club's activities to enjoy, call the club or visit the club's Web site. Do not be left out of this great opportunity to join this great club. Pioneer Arms is also giving special discounts to club members. Check it out!

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Classic Lenten Recipes

Looking for tasty meatless meals for Lent or dietary reasons? Mid-century recipe files were full of handwritten recipes to help harried housewives come up with interesting dinners – sans the meat! Read on for some authentic boomer recipes that are not only nostalgic – but delicious!

And readers, send in your favorite meatless recipes for a chance to win a three course Dinner for Two at the Publick House in Sturbridge!

Salmon Croquettes

Salmon croquettes, a staple Lenten dish from days gone by, are still a flavorful meatless choice today:

Ingredients (for patties): one cup mashed potatoes; one 6½-ounce can salmon, drained; one egg, beaten; one tbsp. minced onion; 1/4 teaspoon salt; dash black pepper; dash cayenne pepper; 1/4-1/2 cup dry unseasoned bread crumbs;

Ingredients (for dredg-

ing): 1 egg slightly beaten; 1/2 cup seasoned bread crumbs

In a bowl, mix the first seven ingredients, adding enough bread crumbs so that the mixture can be handled and is not too sticky. Form patties.

Dip patties into the slightly beaten egg and coat in seasoned bread crumbs. Refrigerate in a single layer for about an hour.

Deep fry until golden brown, (or cook in air fryer until browned). Serve with tartar sauce

Classic tartar Sauce recipe:

Mix together: one cup mayonnaise; one tablespoon sweet pickle relish; one teaspoon yellow mustard; one teaspoon lemon juice.

Crab Cakes

This quick and easy recipe is a throwback from the 1960s that utilizes the convenience of canned fish and Ritz crackers!

Ingredients: 16 ounce canned crabmeat, drained; two tablespoons

olive oil; six chopped green onions; 8 ounces Ritz crackers (about 2.5 sleeves); one large egg; one tablespoon mayonnaise; on teaspoon dry mustard; one teaspoon garlic powder; ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper; ¼ teaspoon Old Bay seasoning; one cup bread crumbs (panko or non-seasoned); olive oil.

Directions: Cook green onions in olive oil until soft, In a bowl mix together the onions; crabmeat, crushed crackers, egg, mayonnaise, dry mustard, garlic powder, cayenne pepper, garlic powder, Old Bay seasoning, salt, and pepper. Form into patties and coat with bread crumbs. Fry until golden brown on each side; drain on paper towel. Or cook in air fryer until browned and crisp.

Shrimp Casserole

Casseroles were common fare for mid-century dinners, and Lent was no exception. This seafood recipe calls for a long, oval casserole dish (yes, they had different shaped

dishes for specialty casseroles!) but you can use a flat glass baking dish.

Ingredients: 2 ½ lbs. shrimp, deveined, peeled and cooked; 1 cup cooked rice; one cup sharp cheddar cheese; one can condensed cream of mushroom soup; ½ cup green onions, chopped; ½ cup celery, chopped; one stick of butter; 8 lemons, sliced very thin

Directions: Mix together the shrimp; rice, cheese and soup. Meanwhile, saute onions and celery in the butter until softened. Add to shrimp mixture, and pour into a long, flat casserole dish. Overlap lemon slices over the top. Cover and cook in a 375 degree oven for 20-30 minutes.

Broccoli and Macaroni

This was one of my favorite Lenten meals growing up! Easy and delicious, it offers a change from fish on Fridays.

Ingredients: 6 cups broccoli florets; Olive oil (as desired); eight garlic cloves, chopped; one tablespoon salt; one box



TAKE
THE
HINT
**KAREN
TRAINOR**

Ziti macaroni, cooked; ½ cup Romano cheese, grated; two tablespoons Italian flat leaf parsley, chopped.

Directions: Heat about a half cup of olive oil over medium heat, add broccoli and salt to the pan, adding more oil as needed for broccoli to be browned and as soft as you like it. Once done, add garlic and cook for another minute or two; be sure not to burn garlic. Add cooked macaroni to the pot and mix with Romano cheese; garnish with parsley.

Win Dinner for Two at the Publick House

Your tips can win you a great dinner for two at the historic Publick House Historic Inn in

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

Do you have a 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.

Gear up for the 2024 garden season

It's never too early to prepare for the garden season ahead. Having the right tool for the job saves time, reduces the frustration of trying to make the wrong tool work, and allows you to garden longer with less muscle fatigue.



GARDEN
MOMENTS
.....
MELINDA
MYERS

Take an inventory of all your tools. Be sure to check the shed, garage, or tool caddy. Make a list of those that need to be replaced or need an update. This is also a good time to clean and sharpen those tools you plan to use in the coming growing season.

As you update your tools, you may want to purchase a few hand tools with comfortable wooden handles and carbon steel heads. The wood adds a natural aesthetic that goes hand in hand with gardening.

hardened steel blade and a handle for durability and long life. The ComfortGel grip allows you to keep working longer.

Like digging with the right-sized shovel, dead-heading flowers with the right tool makes it easier and you're more likely to get the job done. For those with a lot of dead-heading, select one with an ergonomic design, a finger loop for better control, and an easy-release lock like Corona's Ergo Dead Header Snips.

Late winter and early spring are also the time to do a bit of trimming and pruning on indoor plants. Pruners and snips with specially shaped blades, like the Corona BP14623 Houseplant Pruner, make trimming individual leaves and stems easier, ensuring you make the cut where planned.

A scoop comes in handy when placing potting mix or fertilizer in containers. The more you use it, the more uses you will discover for scoops like Corona's Multi-Scoop with a stainless-steel scoop and ComfortGel grip.

If you struggle to haul soil, mulch, and plants to the garden bed, it may be time to invest in a garden cart. Wheelbarrows are a traditional favorite but how about a four-wheeled cart with pneumatic tires to make moving the load over rough ground easier? Consider one with sides that fold down for easier loading and unloading. Or perhaps one with a dumping mechanism, like Corona's CR1000 Poly Dump Cart, that makes it easy to empty loads of mulch and soil where it is needed.

And don't forget about the young gardeners in your life. Having their own set of properly sized hand tools, long-handled tools, and of course, a wheelbarrow will make working with you in the

garden even more special. Kids, like adults, benefit from spending time in the garden. Give them their own garden patch or row to dig, plant, and tend. You'll all have more fun.

When upgrading your garden tools, consider donating those that are still in good working order to a nearby community garden, school garden, or master gardener group. They can always use extra tools to help them grow gardeners of all ages. And those that have reached the end of life can be turned into garden art. It's a great way to save memories of gardens' past.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the recently released Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition and Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" instant video series and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment TV & radio program. Myers is a columnist and contrib-



Courtesy — Corona Tools

The long-handled Digmaster nursery shovel with its narrow head makes it easy to dig even in small spaces.

uting editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and was commissioned by Corona Tools for her expertise in writing this article. Myers' Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.



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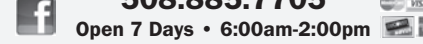
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Never tell them they're wrong

Enemies. We all have them. Some people are your enemy, and you don't even know it. They may have been motivated by jealousy or envy, or maybe they misinterpreted something you said to them once and felt slighted. Since then, they've been quietly undermining you at worst, and at best, they may just be waiting for their moment.

There are a million ways to make an enemy. Maybe you accidentally took someone's favorite pen, and they've sworn a vendetta. Or perhaps you got the last slice of pizza at a party, not knowing it was earmarked for someone else, sparking a silent, saucy rivalry. Let's not forget the classic "reply all" email faux pas, where you accidentally shared your not-so-flattering opinion on the monthly birthday

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cake choices with the entire office. And I'm sure there are some listed elsewhere.

Nobody wants an enemy, do they? I don't. Some say that if you don't have any enemies, then you're not doing it right.

Winston Churchill said, "If you don't have any enemies in life, then you haven't stood up for anything."

He's probably talking about a different type of enemy than what I'm about to present.

While leafing through one of the most popular self-help books ever written, "How to Win Friends and Influence People," I came across one sure-fire way to not make an enemy.

Imagine you're in a

team meeting discussing the direction of the upcoming project. You believe that focusing on digital marketing will yield the best return on investment, arguing, "Considering our target demographic spends most of their time online, it's evident that digital marketing is where we should be allocating the majority of our budget."

Your coworker, however, believes traditional marketing methods like print and television ads will have a broader reach, countering, "Our brand's strength has always been its appeal to a wide audience, and traditional media gives us that visibility."

Your ego flares up at this moment, tempted to dismiss their perspective outright. You might feel inclined to assert, "That approach is outdated and inefficient. Wait

until we see the results from focusing solely on traditional methods and missing out on the digital audience. Then we'll see who's right."

Often, our ego comes up, and the ego always wants to be correct. This temptation to prove your point without fully considering their viewpoint can quickly turn a professional disagreement into a personal conflict.

Now, you may be right. Your reasoning may be sound. But you must also consider that other people almost always want to be correct. Whether you know it or not, you insulted their intelligence, and now they're your enemy.

Enemy is a strong word, but whatever the case, they almost certainly see this as a challenge. Why wouldn't they? You told them they're not seeing the big picture. Now

they have something to prove.

Now, you've got a situation on your hands because you were right and made them feel silly about it, and they're now going to want their chance to make you seem foolish.

What's a way to avoid this? Well. It's straightforward. You can begin by saying, "Well, now, look, I thought otherwise, but I may be wrong. I frequently am, and if I'm wrong, I want to put it right. Let's examine the facts."

Nobody will object to you admitting that you could be wrong, and let's examine the facts!

It's a curious thing about us humans: we can change our minds in a heartbeat over the smallest things, no drama involved. But the moment

someone tells us we're wrong? That's when the walls go up, and we stand our ground harder than ever.

Telling someone they're wrong is a dead-end strategy, especially in a way that might make them feel less than brilliant. You could throw every fact and figure their way, and more often than not, they'll stick to their guns, convinced of their rightness, even if it's just in the privacy of their thoughts.

So, how do we navigate this tricky terrain? Dale Carnegie hit the nail when he said, "Show respect for the other person's opinions. Never say, 'You're wrong.'" It's as simple as that.

Haston Library hosting special pottery workshop

NORTH BROOKFIELD — The Haston Free Public Library staff invites guests to attend a special pottery workshop and presentation this month.

Set for March 18 at 6 p.m., the event will familiarize guests with the history of the Paul Revere Pottery Company. A demonstration will focus

on the individuals behind this renowned pottery studio, originally established in Boston during the early 1900s.

"Discover the legacy left behind and learn about their techniques, materials, and products in this captivating demonstration," read a statement released by the library. "The vividly illus-

trated discussion will transport you to the world of the SEG (Saturday Evening Girls) and the Paul Revere Pottery, giving you an insider's view of the creators and their masterpieces."

Moreover, the hands-on portion of the workshop will allow guests to get up close and personal with pottery making. The pro-

gram will feature several engaging activities for artists of all experience levels.

"You'll have the unique opportunity to pass a freshly made pot from the potter's wheel from person to person, and feel the transformation of clay from wet to dry as it rotates," the library statement read. "Additionally,

each participant will get to create their own pinch pot, a cup formed by pinching the clay with your thumb and finger."

Guests will be able to bring their unfired masterpieces home.

The program is funded by the North Brookfield Cultural Council, a Massachusetts Cultural Council agency.

Haston Free Public Library is located at 161 North Main St. in North Brookfield. To learn more about upcoming events at the library, or to sign up for programs, call 508-867-0208.

For further information about library activities, visit www.northbrookfieldlibrary.org.

A meatless meal to enjoy during Lent

The forty days and nights of Lent are a time for reflection and anticipation of Easter's arrival. Fasting, which for many Christians includes skipping meat and animal products each Friday, also is part of the preparation. Individuals who are unaccustomed to going meat-free may need to expand their culinary repertoire to ensure Friday meals continue to be filling and tasty.

This recipe for "Herby Rice and Black Bean Salsa Burrito Bowl" from Niki Webster's "Rainbow Bowls" (Sourcebooks) is full of protein-rich beans, flavorful herbed rice and satisfying avocado. It can be enjoyed as a quick and easy, meatless lunch or dinner.

HERBY RICE AND BLACK BEAN SALSA BURRITO BOWL

Serves 2

Splash of olive oil
100 grams sugar snap peas
1 avocado, flesh sliced

For the rice:

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
250 grams cooked basmati rice
Juice of 1/2 lime

1 teaspoon maple syrup
40 grams fresh herbs, such as coriander, flat-leaf parsley, mint and/or dill, chopped
Sea salt and black pepper

For the black bean salsa:
240 grams canned black beans, drained and rinsed
2 tablespoons sun-dried tomato paste
100 grams cherry tomatoes, chopped
Juice of 1/2 lime
4 tablespoons fresh mint, shredded
1/2 teaspoon sea salt flakes
Pinch of chili flakes

To make the rice, add 1 tablespoon of the oil to a frying pan with the cooked rice, lime juice and maple syrup. Fry for 1 to 2 minutes on a medium heat, then add the fresh herbs. Add the remaining tablespoon of oil and season with salt and pepper. Set aside and keep warm.

Set a small frying pan or griddle pan on a medium heat. Add a splash of olive oil and the sugar snaps and fry for 2 to 3 minutes until a little charred.

To make the black bean salsa, add all the ingredients to a bowl and stir to combine.

To serve, load two bowls with the rice mixture, black bean salsa, sugar snaps, and sliced avocado.



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Sheriff's Office inspires kindness one community at a time

NORTH BROOKFIELD — For their third year, Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis and Worcester County Sheriff's Office staff celebrated the nationally recognized Random Acts of Kindness Week, this year during the week of Feb. 12. The goal of this week is to inspire acts of kindness throughout the county.

To spread joy and inspire kindness, Sheriff's Office staff successfully executed their mission to visit every community in Worcester County during the Random Acts of Kindness week. Staff distributed more than 3,500 goody bags filled with donated items to lucky individuals they met at various public places. The bags serve as a symbol of support and care from local law enforcement.

Sheriff's Office staff made a stop at the

North Brookfield Police Department as well as a handful of other locations throughout the town.

With its motto, 'Make Kindness the Norm,' the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation was founded during a mid-1990s summer when violence was at an all-time high on the West Coast. Inspiration to start the organization came from a television reporter who noted that people should stop reporting on "random acts of violence" and start 'practicing random acts of kindness and senseless acts of beauty.' This foundation is now the driving force behind Random Acts of Kindness Week in the United States.

This year, Tito's Handmade Vodka and Polar Beverages were the bag sponsors of the initiative. With the support of the two organizations, the Sheriff's Office, and the Worcester County

Reserve Deputy Sheriff Association were able to acquire the 3,500 goody bags at no cost.

"Our duty as a law enforcement agency is to build bridges and strengthen the bond between our department and the communities we serve," commented Evangelidis. "Our team takes immense pride in contributing towards the betterment of Worcester County and always looks for ways to spread positivity. We understand the significance of ensuring public safety and are committed to reinforcing that message. Let us all strive to make positivity the focus of this week."

The Sheriff's Office hosts community events year-round to engage the residents that they serve. To learn more about the Sheriff's Office, visit their Web site at www.WorcesterCountySheriff.com, or follow along on social media for consistent updates.



Staff from the Worcester County Sheriff's Office deliver Random Acts of Kindness goody bags to the North Brookfield Police Department. Left to right: WCSO Lt. Bard, WCSO Ofc. Rainey, NBPD Chief Smith, NBPD Ofc. Martin, NBPD Lt. Daley, WCSO Sgt. Ward.

Local seniors celebrate Valentine's Day with a night out



SPENCER — Local seniors recently enjoyed a fun night out to celebrate the Valentine's Day season. The Senior Center's annual Valentine's Day dinner-dance brought together couples and singles alike for a night of music, dining, and dancing.

"We sold 120 tickets, with a wonderful meal catered by EB Flatts. It was a wonderful night," said Senior Center Director April Caruso.

Songs for dancing were provided by DJ Rich Lapierre. Additionally, the event featured Quilts of Valor presentations made to Paul Angers and Richard Lapierre. Officials thank everyone who teamed up to make the event a success.



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Street), investigated; 4:28 p.m.: suspicious persons (Dale Street), investigated; 6:11 p.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 8:22 p.m.: medical/general (Jolicoeur Avenue); 9:08 p.m.: commercial fire (Meadow Road), referred; 9:36 p.m.: 911 call (West Main Street), hang-up; 11:22 p.m.: abandoned 911 call (Donnelly Road), no contact; (total daily mv stops – 1).

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16

1:09-5:57 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 2:29 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 6:50 a.m.: DPW call (Main Street), transformer blew; 6:52 a.m.: fire alarm (West Main Street), referred; 7:46 a.m.: fire alarm (Chestnut Street), referred; 8:02 a.m.: fire alarm (Pleasant Street), referred; 11:12 a.m.: restraining order service (Bixby Road); 12:15 p.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), services rendered; 1:54 p.m.: sex offender registration (West Main Street), assisted; 1:56 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 2:49 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), LTC change of address; 4:35 p.m.: officer wanted (Prospect Street), spoken to; 5:10 p.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 8:38 p.m.: DPW call (West Main Street),

re: snow drifts; 11:18 p.m.: abandoned 911 call (Pleasant Street), dog complaint; (total daily mv stops – 3).

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17

12:28/12:40/12:49/1:01 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 12:58-2:52 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:52 a.m.: medical/general (Mechanic Street); 2:32 a.m.: parking violation (Church Street), ticket issued; 9:46 a.m.: medical/general (Clark Road); 10:24 a.m.: medical/general (Sunberg Road); 11:01 a.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 11:48 a.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), speeding/passing illegally; 1:09 p.m.: medical/general (Paxton Road); 2:04 p.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 2:12 p.m.: medical/general (Church Street); 2:16 p.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 4:05 p.m.: lost/found (Main Street), pkgs found on roadside; 9:24-9:31 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; 11:00 p.m.: mv stop (West Main Street), Francis J. Marsh III, 60, 46 Mechanic Street, Spencer, OUI liquor/2nd offense, negligent operation, marked lanes violation, arrest; (total daily mv stops – 1).

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18

2:22 a.m.: parking violation (Mechanic Street), ticket issued; 2:24 a.m.: medical/

general (Northwest Road); 2:26-3:21 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 2:35 a.m.: parking violation (Chestnut Street), ticket issued; 6:30 a.m.: medical/general (Mechanic Street); 8:25 a.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Leicester PD bolo/domestic a&b; 8:53 a.m.: illegal dumping (Water Street), trash side of road; 10:22 a.m.: building checked, secure; 10:57 a.m.: animal complaint (Old Farm Road), rep. animal bite; 12:26 p.m.: DPW call (Main Street), low-hanging wires; 12:43 p.m.: building checked, secure; 1:37 p.m.: DPW call (Paxton Road), assist Spectrum; 1:56 p.m.: building checked, secure; 3:13 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 5:01 p.m.: medical/general (Pleasant Street); 5:26 p.m.: mv lockout (South Spencer Road), assisted; 5:54 p.m.: medical/general (Crestview Drive); (total daily mv stops – 1).

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19

12:45-1:18 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 6:34 a.m.: medical/general (Marble Road); 7:24 a.m.: fraud (Bemis Road), report taken; 8:11 a.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), spoken to; 8:17 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 8:42 a.m.: 911 call (Maple Street), non-emergency; 9:42 a.m.: med-

ical/general (Bay Path Road); 1:31 p.m.: suspicious persons (West main Street), rep. theft from donation bin; 3:57 p.m.: RV complaint (Paxton Road), snowmobiles trespassing; 4:32 p.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 7:58 p.m.: animal complaint (Irving Street), stray cat; 8:45 p.m.: 911 call (Wire Village Road), accidental; (total daily mv stops – 5).

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20

2:33-3:07 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 2:40 a.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operator; 9:57 a.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 11:38 a.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 1:27 p.m.: mv complaint (North Brookfield Road), mv blocking line of sight; 2:29 p.m.: officer wanted (Duggan Street), domestic issue; 2:46 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), LTC change of address; 3:54 p.m.: medical/general (Charlton Road); 4:44 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 5:34 p.m.: medical/general (Bay Path Road); 6:07 p.m.: officer wanted (North Spencer Road), req. welfare check; 7:13 p.m.: suspicious mv (Columbine Road), investigated; 7:49 p.m.: mv complaint (Maple Street), mv blocking d/way; (total daily mv stops – 0).



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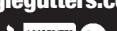
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D'AMATO

continued from page A1

Shot” co-star Steve Carlson, who enjoyed success on both the big screen and the National Hockey League stage as a pro hockey player.

D’Amato is survived by his partner of 23 years, Marina Re; his sister, Andrea D’Amato; niece Nandita Smithback; and many cousins.

“He may have played tough bad guys [on screen], but a sweeter, kinder, more compassionate man does not exist,” Re posted in a statement on social media. “Whether skiing down the slopes, riding his motorcycle, skating on the ice, rollerblading through the village, or kayaking on the lake, he lived life to the fullest.”

D’Amato also appeared in such films as “The Deer Hunter,” “Firepower,” “The Opportunists,” and Suspect.”

His television credits include “The Six Million Dollar Man,” “Murder Ink,” “Law and Order,” and “The Unusuals.”

Additionally, he worked in the ski industry for a number of years, serving as a ski technician at Paragon Sports in New York and Wachusett Mountain.

D’Amato also supported multiple charitable causes throughout his life, many of which benefited children. Over the past week, support for his family has poured in from people whose lives he impacted close to home and across the country.

D’Amato was also known to attend local athletic functions, greet fans, and support programs that give back to kids and the community at large. Whenever fans asked him for a photo or an autograph, he always happily obliged, local residents told the New Leader.

CRASH

continued from page A1

Road. Multiple attempts were made to request an emergency helicopter or a fixed-wing air ambulance on scene, but circumstances prevented the flight, officials said.

AI

continued from page A1

tions, and state and local government. The secretaries of the state’s Executive Office of Economic Development (EOED) and the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security (EOTSS) will serve as task force co-chairs. “Massachusetts leads in adopting innovative technology, and we are proactively embracing the emerging field of AI,” said Secretary of Economic Development Yvonne Hao. “Our goal is not only to propel the growth of AI, but to employ it to stimu-

Hollis was transported to Androscoggin Valley Hospital. She was later transferred to Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center.

At approximately 1:45 a.m. on Feb. 17, Hollis succumbed to her injuries.

Operator inexperience was determined to be the leading factor in causing the crash, officials said.

late job creation, elevate our state’s economy, and lengthen our lead in key sectors.”

Looking ahead, Healey will seek \$100 million in her upcoming economic development legislation to create an applied AI hub in Massachusetts. If approved, the funding will be used for a capital grant program to support the adoption and application of AI capabilities to solve public policy problems.

The task force will begin its work this month and present its final recommendations to the Governor later this year.

To learn more about the task force and its goals for the year ahead, visit www.mass.gov.

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LEGALS

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

(SEAL) LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT

Docket No. 24 SM 000626
ORDER OF NOTICE

TO: **Janet O. Kuszewski**
and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (*et seq*):
PHH Mortgage Corporation
claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in **Spencer, numbered 3 Fairview Drive**, given by **Janet O. Kuszewski to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Liberty Home Equity Solutions, Inc., its successors and assigns, dated August 28, 2015, and recorded in Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 54252, Page 249**, 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 04/01/2024 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 2/16/2024
Attest: Deborah J. Patterson, Recorder
March 1, 2024

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

(SEAL) LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT

Docket No. 24 SM 000665
ORDER OF NOTICE

TO: Kayla A. St Laurent and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (*et seq*):
MSR Asset Vehicle LLC
claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in **Spencer, numbered 159 Northwest Road**, given by **Kayla A. St Laurent to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Evolve Bank & Trust, its successors and assigns, dated January 20, 2021, and recorded in Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 64323, Page 257**, 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 04/01/2024 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 2/16/2024
Attest: Deborah J. Patterson, Recorder
March 1, 2024

**Town of North Brookfield
Notice of Public Hearing**

The North Brookfield Planning Board will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at 6:15PM at the Senior Center, 29 Forest St., North Brookfield, MA. Public opinion will be received regarding two proposed corrections for Zoning Map and two amendments to the Zoning Bylaws regarding fences and detached accessory dwelling units. Fences will amend Section VI. General Regulations by adding a new subsection K. Detached accessory dwelling units will amend Section IV. Use Regulations by adding subsection A.2.t. A definition for an accessory dwelling unit is also proposed. Any person interested in being heard or seeking information should appear at the above stated hearing. A copy of the proposals are on file in the office of the Town Clerk, 215 North Main St., No. Brookfield, MA. William King, Chair
February 23, 2024
March 1, 2024

**Notice of Special Public Hearing
East Brookfield, MA
Zoning Board of Appeals**

A Zoning Board hearing will take place at the East Brookfield Town Hall, 122 Connie Mack Drive, East Brookfield, MA on Thursday March 21st, 2024. Hearing will commence at 7:00 PM in meeting room A or soon thereafter as can be heard. Interested parties can attend in person.
Applicant: Mr. Peter O’Neil; owner. Property location: 119 Maple St, East Brookfield, MA.
The applicant is requesting the following relief: A side setback “Variance” for the construction of a deck.
March 1, 2024
March 8, 2024

**The Commonwealth
of Massachusetts
Town of Leicester
Office of the Collector of Taxes
Notice of Tax Taking**

To the owners of the hereinafter described land and to all others concerned
You are hereby notified that on Monday the 18th day of March, 2024 , at 10:00 A.M. at the Tax Collectors’s Office, 3 Washburn Square , pursuant to the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 60, Section 53, and by virtue of the authority vested in me as Collector of Taxes, it is my intention to take for the Town of Leicester the following parcels of land for non-payment of the taxes due thereon, with interest and all incidental expenses and costs to the date of taking, unless the same shall have been paid before that date.
Nicholas George, Collector of Taxes
Assessed to 128A SARGENT ST
RLTY TRUST And VERCELLINI
LUKE TRUSTEE
A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 1.447 Acres located and known as 128-A SARGENT ST shown on the Town of Leicester Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 23B-C15 and being part of the premises recorded in book 49097 on page 387 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.
2018 Tax \$1,044.17
Assessed To CONDO GERALD G
A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 0.507 Acres located and known as 32 SALMINEN AV shown on the Town of Leicester Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 42A-B7 and being part of the premises recorded in book 45569 on page 369 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.
2013 Tax \$371.94
Assessed To CONWAY R.J.L. LLC
A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 2.28 Acres located and known as CONWAY DR shown on the Town of Leicester

Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 39-A5.2 and being part of the premises recorded in book 32339 on page 234 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.
2015 Tax \$1,075.96
March 1, 2024

**NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE’S SALE
OF REAL ESTATE**

Premises: 113 Northwest Road, Spencer, MA 01562

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Alfred Magnone Jr. and Christine M. Magnone to Citizens Bank of Rhode Island, and now held by **Citizens Bank, N.A. f/k/a RBS Citizens, N.A. s/b/m Citizens Bank of Rhode Island**, said mortgage dated September 30, 2003 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 31882, Page 34, for breach of the conditions in said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at **Public Auction on** March 28, 2024 at 11:00 AM Local Time upon the premises, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit: *The land in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in the Town of Spencer, County of Worcester, on the westerly side of Northwest Road and shown as Lot 2 on a plan by BryLee Civil Engineering Company titled, “Plan of land in Spencer, Massachusetts, owned by Lucien L. Tetrault” recorded in the Worcester County District Registry of Deeds in Plan Book 659, Plan 71 and to which plan reference may be had for a more particular description. Subject to all restrictions, conditions, rights and easements as set forth in deed recorded in Book 17489, Page 078.*

Being the same premises as conveyed to the Mortgagor by deed recorded with Worcester County Registry of Deeds, in Book 17489, Page 078 and which premises is subject to a mortgage held by Bay Finance Company, Inc., dated November 22, 1995, recorded with Worcester County Registry of Deeds, in Book 17489, Page 081. And for consideration, Alfred Magnone, Jr., hereby release unto the mortgagee all rights of homestead and other interest in the mortgaged premises and do hereby specifically release and discharge unto the mortgagee all rights to homestead for themselves, their family and their minor unmarried children acquired by virtue of a Declaration of Homestead dated November 24, 1995, recorded with Worcester County Registry of Deeds, Book 17491, page 026.

The description of the property contained in the mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

For Mortgagor’s Title see deed dated November 22, 1995 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 17489, Page 78.
Said mortgage is subject to a certain mortgage given by Alfred Mangone, Jr. and Christine M. Mangone to Bay Finance Company, Inc. dated 04/23/2003 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 29844, Page 364. Further assigned by Assignment of Mortgage from Bay Finance Company, Inc. to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., its successors and assigns, as nominee for Countrywide Home Loans, Inc., its successors and assigns dated April 23, 2003 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 29844, Page 381, further assigned by Assignment of Mortgage from Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., its successors and assigns, as nominee for Countrywide Home Loans, Inc., its successors and assigns to BAC Home Loans Servicing, LP dated June 29,

2010 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 46002, Page 68, further assigned by Assignment of Mortgage from Countrywide Home Loans, Inc. to Nationstar Mortgage LLC dated April 2, 2013 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 51169, Page 128, further assigned by Corrective Assignment of Mortgage ***This Assignment is being recorded to correct and replace the Assignment recorded on 07/08/2013 as Book/Page/Instrument# 51169/128/2013/00082185 in the records of the Clerk of Worcester South County, MA to correct the assignor*** from Bank of America, N.A., successor by merger to BAC Home Loans Servicing L.P., F/K/A Countrywide Home Loans Servicing, LP to Nationstar Mortgage LLC dated February 13, 2017 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 57110, Page 257, further assigned by Assignment of Mortgage from Nationstar Mortgage LLC to MTGLQ Investors, L.P. dated January 13, 2017 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 56971, Page 63, further assigned by Assignment of Mortgage from MTGLQ Investors, L.P. to U.S. Bank Trust National Association as Trustee of the Tiki Series IV Trust dated November 18, 2020 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 64139, Page 285, further assigned by Assignment of Mortgage from U.S. Bank Trust National Association as Trustee of the Tiki Series IV Trust to U.S. Bank Trust National Association as Trustee of the Bungalow Series IV Trust dated March 26, 2021 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 64917, Page 180.

TERMS OF SALE: Said premises will be sold and conveyed subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens and assessments, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described.

FIVE THOUSAND (\$5,000.00) Dollars of the purchase price must be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer’s or cashier’s check at the time and place of the sale by the purchaser. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer’s or cashier’s check within thirty (30) days after the date of sale.

Other terms to be announced at the sale.

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**Notice of Special Public Hearing
East Brookfield, MA
Zoning Board of Appeals**

A Zoning Board hearing will take place at the East Brookfield Town Hall, 122 Connie Mack Drive, East Brookfield, MA on Thursday March 21st, 2024. Hearing will commence at 6:30 PM in meeting room A or soon thereafter as can be heard. Interested parties can attend in person.
Applicant: Mr. Peter O’Neil; owner. Property location: 117 Maple St, East Brookfield, MA.

The applicant is requesting the following relief: A rear setback “Variance”, A side setback “Variance” for the construction of a deck extension and farm-ers porch.
March 1, 2024
March 8, 2024

SPORTS

Tigers deny David Prouty of second straight Clark Tournament Championship



David Prouty's Noah LaTour, left, wins the game-opening tip against Maynard's Ryan McLaughlin.



Alec Fournier of David Prouty reaches out to collect a pass thrown his way.

Nick Ethier photos



David Prouty's Fred Neiray focuses at the free throw line.

BY NICK ETHIER
SPORTS EDITOR

WORCESTER — By defeating No. 7 Southbridge (72-36) and No. 3 Douglas (56-37) in the quarterfinal and semifinal rounds of the Clark Tournament Small Schools bracket, the second seeded David Prouty boys' varsity basketball team had the opportunity to defend its Clark title from a year ago — a 51-49 victory in double overtime over Hopedale — against No. 1 Maynard on Friday, Feb. 23 at the Kneller Center, as they sought their 18th Clark Championship.

But it was the Tigers

who were able to win the crown, their fourth Clark title, by beating the Panthers, 68-55.

"Maynard was the better team in the game," said David Prouty head coach Pat O'Connor. "We just couldn't get it to striking distance. Credit to them for being as good as they were."

"I'm really proud of our kids," O'Connor continued. "This has been an amazing run and it's not the result we want. There's no such thing as coming in second — it stinks — however, the seniors need to look at they're leaving this basketball program in a

million times better of a place than the way they found it. In that, I can find some happiness."

David Prouty's Jayden Rubio opened the scoring with a 3-pointer, but the quick Tigers worked the ball inside to gather plenty of points. After one quarter Maynard jumped ahead, 17-8.

It was Rubio who then opened the second quarter in the same fashion as he did the first, with a 3-pointer, to give the Panthers a spark. Later, Noah LaTour and Rubio hit two more treys, and it was a 25-19 ballgame. But the Tigers' Daniel Terrell closed the half with a three-point play in the final second, putting Maynard into the locker room ahead by 13 points, 33-20.

"We weren't able to keep them in front," O'Connor said of the Tigers' ability to attack

the basket. "We've been able to keep teams in front all year. Maynard is just a great team. Credit to their kids for executing."

Prouty won the third quarter by a 20-18 count to close the deficit down to 51-40, and then, midway through the final frame, Rubio connected on back-to-back 3-pointers to close the gap to 59-52.

"He's awesome. He's not a freshman, even though he is," O'Connor said of Rubio's ability to not let the bright lights affect his performance, despite being a first-year varsity player.

Maynard continued to hit shots, though, closing the game on a 9-3 run to put the game away.

"Their zone is awesome. They're great defensively the way they play it, and they really force you to make shots

from the outside. We made some shots, but not at the level they did," explained O'Connor.

Rubio led the way with 23 points, while LaTour and Alec Fournier added 11 points and Jay Jay Neiray chipped in another 10. For the Tigers (14-6), double-digit scoring performances were turned in by Terrell (24 points), Cody March (16), Aidan Donahue (13) and Ryan McLaughlin (10).

David Prouty is now 17-4 as they are set to embark on the Division 4 State Tournament. The Panthers are the No. 10 seed and will host a Round of 32 game at North Brookfield High on Friday, March 1 against No. 23 Hamilton-Wenham. A season ago, Prouty lost in the D5 State Championship game to Taconic, 53-51.

"Battle tested is the perfect thing to say, con-

fident in our experience. We've had tough games over the past three years, and we've come right back. I'm confident going forward with the senior leadership and success those kids have had, that we'll be able to focus next week," said O'Connor.

O'Connor added that he and the team has appreciated the support of the strong fanbase from Spencer and East Brookfield.

"I'm proud of the community, they really showed up. I've come to all the games at Clark so far, and the two biggest crowds were David Prouty fans against Douglas and then David Prouty fans against Maynard, so it's really been great. I appreciate everyone in the community for supporting us," O'Connor concluded.

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SPORTS

With season on the line, Leicester rallies to defeat Quaboag



Leicester's Jayda McLeod (33) passes the ball over to teammate Alexis Mercier.

BY NICK ETHIER
SPORTS EDITOR

LEICESTER — The stakes were high when the Leicester and Quaboag girls' varsity basketball teams took to the court on Tuesday, Feb. 20. Both sides were 9-10 and heading into their final game of regular season play. The winner would improve to 10-10, automatically qualifying for the Division 4 State Tournament in the process. The loser would have to wait until Saturday, Feb. 24 to find out if their Power Ranking was No. 32 or better, the last way to reach the D4 Tourney.

"We didn't talk about the States all year until we got to nine," Leicester head coach Chris Barry said once the Wolverines

defeated Quaboag 39-37 back on Feb. 6 to improve to 9-6. "Once we got to nine, we had to get one more to get to States and then we lost to four in a row."

The Cougars, on the other side, were 5-7 after losing to Northbridge 40-15 back on Jan. 29. But Quaboag fought back to 9-8 after a 4-1 stretch. The Cougars then had tough losses against West Boylston and Millis, teams with a combined record of 32-10, to reach the win-and-in game versus Leicester.

"We started playing really good, even the last two games against great teams," Quaboag head coach Bill Beauregard said of the tough schedule.

When the Wolverines

and Cougars finally tipped off, Leicester was looking to defeat Quaboag for the third time this season. It wasn't looking that way, though, as the Cougars led after a quarter of play, 9-1. Quaboag then took a 13-5 lead into the halftime break.

But, from there, the Wolverines rallied. They won third quarter scoring, 11-0, and held on the rest of the way for a 25-21 victory.

"These guys fight hard," Barry said of his squad. "Against the teams we've played, they don't give up, they play hard, they play together. It's hard to beat someone three times."

Although Leicester scored just five first-half points, Barry was optimistic that the shots would fall in the final two



With Quaboag defender Madeline Potvin reaching in, Leicester's Maeve Nelson swings the ball over to her right side.

quarters.

"We had layups and we had shots — we had everything we wanted to do — so we're like, if it falls in the second half..." Barry said. "It was a good team effort because a lot of girls kind of stepped up. Lexi's two 3-pointers in the third quarter broke it open for us."

Alexis Mercier scored all six of her points on those two 3-pointers, with the latter one tying the score at 13-13. Later in the quarter, Allie Blair scored her lone points on a traditional three-point play, giving the Wolverines the lead for good at 16-13.

"Their role players hit shots, and we didn't hit shots," said Beauregard. "And rebounding just killed us."

Leicester outrebounded

the Cougars, 41-24, with the Wolverines' Jayda McLeod leading the charge with 12 boards.

"The entire team plays with heart and hustle. Just go get the ball. Loose ball, go get the ball," Barry said of his team's rebounding mentality.

Quaboag was down 10 points at 23-13 in the fourth quarter, and they finished the game on an 8-2 run, but it was too little, too late. Evelyn Doe led the Cougars with 10 points, while Parker Tunley chipped in another six.

"We played well for a half, but it's 32 minutes. We were pretty much right where I thought we'd be, but we needed another win," said Beauregard, as Quaboag's Power Ranking finished at 33, one spot out

of playoff inclusion.

Leicester, meanwhile, earned the 31st seed and will play No. 34 Mystic Valley Regional in the Division 4 State Tournament Preliminary Round, after press time. Barry said that he and the team are excited to play in States after finishing last season at 5-15 and with a Power Ranking of 35.

"It's huge. It's been a successful season with a tough schedule and a couple injuries here and there. We've got some new players and we lost a good player last year," Barry said of the graduation of Sarah O'Connor. "So, to make the Clark, which was a goal of ours, and to make the States, we're just checking a couple of things off our list. It's pretty nice."

Scoring in transition helps Minutemen defeat Lynn Tech

BAY PATH THEN WINS STATE VOCATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP OVER BVT



Bay Path's Anika Ferrantino goes up between two Lynn Tech defenders.



Kortnie Adams prepares to take a free throw for Bay Path.



Allison Welton dribbles toward the basket for Bay Path.



Bay Path's Hannah Cavan scans the court for an open teammate.

CHARLTON — The Bay Path girls' varsity basketball team has had a very busy postseason, first participating in the Clark Tournament and then hosting the Massachusetts Vocational Athletic Directors Association (MVADA) Large Schools Tournament.

The MVADA first sponsored vocational tournaments in 1996-97. The 14-6 Minutemen, the tournament's top seed, took on No. 4 Lynn Tech (14-6) on Friday night, Feb. 23.

Back in December, before the first regular season game, Bay Path head coach Randy Schulman shared his team's goals: Clark Tournament, Voke Tournament, and State

Tournament, and these goals became reality. Prior to the game with Lynn, Schulman said, "At this point in the season every team in every tournament is good and will be a hard-fought battle. My girls are excited and ready for the challenges."

Bay Path came out ready to play, as they used their full-court press to disrupt Lynn Tech's game plan. Bay Path found their transitions from defense to offense with little effort, putting 20 points on the scoreboard to capture the first quarter lead, 20-8.

The Minutemen maintained the lead going in and out of the second quarter by connecting on quick passes for quick

baskets, adding 16 points this quarter and holding the Tigers to 5. The Minutemen hustled after every loose ball and at the half Bay Path was on top, 36-13.

Lynn Tech found the basket throughout the third quarter, putting 20 points on the scoreboard. But Bay Path stuck to their game plan, with smart defense and aggressive drives to the basket on offense, and they put up 18 points of their own, as Bay Path led at the end of the third, 54-33.

After a minute into the fourth quarter, Lynn Tech had put up 5 quick points to Bay Path's 2, Schulman called a timeout to settle his team. Bay Path then worked the clock and their offense through the end of the game. Bay Path took this State Vocational semifinal game, 68-43.

Following the impressive win, Schulman said, "I thought my girls played great tonight, they played with energy,

moved the ball around and were in sync together defensively. We had seen on film that we might be able to score in transition on them and made a conscious effort to do that. Very proud of how they played and will now get ready for the Championship game."

The State Vocational Championship game was held back at Bay Path on Sunday, Feb. 25 against Colonial Athletic League rival Blackstone Valley Tech, the third seed, who previously defeated No. 2 Southeastern in a semifinal. The Minutemen were able to top the Beavers for the title, 54-43. Check back next week to read about Bay Path's championship win.

The Minutemen are next headed into the MIAA's Division 2 State Tournament, where they are seeded 38th. Bay Path will take on No. 27 Holliston after press time. This is Bay Path's first year in Division 2, previously participating in the Division 4 tourney.

SPORTS

Warriors rally past Millbury for Clark Tournament title



The Tantasqua boys' varsity basketball team defeated Millbury, 44-42, for the Clark Tournament Large Schools Championship on Friday, Feb. 23.

BY NICK ETHIER
SPORTS EDITOR

WORCESTER — The Tantasqua and Millbury boys' varsity basketball teams know each other, and know each other well. The Southern Worcester County League A Division rivals met twice during regular season play. First, the Woolies took care of the Warriors back on Dec. 18, 54-44, before Tantasqua returned the favor to Millbury, 55-49, on Jan. 22.

The Warriors and Woolies got to renew their rivalry in a rubber match that wasn't just an ordinary game. Sixth seeded Tantasqua and No. 4 Millbury got to settle it all at the Kneller Center for the Clark Tournament Large Schools Championship on Friday, Feb. 23.

After a slow start where the Warriors trailed at the half, 28-17, they

continued to chip away over the next two quarters. The Woolies led, 42-41, before Tantasqua's James Sciaraffa ultimately hit the game-winning 3-pointer with under 30 seconds to play, lifting the Warriors to a 44-42 victory.

"They didn't care about anything other than winning. James Sciaraffa made a huge shot at the end, and not one guy on our team cares that it was him and not them," explained Tantasqua head coach Scott Dion. "We're all rowing the boat in the same direction. When you do that, it can be pretty powerful in high school."

On the winning sequence, Sciaraffa (13 points) received a pass from teammate Elijah Webb near the left elbow. Sciaraffa looked around, realized how open he was, and confidently sank the 3-pointer.

"I was wide open. At first, I was going to swing it back to (Webb). But I was open, and I had to take it. I was too open," said Sciaraffa.

The Warriors then survived the final two Millbury possessions. First, Kenny Donnelly's 3-pointer was no good. The Woolies then got the ball back, and Anthony Phillippo's layup wouldn't fall. Jack Rapose secured the rebound, and he was fouled.

Although Rapose missed both ensuing free throws, there was less than two seconds remaining on the clock. Rapose emphatically blocked Phillippo's desperation three-quarter court heave, and Rapose and his teammates celebrated with the nearby Tantasqua fans.

This was the Warriors' first Clark Tournament title in their eighth appearance, and defense

paved the way to victory. Millbury scored just 14 second half points after scoring 14 in both the first and second quarters.

"Our defense helped us flip the switch, so then we went on a run and started hitting our shots more. Everyone forgot about the first half and focused on the next half," said Sciaraffa.

"We pride ourselves on it. That's kind of our bread and butter," added Webb, who also got the team going offensively with a 3-pointer just before halftime before adding 8 of the Warriors' 17 third quarter points.

"I started off a little bit cold, but we pride ourselves on starting and ending halves fast, so we go into halftime down 11, so we're just keeping our mental and chipping away throughout each quarter," said Webb, who finished with 15 points.

Dion pointed out that



James Sciaraffa of Tantasqua looks to drive the ball on Millbury defender Jimmer Donnelly.



Tantasqua's Elijah Webb uses the entire length of his 6-foot-8 frame to defend Millbury's Anthony Phillippo.

Rapose was responsible for guarding Donnelly, Millbury's explosive scorer. Donnelly finished with 14 points, but only three of those came in the second half on a third quarter 3-pointer.

"Jack Rapose is just a gamer. He was guarding Kenny. We've played them twice already and Kenny has gotten into the 20s in both games. Today, Jack took it upon himself to make sure that one, he could take away his 3-point shot, and then he gave him fits when he tried to put the ball on the floor," explained Dion.

For Dion, winning a Clark Championship was a dream come true.

"I was at Prouty for 11 years. I took the Tantasqua job, and I

thought that dream of winning a Clark was done because Tantasqua wasn't a Clark eligible school at the time. Now we're a Clark eligible school, so this is quite a surprise and quite a treat for me personally," said Dion. "Growing up in Spencer and seeing the history that Prouty had and then we got there a few times when I was the coach, and we could never get past the semi-finals."

The Warriors (14-7) will now turn their attention to the Division 3 State Tournament. Tantasqua, the No. 9 seed, will host No. 24 Dennis-Yarmouth in the Round of 32. That game will be played Friday, March 1 at 6:45 p.m.

Tantasqua girls watch boys' team win at Clark, then capture Tournament themselves



By defeating Northbridge, 40-29, the Tantasqua girls' varsity basketball team captured the Clark Tournament Large Schools Championship on Saturday, Feb. 24.

BY NICK ETHIER
SPORTS EDITOR

WORCESTER — During the Tantasqua girls' varsity basketball team's practice on Friday, Feb. 23, head coach Andy Haley talked to the players about the boys' team's matchup later that day versus Millbury for the Clark Tournament Large Schools Championship.

"I remember saying at practice, 'I want you to go to the gym, walk around that place, look at the lines on the floor, watch the teams celebrate and how much fun that's going to be for us tomorrow,'" said Haley.

That was because the Warriors had a Clark Tournament Large

Schools Championship game themselves on Saturday, Feb. 24 versus Northbridge.

"It was so fun. I was in the stands, we were all cheering for the boys and their game was so close," Gabby Scanlon said of the boys' team edging past the Woolies, 44-42. "We wanted to bring the other title home. They were here supporting us. We all support each other."

And Tantasqua, the tournament's top seed, was able to bring the girls' title home, as they beat No. 2 Northbridge at the Kneller Center, 40-29. The Warriors and Rams had split a pair of regular season contests heading into the Clark final.

Tantasqua's defense was

able to hold Northbridge into single-digit point totals in three of four quarters, and the Rams tallied just 11 points in the entire second half.

"This team, we sometimes go in droughts, but one thing that we always do is play good D. If you can play good D long enough to go on a little bit of a run here and there, and stay the course and not get down, eventually we'll go on a little (scoring) spurt," said Haley. "But it really stems from staying the course on defense."

The Warriors found their points in the aforementioned spurts, with Scanlon's spurt coming in the fourth quarter. Scanlon scored 10 points, with 7 coming in the final

frame.

"In the fourth quarter, we knew we needed to get up," said Scanlon, as Tantasqua held a slim lead of 27-22 with eight minutes to play. "I see the openings and I just take them. It started opening up more in the fourth. In the beginning it was hard to find lanes to drive. When I see a lane, it's nice to be able to drive and get the foul call or get the make."

All of Scanlon's fourth quarter points came on drives, as she made two layups and three free throws.

"She knew," Haley said of Scanlon taking charge late. "She's done that a bunch of times this year. She kind of knows she's the leader on the floor."



With enough room to shoot, Tantasqua's Sophie Webb launches a deep 3-pointer.

In addition to Scanlon's contributions, starters Maya Gidopoulos (11 points) and Sophie Webb (10 points) also reached the double-digit scoring plateau. And Sophie Ezzo came off the bench and scored 7 very important points.

"She is a very tough kid. She doesn't get a ton of minutes, but when she's out there she plays hard," Haley said of Ezzo. "I thought tonight she gave us a real spark. For her to be able to come off the bench and be ready to go, it was so helpful."

Northbridge head coach Jeff Kozik thought that the Warriors getting points from so many sources was a key to their victory.

"They got a lot of contribution from a lot of different people. They spread it around and they had some players hit some big shots at some big moments. So, credit to them to be able to step up," said Kozik.

For the Rams' points, the vast majority came from Molly Gahan. She

finished with a game-high 21 points.

"She's going to get hers. She's just so physical," Haley said of Gahan. "If she catches the ball in the red area it's over, and you kind of know that. If you can keep her from getting the ball, you're in better shape."

Haley credited Nicki Vejack and Webb — who watched her brother, Elijah, win for the boys' team a day prior — with guarding Gahan, as the other Northbridge (15-6) players combined for just 8 points.

Tantasqua improved to 17-4 with the win.

"It's such a good atmosphere and experience for the girls. Plus, it's a little boost as we go into the postseason, too," Haley said, citing the upcoming Division 3 State Tournament.


The Warriors received the No. 13 seed in that tourney and will host No. 20 Dennis-Yarmouth (16-5) in the Round of 32 on Friday, March 1 at 5 p.m.

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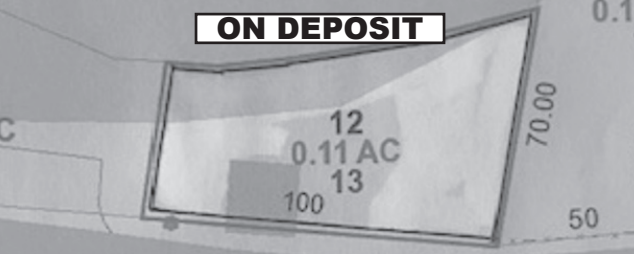


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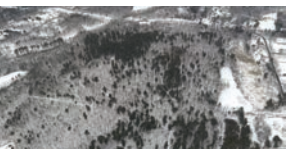
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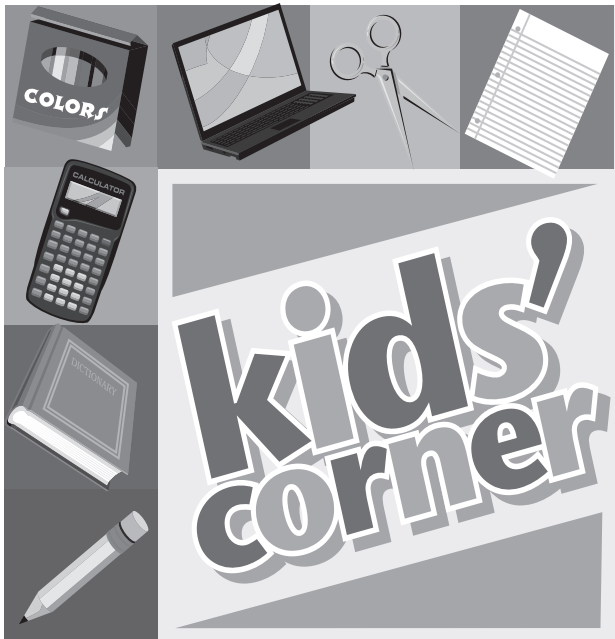
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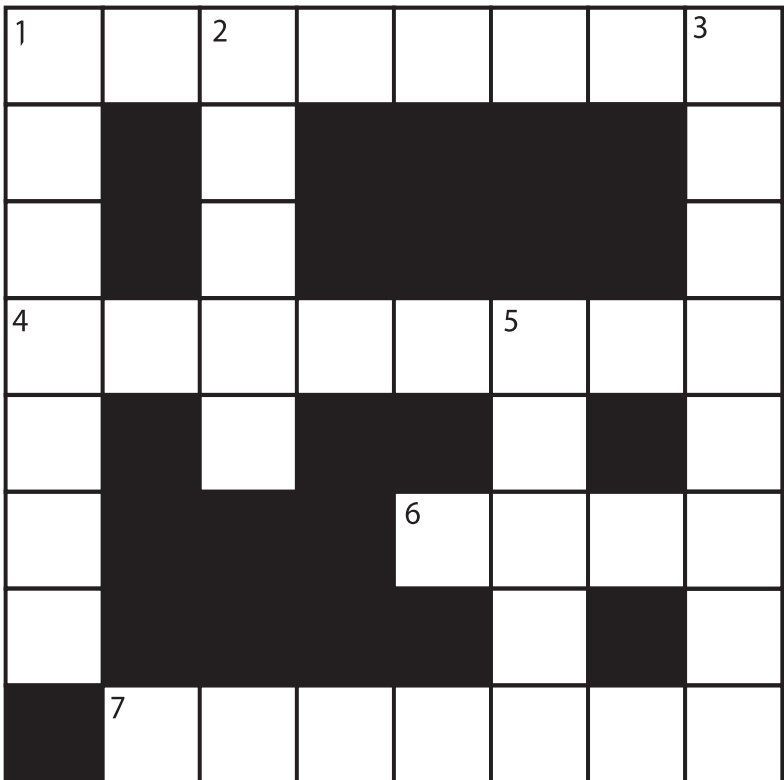
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Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- 1. Resting
- 4. Represented
- 6. Food enjoyed on Tuesday
- 7. Short novel

DOWN

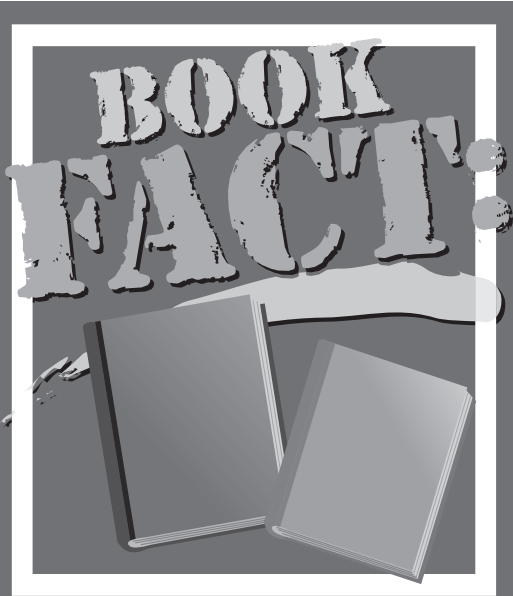
- 1. Enjoying a book
- 2. Illumination providers
- 3. Type of flower
- 5. Path

THIS DAY IN...



HISTORY

- 1759: THE BRITISH MUSEUM OPENS TO THE PUBLIC.
- 1870: A POLITICAL CARTOON DEPICTS THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY WITH A DONKEY FOR THE FIRST TIME.
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ANSWER: 44

1. Reading 2. Lamps 3. Gladiola 5. Trail
Down

1. Relaxing 4. Depicted 6. Taco 7. Novella
Across
Answers:



GLOSSARY

alphabetical list of terms in a book



- ENGLISH: Page
- SPANISH: Página
- ITALIAN: Pagina
- FRENCH: Page
- GERMAN: Seite



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Lenten traditions explored

The Lenten season marks a period of 40 days when faithful Christians prepare for the glory of Easter Sunday. Easter commemorates the miracle of Jesus Christ's resurrection, which is foundational for the Christian faith.

Lent is a season when Christians reflect and prepare to celebrate Easter. Lent is a period of spiritual purification that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Thursday. Fasting, giving alms and prayer are some of the hallmarks of Lent.

Many Lenten traditions are well known, but others are not. Here's a glimpse at some of those traditions.

The first 'Lent'

Lent is based on the

40 days that Jesus spent in the desert in preparation for his public life. Matthew 4:1-11 shares that Christ was led into the desert by the Holy Spirit for a period of fasting and prayer, where He constantly encountered the devil and his temptations. Lent also mirrors the period of time (40 days) that the Israelites spent in their journey from slavery in Egypt to the promised land of Israel.

Black fasts

While certain Lenten restrictions have lightened up a bit in recent years, it once was the norm to consume a single meal per day of bread, water and herbs after sunset on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, which was known as a black

fast. During the other days of Lent, no food was allowed until 3 p.m., which Christians believe was the hour of Our Lord's death.

Piñatas for Lent?

The Lenten tradition of hitting a papier-mâché creation filled with candy originated in Italy. Eventually the idea was picked up by the Spanish and brought to Mexico, where the familiar piñatas now known to partygoers across the globe appeared. Professor Michael Foley, author of "Dining with the Saints," says the original piñata had seven cones to represent the seven deadly sins. Hitting the cones and defeating the sins revealed the heavenly reward in the form of candy.

Prayerful pretzels

In the early Middle Ages, when other foods were not allowed during Lent, pretzels became popular. The twisted shape of the pretzels was associated with arms entwined in prayer.

Hot cross buns

Hot cross buns are synonymous with Easter. Although they may pre-date Christianity and might have been a tradition adopted to make Christianity more relatable to the masses, one legend suggests they originated with a twelfth century Anglican monk. This

monk reportedly baked the buns and marked them with crosses in honor of Good Friday. These yeast-ed sweet rolls have since become a popular treat on Easter weekend.

Lent precedes Easter each year and is full of time-honored traditions.



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