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Thursday-Friday, February 8-9, 2024

Teacher dismissals spark uproar over conditions at Southbridge High



The police station's community room was standing room only Saturday evening, as the crowd spilled into the hallway. About 100 came in person and 40 by Zoom.

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBIDGE — Nearly 100 people in person and 40 on Zoom turned out for a community forum Saturday that alleged long-simmering issues within Southbridge High School and district administration. That came after a couple days of student protest at the school itself sparked by the recent dismissal

of two popular teachers. Among the concerns students, parents and teachers raised were failure to address multiple sexual harassment and assault complaints; failure to implement IEPs; verbal abuse of students and teachers in front of others; locking students into the Student Support Center, sometimes with others and sometimes

alone; male administrators following female students into the bathroom; sharing confidential Title 9 complaints with the subject of the complaint; and using techniques (“Teach Like a Champion”) that may be suited for elementary school but inappropriate for this age range. “We taught our children to be afraid of

what? Monsters,” said one parent, Alisa Murch. “We didn’t want monsters teaching our kids.” Receiver Jeffrey Villar emailed a lengthy response to the issues raised above, but as the timing of its arrival did not allow our correspondent sufficient time to incorporate his response into this report before

Turn To **FORUM** page **A19**

School Committee presents Superintendent, Principal Awards

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY/CHARLTON — The Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee celebrated its annual honoring of two outstanding seniors in the district with the presentation of the Superintendent’s Award and Shepherd Hill Regional High School Principal’s Award on Jan. 24. Each award represents a senior that goes above and beyond to achieve success at Shepherd Hill and to contribute as a larger part of their school community. The first honoree was Joanna Lepper, who was presented with the Superintendent’s Award by Superintendent Steve Lamarche. Lepper is an active member of Shepherd Hill National Honor Society, a peer tutor, and an accomplished musician proficient in clarinet and saxophone. She comes from a family of mathematicians and has shown great comprehension of biology taking AP studies in the subject her senior year. She plans to attend Syracuse University to study bioinformatics. Superintendent Lamarche complimented Joanna as a student who is unafraid to challenge herself every step of the way. “Joanna sets goals for

herself and has taken the opportunity to reach new heights and try new things during her high school experience as she prepares for graduation and what is next,” said Lamarche. “Joanna maintains the highest GPA in the class of 2024 and has received scores of five on three and a four on one of four AP exams prior to her senior year. While Joanna’s academic interests are heavily weighed to the studies of mathematics and sciences, she leaves nothing off the table in all areas of learning.” The second honor was the Principal’s Award presented by Shepherd Hill Principal Darren C. Elwell to senior Adrian Roach. Roach has also maintained a 4.0 GPA and succeeded in several AP classes such as Stats, Bio, English Language and Composition, and an AP seminar earning fives in all exams prior to senior year. He is currently participating in AP Calculus and Research. Roach is the recipient of the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship, Jae S. Lim Award, and the 2023 AP Scholar with Honor Award and is an active basketball player and Best Buddy. Principal Elwell complimented Roach as not only an exceptional student, but an exceptional person as well.

“Scholastic achievement is our bread and butter, and its students like Adrian whose steady churning deserves to be celebrated. Intrinsic motivation, intellectual curiosity, effective time management skills, and a determined work ethic are among some of the characteristics that allow Adrian and other exceptional students to sustain high levels of achievement, not simply on occasion, but over an extended period of time,” said Elwell. “It’s students like Adrian whose academic achievements inspire and whose own contributions to the social fabric of our school truly make this a special place.” While the two seniors were the focus for the celebration, the school committee’s Jan. 24 meeting also revealed several other members of the Dudley and Charlton school communities who will soon be presented with honors of their own. The Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation is preparing for its 2024 Heroes Among Us ceremony later this year and President Sabrina Webb revealed the ten honorees who will be recognized for their contributions and dedication to the district on April 6 at the Wellsworth Hotel in

Turn To **AWARDS** page **A19**

Charlton PD’s Cloutier promoted to Lieutenant

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — The Town of Charlton continues to fill out its police department leadership with the promotion of one of its most tenured employees to the rank of Lieutenant late last month. The Charlton Board of Selectmen unanimously approved the promotion of Sergeant Keith Cloutier on Jan. 23, filling a vacancy left by the promotion of Deputy Chief Gary Mason last year. Cloutier is one of the department’s longest serving active officers and was highly recommended by Chief Daniel Dowd who complimented Cloutier’s many years of service. “Keith’s been my senior Sergeant for close to 12 years now. He’s served under other chiefs as well, but he’s currently the senior Sergeant. I think after Deputy Chief Mason he’s the most senior person in the police department. Keith has a master’s degree in criminal justice. He raised his family here in town, he lives in town. I think he’s shown a lot of commitment to this agency,” the chief told selectmen. When asked to comment on his promotion, Cloutier said he was proud to continue his



Pictured from left to right: Deputy Chief Gary Mason, newly promoted Lt. Keith Cloutier, and Chief Dan Dowd.

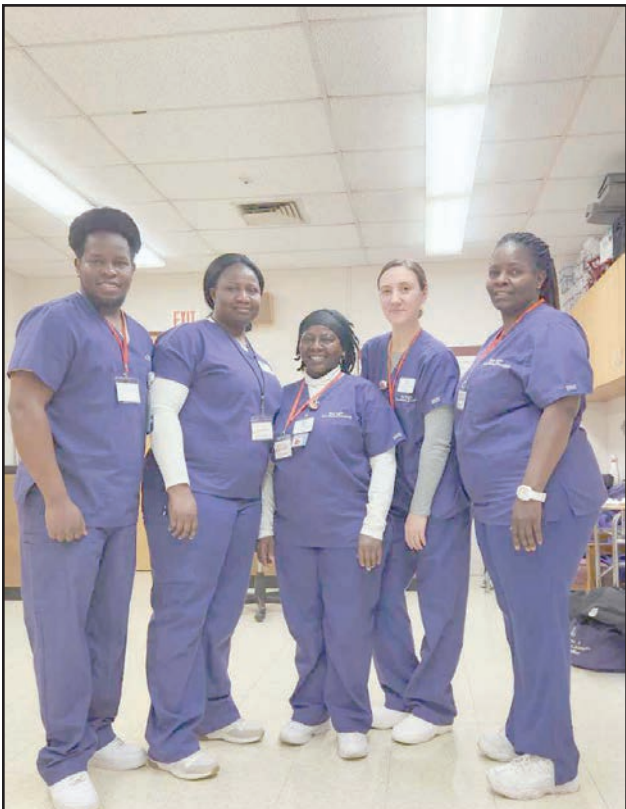
service to Charlton and looks forward to the challenges ahead of him in his new leadership position. “I’ve been here in town for a long time. This town’s been really good to me and good to my family. I’m very happy to be here working for a great police department and under good command. I am excited about this appointment, and I definitely appreciate everyone’s support,” he added. Cloutier was one of three qualified applicants for the job and “performed extremely well” according to Town

Administrator Andrew Golas who noted Cloutier’s graduation from FBI programs and his experiences with numerous facets of police work including dispatch and operations. Cloutier’s promotion won’t be official until April to avoid adverse effects to the department’s operations. In the meantime, officials will proceed with a hiring process to choose a new Sergeant to succeed Lt. Cloutier. The department is also in the midst of filling a patrolman position which has already been posted.

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Bay Path Nursing students volunteer at Show Choir Festival



DUDLEY — The Central Massachusetts Show Choir Festival was held at the Shepherd Hill Regional High School, Saturday, Feb. 3. Faculty and Practical Nursing Student Volunteers from Bay Path RVTHS Practical Nursing Academy provided on site medical emergency care alongside Dudley Police and Fire Department.

The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy team included Faculty lead Dr. Adelina Healy of Dudley and Practical Nursing student volunteers John Martin Wanjiru, Ashley Urbain, Michael Wairimu, Kaitlin Miliauskas, Evelyn Kiplangat, Catherine Ibrahim and Christiana Sochiletey.

The Practical Nursing student volunteers are all HCP/BLS CPR certi-

fied and trained in first aid. Photo shows from left, Michael Wairimu, Christiana Sochiletey, Evelyn Kiplangat, Kaitlin Miliauskas, and Catherine Ibrahim, all from Worcester.

Terry Salonis, Vice President of the Shepherd Hill Music Parents along with Maria “Chet” Perea-Beaulieu coordinated the Bay Path student nurses’ participation with Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN Academy Director. According to Salonis, “this enormous event involves more than 24 schools from around the country and over 500 student performers.” Bay Path PN volunteers were there to ensure the safety of students and their families with onsite medical care as a compli-

ment to Dudley PD and Fire. Volunteer shifts started at noon through 10 p.m.

“This was the second year for PN Volunteers to participate in this capacity, we’re glad to assist again and are looking forward to 2025,” concluded Bolandrina.

About Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy

Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy offers a 40-week (10-month), full-time, Monday through Friday, evening program. The program begins mid-August and is completed in late June. Graduates receive a Practical Nursing Certificate and are eligible to take the NCLEX-PN licensure exam. The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy is fully approved by the:

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Human Services of Public Health Board of Registration in Nursing 239 Causeway Street Boston, MA 02114 617-973-0800 www.mass.gov/dph/boards/rn The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy is accredited by the: Council on Occupational Education 840 Roswell Road Building 300, Suite 325 Atlanta, GA 30350 Telephone: 800-917-2081 www.council.org Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School is fully accredited by the: New England Association of Schools and Colleges 209 Burlington Rd., Suite 201 Bedford, MA, 01730-1433 781-271-0022 www.neasc.org

QCC welcomes first community resource dog

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College Campus Police started the new year off with the college’s first-ever community resource dog, Siggy, a four-month-old English Cream Golden Retriever, is already making his presence known on campus. He will be sworn in as an official campus police dog once he completes rigorous training, making him the first of his kind at a Worcester college or university.

“The college community is overjoyed to have this type of emotional support service for its students, faculty and staff. Studies have shown that interacting with dogs can improve mood and decrease stress,” said QCC President Dr. Luis G. Pedraja. “In this new post-pandemic world many people are still struggling with added stress and stressors. We are delighted to have Siggy as a member of our QCC community to

offer a bit of cheer and positivity.”

Community resource dogs have become a common practice for both educational institutions and police departments across the country. At QCC, Community Resource Officer Nicholas Yacuzzi is supervising Siggy, and the dog resides with Officer Yacuzzi and his family when he is not on duty.

Yacuzzi brought up the idea of having the college retain a dog after witnessing resource officers utilize canines as a de-escalation technique.

“There is a huge need for this across the state and the country. These types of dogs have become a common practice to bridge the gap between the public and the police,” Yacuzzi said.

While QCC has had therapy dogs on campus during events and busy periods such as final examinations, the new community resource dog will be on campus

consistently with office hours available for people to spend time with him.

Siggy is currently being trained by Golden Opportunities for Independence, a program in Walpole, MA that specializes in training dogs to work in a variety of settings, such as schools, healthcare facilities or as personal service dogs. The community resource dogs are taught to be calm and confident in crowded environments through activities such as visits to Gillette Stadium on a busy day.

According to Yacuzzi, Siggy already knows several basic commands and has begun meeting the college community. Upon completion of his training, students, faculty and staff will be able to submit requests to spend time with Siggy during specific hours.



Country Bank supports EcoTarium with \$25,000 pledge



WORCESTER — Country Bank, a full-service financial institution serving Central and Western Massachusetts

recently announced a \$25,000 pledge to the EcoTarium. This pledge aims to support the development of a cutting-edge

gallery for traveling exhibits and contribute to the establishment of the new Early Childhood Science Learning Center, showcasing the Bank’s commitment to education and community enrichment.

“The EcoTarium is deeply grateful for Country Bank’s generous gift to our Third Century Campaign which will build a new state-of-the-art gallery for traveling exhibits and develop an Early Childhood Science Learning Center for children up to age six,” stated EcoTarium President and CEO Noreen Johnson Smith. “These vital projects will ensure the Museum continues to offer transformative experiences that promote science literacy and learning about science and nature as we prepare the next generation of leaders in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.”

To learn more about the EcoTarium, visit <https://ecotarium.org>.

Friday's Child



Ashlynn
Age 15

Hi! My name is Ashlynn and I love to draw! !

Ashlynn is a shy teenage girl who loves music, and doing her nails, makeup, and hair. She can start out being quiet with new people but warms up if given the time to develop a relationship. Ashlynn enjoys arts & crafts, spending time with her friends, and swimming in the pool. She loves the company of her siblings and is very protective of them. Ashlynn has friends at school that she enjoys being around. She does well in class with support.

Ashlynn will thrive in a home that can provide her with her own space and individualized attention. A family that is knowledgeable and able to navigate education and mental health resources is also important.

Ashlynn does best with clear expectations and a structured routine. Her social worker is open to exploring homes with a mother and a father or two mothers. Ashlynn will do best as the youngest or only child in a family. Ashlynn has four brothers and two sisters in Massachusetts, and it is extremely important that she maintains relationships with them.

<https://adopt.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/child/6169>

Can I Adopt?

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

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

To learn more about adoption from foster care visit www.mareinc.org. Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) can give you guidance and information on the adoption process. Reach out today to find out all the ways you can help children and teens in foster care.

MASSHEALTH paperwork is confusing! Certified Application Counselors can help!

In person assistance available through March 2024

Tri-Valley Office Hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am-1pm and Wednesdays Noon-4pm at 10 Mill Street, Dudley

Alternating Friday’s 9am-11am at Webster Senior Center 5 Church Street, Webster

Call Tri-Valley to schedule an appointment that works for you!
508-949-6640 Information and Referral Department



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FIRE DEPARTMENT (248-2299)
Monday to Friday..... 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
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Charlton City (01508) (800) 275-8777
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Heritage School (508) 248-4884
Charlton Middle School..... (508) 248-1423
Shepherd Hill Regional High School
..... (508) 943-6700
Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical
High School (508) 248-5971 or (508) 987-0326

HOLLAND: 413-245-7108

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Weekdays 9:00-4:30 and Sat. 9:00 -12:00
STURBRIDGE 508-347-6463
Weekdays 8:30 – 5:00 and Sat. 9:00 -12:00
BRIMFIELD: 413-245-3451
Weekdays: 9:00 – 4:30 and Sat. 9:00 -12:00
WALES: 413-245-9808
Weekdays 8:30 – 12:30 and 2:00 – 4:30 and
Sat. 9:00 – 12:00

CHURCH LISTINGS

- **Central Baptist Church**
256 Main St., Southbridge, MA 01550
Tel 508/764-6365; Worship 10:00 A.M.
- **Charlton Federated Church**, 64 Main St.,
248-5550, Sunday worship 10:30 a.m.
www.fedchurchcharlton.org
- **Charlton Baptist Church**, 50 Hammond
Hill Road, 248-4488,www.charltonbaptist.org,
Sunday worship 10 a.m.
- **Charlton City United Methodist**, 74 Staf-
ford St. 248-7379, web site: [CharltonCityU-](http://CharltonCityU-MC.org)
MC.org
Sunday worship and Children's church
10am
- **St. Anne St. Patrick Church**, 16 Church
St., Fiskdale (508) 347-7338
www.stannestpatparish.com
Saturday Vigil Mass at 4 pm, Sunday 8 am, 10
am, 12 noon, Youth Mass (September to May)
5 pm. Daily Mass Mon - Thurs 7:30 and 10
am, Fri and Sat 7:30 am
- **St. Joseph's Church**, 10 H. Putnam Ext,
248-7862, www.stjosephscharlton.com, Sat-
urday Vigil Mass 4:30 p.m., Sunday Mass 8
a.m., Sunday Family Mass 10 a.m., Sunday
LifeTEEN Mass 5 p.m., Weekday Mass Mon-
day, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 a.m.
- **Hope Christian Fellowship**, 6 Haggerty
Road, 248-5144
- **Assemblies of God Southern New En-
gland District Headquarters**, Route 20,
248-3771, snedag.org, Office hours Mon-
day-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Living Word Church of Charlton**, 10
Main Street - Grange building 1st Floor,
Charlton, Ma 01507, Pastor Craig Bellisario,
(508) 233-8349 Sunday Service 10:00am.
www.livingwordcharlton.com
info@livingwordcharlton.com
- **New Life Fellowship A/G, SNED Chap-
el**, 307 Sturbridge Road, Rt. 20, Charlton,
MA,
Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.
- **Federated Church of Sturbridge and
Fiskdale**- 8 Maple St. Sturbridge, 774-304-
1021
www.sturfed.org
Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.
- **Bethlehem Lutheran Church**- 345 Main
Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566
Phone 508-347-7297
Web: www.bethlehemsturbridge.org
Services - Sunday 9:30 am
Pastor Dan Purtell
- **Holland Congregation Church**
“Where the Bible is preached.”
11 Sturbridge Road, Holland, 413-245-9926
Hollandchurch.org
Sunday Service @ 10:00 am
Pastor Dan Maketansky

CMS Chamber to welcome Pickleball
U to Sturbridge with ribbon cutting



Courtesy

Pickleball, anyone? Pickleball U, the new indoor pickleball complex, at the Sturbridge Plaza.

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Chamber of Central Mass South invites the community to join in as it welcomes its newest member business, Pickleball U, to Sturbridge with a ribbon cutting ceremony to commemorate its grand opening on Friday, Feb. 16 at 2 p.m. Pickleball U is a new, state-of-the-art 19,000-square-foot indoor facility located at 178 Main St. in the Sturbridge Plaza, which offers six regulation pickleball courts, a players' lounge and fully stocked pro shop, year-round memberships, open play, league play, tournaments, and intro clinics for all ages and skill levels. If you play or are curious to learn more about this incredibly popular sport, Pickleball U is your local destination to get in the game!

Pickleball is a paddle sport that combines elements of tennis, badminton, and table tennis, played on a smaller court with a lowered net; it involves two or four players using solid paddles to hit a perforated polymer ball over the

net, aiming to score points when the opposing side fails to return the ball within the designated boundaries. For three consecutive years, pickleball has remained the fastest growing sport in the US, with more than 36.5 million players. While many players are more than 65, the largest segment of new players is 18-34, demonstrating a younger trend in popularity. Pickleball U is here to serve all those markets and players, new and advanced.

“We are excited to be bringing indoor pickleball to Sturbridge,” said Scott Sargent, co-founder and General Manager of Pickleball U. “This site, settled between Planet Fitness and AutoZone, was selected for its accessibility and prominent location in the Sturbridge community.”

“The local community is excited about this project, and the Town of Sturbridge has been very supportive of our efforts to establish this new entity,” continued Sargent. “We look forward to a long run here, meeting the residents, and creating community and enjoyment at our facility.”

Pickleball U is a member of USA Pickleball, the national governing body for the sport in the US, providing players with official rules, tournament standings, player rankings, and more.

The Chamber of Central Mass South will present the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on February 16th at 2:00pm sharp and the open house will follow until 8 p.m. with tours of the facility, giveaways, treats and raffles for some valuable prizes. All are welcome to attend the Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening. There is no cost, and no RSVP is required.

For more about Pickleball U, you may visit pickleballu.com or email requests to courtmaster@pickleballu.com.

The Chamber of Central Mass South is the leading advocate for local business, promoting the success of its members, and enhancing regional prosperity through networking, education, and promotion. Learn more and join the Chamber today by visiting cmschamber.org.

Celtic duo to perform at Jacob
Edwards Library

SOUTHBRIDGE — Orkney (Scotland) born fiddler Louise Bichan and Indiana (USA) mandolinist Ethan Setiawan present a collaboration and meeting of their musical worlds in Hildaland, which will perform at the Jacob Edwards Library Feb. 29 at 6:30 p.m.

A path steeped in the fiddle traditions of their respective sides of the Atlantic, the journey taken wends through Scottish and American soil, celebrating their foundations while intertwining with contemporary composition. Bichan's fiddle is a melodic foil to Setiawan's counterpoint and harmonic depth, and the two weave in and out seamlessly.

More information can be found here: <https://www.sas-safrashillproductions.com/hildaland>.

The Town of Brookfield is accepting
applications for a full-time
Highway Foreman (Operator 1)

Full job description and application
details may be found at
brookfieldma.us.

Application review will begin after 2-16-24.
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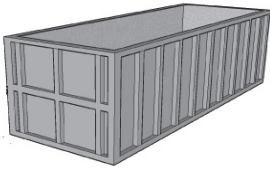


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Wings of Song to start rehearsals for spring program

STURBRIDGE — Wings of Song is about to start rehearsals for a one-of-a-kind musical program that it will offer twice: on Saturday, May 18 at 7:30 p.m. in the First Church of Monson, Congregational, 5 High St., Monson and on Sunday, May 19 at 3 p.m. at St. Anne-St. Patrick Parish, 16 Church Street, Fiskdale (Sturbridge).

“Rough Seas, Safe Harbor” will take audiences on a huge sea voyage, much of it aboard a 19th-century whaling ship that might have left Portsmouth, New Hampshire—or Portsmouth, England—and sailed practically around the world, separating the crew from their families for as much as a year or two. Nym Cooke, who served as Music Director

for a similar program presented by the Revels organization based in Cambridge, Mass. (the “Sea Revels”), has combined 29 stirring, eloquent songs of the sea into a seven-part odyssey. The individual sections of the program are titled “Home Port,” “Setting Sail,” “At Sea,” “Shipwreck!” “Foreign Ports,” “Wives and Mothers at Home,” and “Return and Reunion.”

The individual songs vary tremendously in their points of origin, but collectively they weave a moving tapestry of life at sea—and also of life at the home port, for those left behind. There are recently-composed choral works such as Allister MacGillivray’s “Away from the Roll of the Sea”

and Leon Dubinsky’s “We Rise Again.” There are many short, anonymously-composed sea songs, including chanteys (work songs) with titles like “Blow, Ye Winds, in the Morning,” “Away Rio!,” and “Cape Cod Girls” (all capstan, or pumping chanteys).

There’s a dockside street cry, “New Oysters!” and the part-song “To Portsmouth”; both are sung as rounds, and both hail from 17th-century England. There are classics of the sea-faring repertory, songs such as “What Shall We Do With the Drunken Sailor?” and “Blow the Wind Southerly.” There’s an 18th-century New England futing tune, “Ocean” by Supply Belcher of Farmington, Maine, and the U. S. Na-

vy’s signature hymn tune, “Eternal Father, Strong to Save.”

There’s a gripping narrative of a shipwreck and its final victim, a real potboiler titled “The Last Hymn,” that will surely leave no eye dry. There are passionate songs of parting (“Fare You Well, Mary Ann,” “Adieu, Sweet Lovely Nancy”) and of homecoming (“The Jamestown Homeward Bound,” “Rolling Home to Old New England”).

There are choral arrangements by Music Director Cooke (“Sailing Away,” “Where Am I to Go?”); there’s a song about a young lady committed to an insane asylum by her cruel parents while her lover is at sea (“I Love My Love”);

there are unforgettable, moving anthems of the ocean like “The Mingulay Boat Song,” “Leave Her, Johnny,” and “The Seamen’s Hymn.” And, as always at Wings of Song concerts, there are several audience sing-alongs: “Somos el Barco” (“We Are the Boat”), “Deep Blue Sea,” and some other songs already mentioned.

This is sure to be an unforgettable adventure—both musically and narratively—and the concert venues are sure to be crowded, so be sure to arrive early for a good seat. Admission is free, but a freewill offering will be collected at intermission. Both venues are handicap-accessible. Audience members are invited to join the chorus for tasty (and

free!) refreshments after the concert. Last but not least, these concerts are sponsored in part by the Monson and Sturbridge Cultural Councils, local agencies supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency. Wings of Song is grateful for this support—and for the continued support of their many faithful audience regulars, supplemented by first-timers whom we’re always glad to see!

Anyone needing more information or wishing to join the chorus on its nautical adventure is encouraged to email Music Director Cooke at nym-cooke@gmail.com or Wings of Song President Carol Curtin at carolcurtin77@gmail.com.

Bay Path nursing student obtains Relias Certificates

CHARLTON — Ashley Rincon of Southbridge, a practical nursing student at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, recently completed multiple online training modules and obtained her certificates in The Organ and Tissue Donation Choice, Ambula-

tory Preceptor: Leadership, Autoimmune Disease: Causes and Treatments, and Common Sleep Disorders.

The online courses are self-paced learning experiences designed to increase health literacy and awareness. The training provides knowledge, skills, and confidence needed by healthcare providers. The courses are available at <https://www.relias.com/> a leading provider of workforce education and enablement solutions, empowering healthcare organizations and their staff with integrated tools and best-in-class learning content. Relias’ healthcare workforce enablement and education solutions aim to attract and retain staff, elevate care quality, and reduce risk.

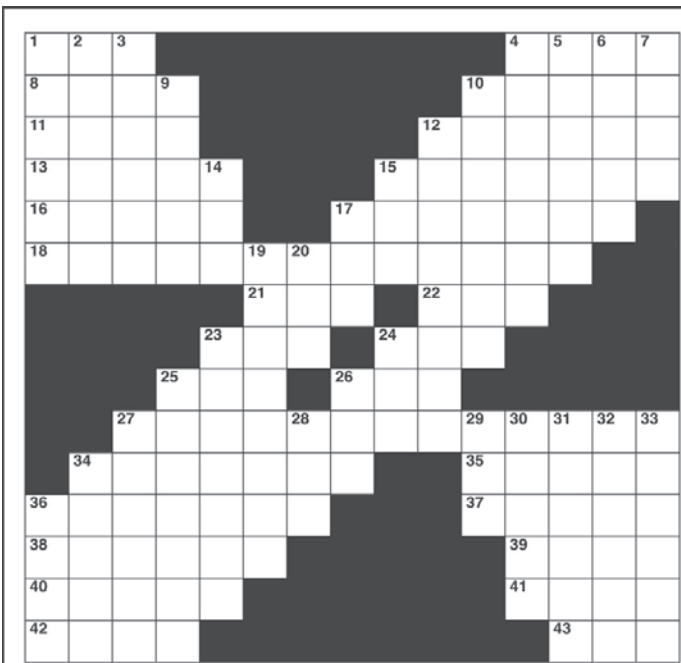
Rincon, a 2017 Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School graduate and an Associate in Criminal Justice degree holder with a minor in Science (2020) from Quinsigamond Community College, believes that as a student nurse being compassionate, hardworking, helpful, and patient includes learning new things and using the new skills towards helping others. She is certified in Mental Health First Aid, Dementia Care, Stop the Bleed, HCP/BLS Provider CPR and first aid. She recently participated in her clinical team’s Luminary lighting project for the Alzheimer’s

Association’s the Longest Night to shine a light to diminish the darkness and illuminate a path towards a world where Alzheimer’s and dementia are nothing but a memory. She joins 31 other members of the 2024 with an anticipated graduation date of June 21, 2024. Photo shows Rincon with her certificates.

According to Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, Academy Director, “At Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, we applaud student engagement. We believe that success is intentional and ensure that our PN students are relevant and actively engaged in empowering themselves. In person and online learning are both helpful.”

About Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy

The program is a 40-week (10-month), full-time, Monday through Friday, evening program. The program begins mid-August and is completed in late June. Graduates receive a Practical Nursing Certificate and are eligible to take the NCLEX-PN licensure exam. The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy is fully approved by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services Department of Public Health Board of Registration in Nursing (www.mass.gov/dph/boards/rn) and is accredited by the Commission on Occupational Education (www.council.org). For more information, visit www.baypath.net.



- CLUES ACROSS**
1. One point south of due east

4. Coagulated blood

8. Fortifying ditch

10. Devotee of Hinduism

11. Trunk of a tree

12. Bank note

13. Capital of Guam

15. Study again

16. Covered with hoarfrost

17. Opening

18. Legendary Rolling Stone

21. Stray

22. Computer storing system

23. Signal

24. Pitching statistic

25. Human being

26. Malaysian isthmus

27. The "Blonde Bombshell"

34. A gland

35. Bluish greens

36. Endangered

37. Three-dimensional

38. In a way, precipitated

39. God associated with dissolution

40. Blemished

41. Flow or leak slowly

42. Disco legends The Bee

43. Midway between south and southeast

- CLUES DOWN**
1. A way to board

2. Get down

3. Highly seasoned sausage

4. First day of month

5. Eurasian shrubs

6. The organ that bears the ova of a flower

7. Small lake

9. Belief

10. Sunrooms

12. Metric weight unit

14. Vasopressin

15. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!

17. One-time family room staple

19. Got back together

20. Anger

23. Sang merrily

24. Sea eagle

25. Military men

26. Kilo yard (abbr.)

27. Found in the sea

28. Protects from weather

29. Type of medicine

30. City along the Rhine

31. Animal disease

32. Martini ingredients

33. Get away

34. Lack of disunity

36. One-time European Commission officer



Brimfield community looks forward to annual Wine and Food Festival

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

BRIMFIELD — With longer days and warmer weather fast approaching, local residents are looking forward to the fifth annual Wine and Food Festival at Brimfield Auction Acres.

Set for June 8 & 9, the weekend festival will bring guests from throughout the area to Brimfield Auction Acres (35 Main St., Brimfield).

The event is a great way for guests to sample fine offerings while supporting local businesses. “This exciting event brings together Massachusetts wineries, cideries, and meaderies from across the Pioneer Valley and beyond,” read a statement promoting the event.

In cooperation with the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture, the weekend lineup is full of artisans, farmers market vendors, live music acts, and food trucks, among other highlights.

Guests can purchase a wine passport to sample products at each of the participating wineries.

For those who prefer not to imbibe at the event, a non-drinkers pass is only \$5 per person. This pass is good for both parking and entry to the festival.

A wine tasting passport can be purchased in advance for \$35 per person. Tickets are available by visiting www.brimfieldwinery.com/events.

An array of local musicians will perform throughout the festival.

“The event was started in 2018 by the owners of Brimfield Winery, with much collaboration with other farm wineries throughout Massachusetts and local farmers,” the promotional statement read.

Typically attracting more than 2,000 attendees over the two-day event, the festival is sure to draw guests from across central Massachusetts and beyond.

Brimfield Winery started in 2017 with the renovation of the iconic barn on the property. Producing award-winning wines and hard cider, among others, the business offers an outdoor winery open from May to October.

“Located just miles from the Massachusetts Turnpike, Brimfield Auction Acres (adjacent to Brimfield Winery) is located on Route 20 at 35 Main Street in Brimfield,” the promotional statement read.

For more information about the event, visit www.Brimfieldwinery.com.

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Current, former state troopers charged with taking bribes for falsifying CDL test scores

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — Two current and two former State Police troopers are facing charges in connection with an alleged conspiracy to falsify records and give passing scores to certain Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) applicants in exchange for bribes.

The following six individuals have been indicted on three counts of conspiracy to falsify records; three counts of conspiracy to commit extortion; three counts of extortion; six counts of honest services mail fraud; and one count of perjury: Gary Cederquist, 58, of Stoughton; Calvin Butner, 63, of Halifax; Perry Mendes, 63, of Wareham; Joel Rogers, 54, of Bridgewater; Scott Camara, 42, of Rehoboth; and Eric Mathison, 47, of Boston.

According to the charging document, MSP Sgt. Cederquist was in charge of the State Police’s CDL Unit. Trooper Rogers and retired Troopers Butner and Mendes were members of the unit.

“Members of MSP’s CDL Unit were responsible for administering CDL skills tests. Test requirements for CDLs are established by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, which is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation,” read a statement released by the U.S. Attorney’s Office.

The CDL skills test is a demanding, in-person test that consists of three segments: vehicle inspection, basic control skills, and the road test.

Class A CDLs are required to drive tractor-trailer units. Class B CDLs are required to drive heavy single vehicles (box trucks, school buses).

According to the charging document, between May 2019 and January 2023, Cederquist, Butner, Mendes, Rogers, and others conspired to give preferential treatment to at least 17 CDL applicants. The troopers agreed to give passing scores on these applicants’ skills tests, regardless of whether they passed the test, investigators allege.

The six suspects used the code word “golden” to identify applicants who would receive special treat-

ment, according to investigators. The indictment alleges that several incriminating text messages were sent between the suspects describing applicants and their test results.

Additionally, it is alleged that Cederquist gave preferential treatment to four Class A CDL applicants who were MSP troopers by falsely reporting that each trooper took and passed a Class A skills test.

Moreover, Cederquist allegedly conspired with his friend, Camara, who worked for a truck-driving school in Brockton.

It is further alleged that Cederquist conspired with his friend, Mathison, who worked for a spring water company that employed drivers who needed CDLs. Cederquist allegedly gave passing scores to certain applicants affiliated with the water company.

“The indictment alleges that Cederquist gave passing scores to three such applicants who actually failed, in exchange for bribes of free inventory from the water company, such as cases of bottled Fiji, VOSS and Essentia water; cases of bottled Arizona Iced Tea, and coffee and tea products—all of which Mathison delivered to an office trailer at the CDL test site in Stoughton,” the U.S. Attorney’s Office statement read.

Southbridge Cultural Council announces 2024 awards

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Cultural Council, a local agency, is part of the overall grant program of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency which provides allocations to each of the 351 cities and towns of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in support of grants for cultural activities. The Massachusetts Cultural Council receives its funding from the Massachusetts legislature and from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Of the 351 communities receiving funds, the Southbridge Cultural Council ranked as 45th highest. In the South Central area of Worcester County, it ranked as the second highest after the city of Worcester. The qualifying grant applications for 2024 were initially approved online by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The following 27 applicants received the final acceptance for grants

from the Southbridge Cultural Council for the 2024 cycle.

The 2024 grant recipients receiving partial or full support are Ed the Wizard and Magic, Katie Alicia Tilton, Southbridge Community Center; David R. Bates III, “A Song & Story Summer Celebration,” Jacob Edwards Library; Paula Bradley, “Banjo Pickin’ Gals: Women & the Banjo,” Jacob Edwards Library; Sarah Clay, “Blues Skies,” Jacob Edwards Library; Edward Cope, Jr. and “Reading Magic,” Jacob Edwards Library; Zach Combs, “Crocodile River Music,” Jacob Edwards Library; Gateway Players Theatre, Inc., “Alice at Wonderland,” Elm Street Congregational Church; Gateway Players Theatre, Inc., “Jimmy Buffet Escape to Margaritaville,” Southbridge Middle-High School; Festival of Life Trees, “Visit with Santa,” La Salle Reception Center;

the Acoustic Nomads, “Around the World Music,” Jacob Edwards Library; Stephen Hurlbut, “Jumpin’ Jupa Library Concert,” Jacob Edwards Library; M. Morrissey, “Carlos Odria Trio In Concert,” Jacob Edwards Library; Henry Lappen, “Henry The Juggler,” Jacob Edwards Library; Mary Jo D. Maichack, “Fairy House Crafts,” Jacob Edwards Library; John McDonough, “The Pumpernickel Puppets,” Jacob Edwards Library; Frank Morrill, “The Photography of Color,” Jacob Edwards Library; Bridget Nault, “Badger and Nault Concert,” Jacob Edwards Library; Raianne Richard, “Mark Mandeville & Raianne Community Concert,” Jacob Edwards Library; George Sateriale, “The Magic of Your Imagination,” Jacob Edwards Library; Ethan Setiawan, “Hildaland Concert,” Jacob Edwards Library; Shawna E. Shea Memori-

al Foundation, Inc., “Free Film Screenings,” Starlite Lounge, Southbridge; Lynda Shoup, “Draw and Stich Labyrinths,” Jacob Edwards Library; Elizabeth Sylvia, “The Catnip Junkies Live Concert,” Jacob Edwards Library; Anthony Tran, “Flamenco Dance and Music,” Jacob Edwards Library; Emily van Nort, “The Native Plant Winter Show,” Jacob Edwards Library; Jon Waterman, “Live Music Making History,” Jacob Edwards Library; Matt York, “Songs and Stories – Willie Nelson,” Jacob Edwards Library.

The Southbridge Cultural Council extends its gratitude to the Massachusetts Legislature and the above grant applicants/recipients who, by their grant requests and acceptance, have shown a special interest in expanding the cultural life of Southbridge for the benefit of all ages, not only Southbridge, but beyond as well.

The indictment alleges that Butner assisted with the conspiracy by giving Mathison a key to the Stoughton yard, enabling Mathison to drop off water company inventory even when the test site was closed. The indictment also alleges that Mendes took part in the conspiracy by accepting cases of water from Mathison immediately after administering an incomplete skills test to a new driver for the water company.

According to the charging document, Cederquist accepted additional bribes in exchange for using his position as the sergeant in charge of MSP’s CDL Unit to give preferential treatment to certain CDL applicants. Alleged bribes include a \$750 granite post and mailbox; a new driveway valued at over \$10,000; and a snowblower valued at nearly \$2,000.

“The indictment alleges that Cederquist described one such applicant as ‘horrible’ and ‘brain dead’, but gave him a passing score anyway in exchange for the snow blower,” the U.S. Attorney’s Office statement read.

All CDL recipients who were later identified by investigators as not having been properly certified were reported to the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles.

The investigation remains ongoing.

The following individuals and agencies are thanked for their roles in the investigation: Acting United States Attorney Joshua Levy; Michael Krol, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in New England; and Christopher Scharf, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of Transportation Office.



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EDITOR

Leading with purpose: Prioritizing local issues over the culture war

At a time when communities far and wide face pressing challenges like homelessness, substance misuse, and the need for unity, it is essential that our local leaders redirect their focus towards the issues that truly matter. Rather than engaging in divisive cultural battles, true leadership demands a dedication to improving the daily lives of residents by addressing local concerns.

One of the most pressing issues in many communities today is homelessness. Our woods and streets are home to many individuals who are struggling to find shelter and support. This issue should take precedence over divisive cultural debates, as it directly impacts the well-being and safety of our very own community members.

Similarly, the challenge of substance misuse is a significant concern that requires our leaders' full attention. Addiction affects not only the individuals grappling with it but also their families and communities. Local leaders should work collaboratively to establish effective rehabilitation and support programs that address this issue head-on, instead of allowing it to be overshadowed by polarizing cultural discussions.

A true leader understands the importance of bridging gaps rather than creating divisions. In an era marked by increasing polarization, it is incumbent upon our local leaders to strive for unity. Their role should be to bring residents together, encouraging dialogue and understanding among diverse groups. Creating a sense of community and solidarity should be a top priority, as it helps build a stronger, more resilient society.

It is crucial to recognize that small, symbolic issues like the presence of a two-inch pride sticker on a public building's door should not distract us from the substantial problems at hand. A leader's duty is to prioritize actions that will improve the daily lives of everyone in the community. While diverse perspectives are important, focusing on such symbolic issues detracts from the time and resources that could be better allocated to address actual challenges.

Furthermore, thriving businesses are an integral part of a flourishing community. Local leaders should work tirelessly to create an environment where businesses can thrive. A prosperous economy enables residents to access better opportunities and services, thus improving their quality of life.

Effective local leadership necessitates a clear focus on the issues that directly impact our community's well-being, such as homelessness, substance misuse, and unity. Divisive cultural debates, while important in their own right, should not overshadow these pressing concerns. A true leader, one with courage, prioritizes the needs of their constituents, brings people together, and strives to build a stronger, more resilient community. By doing so, they ensure that businesses thrive, basic needs are met, and everyone can enjoy a higher quality of life.

Letter submission
policy

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

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

OPINION

Love in the new media landscape

One of the most beautiful scriptures in the Bible is in the epistle (letter) called 1st John, which is located almost at the back of the Bible (1st John should not be confused with the Gospel of John found earlier in the New Testament). The truncated version goes like this, "God is love and all who abide in love abide in God." The letter instructs us to love one another because we are the recipients of God's love and therefore we should share what we have received. Thus, for many who believe in God, mission is an important part of their faith. They give physically to those who are in need as a way of showing love. Others seek to be peace-makers and bridge builders as a way of showing God's love to the wider world. Some work very hard on their own behaviors embodying peace, kindness, and compassion as their way of putting love in the world. Unfortunately, many set these ways aside when they go online.

It seems the "new media" landscape has the propensity to draw out the very worst in people. Sadly, in some ways, that is its purpose. The system wants us to stay engaged and not turn away. It accomplishes this task by encouraging dissension, hate, and divisiveness. These actions and emotions keep our attention better than more positive ones. That said, "new media," in its many forms, should serve us and not we it.

To change this, we need to remember the ideas of this ancient letter as we engage with "new media." We need to ask ourselves: What does it mean to "abide in love" as we scroll and comment online? What does it mean to communicate in love? What does it mean to put out love into the cyber world? How might we phrase things differently? In what ways might we sit with someone in their suffering or rejoice in their rejoicing? How might we insist others behave well and speak the truth without becoming a part of the same problem and ourselves getting caught up in promoting chaos?

An embarrassing example of this occurred the other day on my Facebook feed when I posted my weekly request for anyone who might want prayers to be said to post below. As normal for our Tuesday prayer requests, people from all different dimensions of



BEYOND THE PEWS
• • • • •
REV. DAWN M. ADAMS
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BRIMFIELD

life posted issues that were on their hearts. Unfortunately, and in short order, two posters were on what appeared to be opposite sides of an issue and instead of just leaving their prayer request as a stand-alone request, they instead posted their prayer requests up and against one another. Soon, they were going back and forth arguing the issue at hand. A prayer post became a political debate. To abide in love sometimes we need to consider whether it is worthy to respond to someone's post at all and if deemed appropriate to respond, then one must consider how to do it in a loving way.

"New media", because of its limits (the inability to see the other person, the inability to convey tone, the limits of characters used, the belief of anonymity), emboldens people to act in ways that they would not in person.

So before you hit send or post a meme or in any other way interact in the "new media" landscape, remember the scripture from 1st John and ask yourself, will this add to the love in the world or detract from it? As you contemplate this, consider also using these 5 questions, offered in Professor Angela Gorrell's book Always On, to guide your online activity:

1. Is the information true?
 2. Even though the content may seem funny to you, is it mean, hateful, harmful, or demeaning to others?
 3. Am I okay with everyone I know, including people I may not even know yet, viewing this?
 4. How can I respond in a healthy and helpful way when I see something quotation mark bad quotation mark happening online?
 5. Am I affirming information that is worthy and accurate?
- It is time for us all to stop letting "new media" form us in ways we aren't even conscious of and consider how we might transform it to be the powerful tool that can help us all in the future. May we all be willing to make it so.

Rev. Dawn M. Adams is the minister of the First Congregational Church of Brimfield (MA), UCC where "no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome." To learn more about Pastor Dawn or the church, visit BrimfieldUCC.org.

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Avoiding mistakes – A financial advisor can help you avoid costly investment mistakes. One such mistake is attempting to "time" the market. Investors pursue market timing when they try to "buy low" and "sell high." In theory, of course, this is a great idea — if you could consistently buy investments — stocks, in particular — when their price is down and then sell them when the price has risen significantly, you'd always make some tidy profits. The main drawback to this technique, though, is that it's virtually impossible to follow, especially for individual investors. Nobody, not even professional money managers, can really predict with any accuracy when stock prices have reached high or low points. Consequently, those who try to make these guesses could miss out on opportunities. For example, investors who are determined to buy low might not want to purchase investments when the market is up — but this practice could lead to taking a "time out" from investing just when the market is in the midst of a rally. But a financial advisor can steer clients toward a more disciplined approach, such as buying quality investments and holding them for the long term, regardless of the ups and downs of the market.

Checking progress toward your goals – If you were to invest without any guidance, you might not be looking at your investments' performance with the proper perspective. For example, some investors simply compare their portfolio returns against a widely used market index, such as the S&P 500. But this comparison may not be that useful. The S&P 500 only measures the stock prices of the leading publicly traded U.S. companies by market capitalization — but your investment portfolio, if properly diversified, will include investments other than U.S. stocks, such as bonds, government securities, international stocks and more. Consequently, the performance of your portfolio won't track that of the S&P 500 or any other single index, either. Your financial advisor can help you employ more meaningful benchmarks, such as whether your portfolio's progress is on track toward helping you meet your financial goals. Also, a financial advisor will review your portfolio and investment strategy regularly to determine what changes, if any, need to be made, either in response to the markets or to events in your life.

Investing for your future can be exciting and rewarding — and you can feel more confident in your decisions when you have someone helping you along the way.

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.

Aircraft memorabilia

Fascination with flight dates back centuries. English cleric Roger Bacon wrote about mechanical flight around 1250 A.D., according to the Library of Congress. Leonardo da Vinci designed flying machines and a parachute from 1485 to 1500. The first aerial voyage took place in 1783 when Jean François Pilâtre de Rozier and Marquis d'Arlandes took flight in a Montgolfier hot-air balloon. Two years later in 1785, Jean-Pierre Blanchard and John Jeffries crossed the English Channel by balloon. DaVinci's parachute design was put to use in 1797, when André Jacques Garnerin made the first human parachute descent from a balloon.

Both powered flight and winged flight were being considered in 1843 when aeronautical engineering pioneer George Cayley published a biplane design. Henri Giffard used a steam engine to propel a cigar shaped aircraft in 1852. In 1891, Otto Lilienthal began successful gliding experiments and in 1895 he began flying his biplanes. Hu used split willow framed wings covered with cotton, resembling bird wings. His biplane was considered the most influential winged aircraft prior to the Wright Brothers.



ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES & ESTATES
• • • • •
WAYNE TUISKULA

On Dec. 17, 1903, two brothers who owned a bicycle shop in Dayton, Ohio made the first airplane flight. Wilbur and Orville Wright flew a 12-horsepower gasoline engine powered aircraft for 12 seconds above the sand dunes of Kitty Hawk, N.C.

Later in the 1900s, record-breaking pilots were considered heroes. Charles A. Lindbergh completed the first solo, nonstop trans-Atlantic flight in 1927. In 1932, Amelia Earhart became the first woman to fly a solo non-stop trans-Atlantic flight. Later in 1947, Charles E. Yeager's Bell X-1 became the first aircraft to exceed the speed of sound in level flight.

As you might expect, there are collectors who appreciate the history of flight or have fond memories of airlines and collect airplane related memorabilia.

Locally, the "Worcester" Airport opened in North Grafton in 1927. Over 30,000 people witnessed stunt flyers, parachuters, and military pilots when the airport opened. We sold a program, ticket, and first day cover from the event for \$150 in our December 2022 auction. Some other early aviation medals sold well



in our last auction this past January. A sterling silver 1919 New York Aeronautical Expedition commemorative medal sold for \$140 and a bronze medal commemorating Admiral Byrd's Flights over the Arctic and Antarctica sold for \$550.

As for more recent history, Pan American World Airways (Pan Am) was founded in 1927. It was considered to be the leading international carrier after World War II. In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt needed a plane to fly to a conference in Morocco and chose a Pan AM Boeing 314 Clipper. Other presidents including Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, and Richard Nixon also flew on Pan Am flights staffed by some of their finest employees. We auctioned memorabilia from the estate of a stewardess who flew with Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Nixon on their chartered flights. A signed Richard Nixon

A night to remember

Last week, the Whitinsville Fish & Game Club held their annual Founders Day banquet. The event included a sold out prime rib dinner put on by President Matt Burbank and his committee. It was fantastic. After the meal, this writer was surprised with a plaque dedicating the club's trout pond in my name. I was totally surprised by the award, and was extremely appreciative of the award. This writer joined the club when I was only 10 years old, and was elected secretary of the club when I was 16. In later years, I contin-



THE GREAT OUTDOORS
.....
RALPH TRUE

ued as Secretary, and was on the board of directors for many years. I also served as president for a couple of years. After the club was incorporated, I remained an active member serving in numerous positions at the club including fish chairman. The clubhouse was located at Prentice Corner in a small patch of



Courtesy
This week's first picture shows the plaque I received at the pond dedication.

woods a couple hundred yards from the shore of the Meadow Pond. The activities at the club back then were BINGO parties and numerous suppers. Raccoon and ham suppers were a big hit back then, with tickets to the supper selling for \$2. They were quickly sold out for every supper. The club's cook was George Bramen back then, and he was famous for his turtle soup. Every year, snapper turtles were caught in the scenes of bait fishermen trying to catch shiners for local bait shops. The turtles were donated to the club almost on a weekly basis. Linwood Pond was the hot spot to



The writer with his family on the big night.

seign for shiners back in the day. The Clubhouse was later moved to a piece of property on White Court in Douglas that was purchased for land taxes. The approximately 100 acres has been the home of the WFGC for many years, and has a state of the art clubhouse built by many members of the club over the years. The Blackstone Valley Beagle Club used the club for a number of years prior to

moving to their own club in Douglas. The Whitinsville Fish & Game Club used Rileys Pond on Castle Hill Road in Whitinsville for many years. The former Whitins Machine Works owned Rileys pond and allowed the Whitinsville club to stock it with trout. I have a lot of great memories fishing at Rileys Pond, and my son Ralph JR. caught his first big brown trout there. Now, the Whitinsville

Fish & Game Club has their own trout pond at their new location on White Court. Having my Granddaughter Andrea & her husband Chris, along with my two great grandchildren Eva and Logan and son Ralph, Jr. made four generations that were at the ceremonies making it that much more special. The Eastern States Expo at the Big E in Springfield will open

their doors on Feb. 23-25! Attending the show every year is always a blast as we see old friends and acquaintances. The latest in fishing and hunting gear is always great to see, along with hunting and fishing guides from around the world signing up sportsmen and women for that special outdoor adventure. Hope to see you there. Captain Mel True will be holding his annual fishing show again this year in Wareham! One day only! Towneplace Marriott, Wareham, MA, Buzzards Bay! April 13, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. New & used fishing tackle. A few tables available! Contact Mel at 1- 508-951-9991. 200 Sportsmen's club ice fishing derby cancelled for this weekend due to unsafe ice. The Uxbridge Rod & Gun Club will hold their annual ice derby this Saturday for members only, ice permitting. The kitchen will be open for breakfast starting at 6 a.m., even if the derby needs to be canceled because of poor ice! Chef Bedard is planning a great breakfast for all in attendance. Come on down! Take A Kid Fishing & Keep Them Rods Bending!

A Nostalgic Peek at Garden Folklore

The garden has long been a mystical place, where the wonder of nature's handiwork is apparent each harvest season. Given a garden's unpredictability it should come as no surprise that gardeners through the ages have tried to tempt fate through rituals and rhymes. As we anticipate the spring season (and the ground hog predicted an early spring!), it is fitting this column be dedicated to a sampling of garden folklore of tradition and tales.

“Weather” or Not: The weather plays a major role in planting success, and our forefathers had numerous anecdotes and rhymes to aid them in recalling nature's predictions. Here is an entertaining collection of phrases for you to ponder.

Clear moon, frost soon. Cloudy mornings turn to clear afternoons. Halo around the moon, rain soon. Halo around the sun or moon, rain or snow soon. If you see the underside of the leaves in the gentle breeze, it will rain before your sneeze. Mare's tails and mackerel scales make tall ships take in their sails. No weather is ill when the wind is still. Pale moon doth rain, Red moon doth blow,

White moon doth neither rain nor snow. Red skies at night, sailor's delight. Red skies at morning, sailors take warning. Smoke curling downward, poor weather. When the stars begin to huddle, the earth will soon become a puddle. When your joints all start to ache, rainy weather is at stake. When a cow endeavors to scratch his ear, it means a rain shower is very near. When he thumps his ribs with an angry tail, Look out for thunder, lightning and hail. A year of snow, a year of plenty. Evening red and morning gray help the traveler on his way. Evening gray and morning red bring down rain upon his head.

Mantra of the Months: Certain months of the year bring curious clues as to Mother Nature's mood. Some of these vintage verses are oft repeated today.

If February brings no rain, 'tis neither good for grass nor grain. If the grass do grow in Janiveer, it grows the worse for it all the year. In February, if thou hear'st thunder, thou shalt see a summer wonder. A summer fog for fair, a winter fog for rain. A wet January, a wet spring.

An April flood carries away both the frog and his brood. April showers bring May flowers. April weather: rain and sunshine both together. Be it weal or be it woe, bean blow before May doth go. A cold May and a windy, a full barn will find ye. If it thunders on All Fool's Day, it brings good crops of corn and hay. A peck of March dust is worth a king's ransom. March'll search ye, April try ye; May'll tell, whether live or die ye. A wet May makes a big load of hay. A cold May is kindly and fills the barn finely. When April blows his horn, 'Tis good for both hay and corn. A cold and wet June spoils the rest of the year. A dripping June keeps all things in tune. A dry May and a leaking June, make the farmer whistle a merry tune. If the 24th of August be fair and clear, then hope for a prosperous autumn that year. In July, shear your rye. June damp and warm does the farmer no harm. Mist in May and heat in June will bring all things into tune. A swarm of bees in May is worth a load of hay. A swarm of bees in July is not worth a fly. **



TAKE THE HINT
KAREN TRAINOR

The Legend of Gazing Balls: Gazing balls, which are large shiny, reflective orbs that typically sit on a stand in the garden, have long been said to have protective powers. In the Victorian era, gazing balls were common sights in gardens. Legend has it evil spirits attempting to enter the garden were scared off by their own reflections in the gazing ball. Also called Witch Balls because witches were often the spirits to repel, the brilliant globes were also said to ward off misfortune and illness. Today, gazing balls have become an attractive addition to both formal and casual gardens. Set on a cement or metal stand, the orb allows a view of the entire garden with a single glance. **

Hummingbird Lore: The tiny hummingbird has a rich heritage steeped in Native American folklore. In Mayan lore, the hummingbird is the sun in disguise. A Mojave legend has a hummingbird

flying up from the darkness of the inner earth to discover the world we now live in. The Taino tribe worship the hummingbird, believing it is a “sacred pollinator.” And the Chaymas of Trinidad also hold hummingbirds sacred, as it is thought the hummingbirds are their dead ancestors. Hummingbirds are a delightful addition to the modern garden, as they are not only wonderful to watch, they are valuable pollinators and insect predators. Growing flowers that produce nectar will attract the tiny birds, and hummingbird feeders ensure a plentiful flock of the tiny visitors. Hummingbirds are attracted to the following shrubs and flowers: Azalea; Bee Balm; Butterfly Bush; Canna; Coral Honeysuckle; Flowering Quince; Four O'Clocks; Foxglove; Fuchsia ; Hosta; Impatiens; Morning Glory; Petunia; Trumpet Creeper; Yucca. If you use a hummingbird feeder, a homemade solution of nectar is an economic way to attract the birds. The general recipe is one part sugar to four parts water. Mixture should be boiled for about a minute to retard mold. The solution should be replaced at least once a week and it is imperative you keep the feeder clean.

It is not necessary to add red food coloring to the water, as any red trim on the feeder will attract the birds. ** 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 (or whenever enough tips are received) 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.

Retirees: Time to use a barbell? (No, not the weights)

Predicting where interest rates will be in the future is an extremely difficult task. Where will rates be 12 months from now? Higher? Lower? The same? Even professional economists with their proverbial crystal balls guess wrong. Nevertheless, it is important for retirees to consider the current interest rate environment when looking for ways to maximize their sources of retirement income. During 2023 we watched the Federal Reserve dramatically raise rates in an effort to slow the economy and curb inflation. The chart below illustrates that dramatic increase. Today, there is a general consensus amongst economists that we are at the end of this

tightening cycle, and we will likely see rates come down in the second half of 2024. Most notably, during their Dec. 12-13 Fed meeting, policymakers signaled the central bank would cut rates three times in 2024, confirming a pivot from prior rate hikes. Against this backdrop, retirees are now left wondering how to position excess cash, CD's, bonds, and fixed income portfolios. It is no surprise one of the most common questions our clients ask us is, “How can we maximize our retirement income?” One effective strategy for consideration is a “barbell approach”. To use this approach an investor will pair a short-term fixed income instrument with a longer-term

FINANCIAL FOCUS

BY CHRISTOPHER MALLON
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT,
PROGRAM MANAGER
LPL REGISTERED PRINCIPAL, THE
CAPSTONE PLANNING GROUP

fixed income instrument. Here's a hypothetical example of a barbell in action: Nancy has \$200,000 of assets she'd like to put to work. She places \$100,000 in a (12) month CD paying 5.05 percent* and the remaining \$100,000 in a (5) year fixed annuity paying 5.45 percent* If interest rates fall over the next 12 months: Nancy will still have a portion of her money paying 5.45 percent* (the fixed annuity) If interest rates rise over the next 12 month: her CD will mature and

she can reinvest that money at a potentially new (higher) rate In summary, this approach can help retirees hedge against interest rate movements in either direction. And if rates are indeed near their peak, this strategy may help “lock in” a potentially attractive rate for longer: If you would like to learn more about how The Capstone Planning Group assist clients with retirement income planning, or discuss our current rates, please contact our office at 508-764-0046 to speak with a professional. About The Capstone Planning Group The Capstone Planning Group is an experienced wealth management team conveniently located at Cornerstone Bank.

The team offers comprehensive financial planning, asset management, and insurance. To learn more about the team and schedule a courtesy consultation please visit www.thecapstone.group or call 508-764-0046 ----- *Interest rates quoted in this article are for educational purposes only. Interest rates change daily. This article is not a solicitation or recommendation to purchase any specific product. Guarantees offered on Fixed Annuities are subject to the claims-paying ability of the issuing insurance company. Securities and advisory services are offered through LPL Financial (LPL), a registered investment advisor and broker-dealer (member FINRA/SIPC). Insurance products are offered through LPL or

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Uxbridge resident named to President's List at Dean College

FRANKLIN — Evenfall Bair of Uxbridge has earned a place on the President's List for the Fall 2023 semester. Students named to the President's List have demonstrated a serious commitment to their studies while at Dean College.

Founded in 1865, Dean College is a private, residential college located in Franklin Massachusetts, 45 minutes from Boston, Massachusetts, and Providence, Rhode Island. Dean College offers baccalaureate degrees, associate degree programs, as well as a robust schedule of part-time continuing and professional education credit and certificate programs throughout the calendar year.

Local students named to University of Hartford President's List

WEST HARTFORD, Conn. — The University of Hartford congratulates the students who have been named to the President's List for Fall 2023.

The President's List is made up of an extremely select group of students who earned a grade point average of 3.75 or higher in the semester.

Grace Farland of Sturbridge
Andrew Briere of Holland
Emma Fancy of Sturbridge
Lee Warner of Uxbridge

Spread across seven dynamic schools and colleges, the University of Hartford has been guiding the purpose and passion of students for over six decades. On our 350-acre campus alongside Connecticut's capital city, approximately 4,100 undergraduate and 1,800 graduate students representing 48 states and 51 countries come together for a common purpose: to collaborate across different disciplines, diversify perspectives, and broaden worldviews. We're a four-year private university focused on advancing the public good through meaningful connections within our communities. Our unique approach to comprehensive education gives us the critical perspectives that lead to impact change, regionally and beyond. With degree programs spanning the arts, humanities, business, engineering and technology, education, and health professions, we focus on doing the work that matters. Visit hartford.edu to learn more.

ANTIQUES

continued from page A6

photo and other memorabilia sold for \$275. A 1950s or 1960s stewardess cap with pin brought \$350. A Pan Am clock shaped like an instrument panel landed at \$500 and three silver appreciation tokens from President Eisenhower soared to \$2,400.

We are accepting comic books, sports cards & memorabilia, and collectibles consignments for the next week. We are also accepting consignments for our multi-estate auction with gold jewelry, sterling silver, coins, art, antiques and collectibles. My "Evaluating your Antiques" class will be on March 5th at the Bay Path Evening School in Charlton. I'll also be at the Learning in Retirement event in Danielson, Connecticut on May 6. Please note the date correction from my last column. Please visit our Web site, <https://centralmassauctions.com>, for links to other upcoming events.

Contact us to consign items or for auction information at: Wayne Tuiskula Auctioneer/Appraiser Central Mass Auctions for Antique, Collectibles Auctions and Appraisal Services info@centralmassauctions.com or (508-612-6111).



Dean College announces Fall 2023 Dean's List

FRANKLIN, Mass. — Dean College is pleased to announce the students that have earned a place on the Dean's List for the Fall 2023 semester. These students have demonstrated a serious commitment to their studies while at Dean College.

Ava Turner of Uxbridge
Lia Zajas of Uxbridge
Ryann Leaming of Uxbridge

Founded in 1865, Dean College is a private, residential college located in Franklin Massachusetts, 45 minutes from Boston, Massachusetts, and Providence, Rhode Island. Dean College offers baccalaureate degrees, associate degree programs, as well as a robust schedule of part-time continuing and professional education credit and certificate programs throughout the calendar year.

Fall Dean's List announced at Stonehill College

EASTON — More than 1,000 students have been recognized for academic excellence at Stonehill College. To qualify for this honor, students must have a semester grade point average of 3.50 or better and must have successfully completed all courses for which they were registered.

Megan Vanelli of Uxbridge
Rofail Wassef of Uxbridge
Rahni Bussiere of Charlton
Rory Paul of Uxbridge
Mark Wassef of Charlton
Allison Moloney of Brimfield
About Stonehill College

Stonehill College, a Catholic institution of higher learning, was founded by the Congregation of Holy Cross in 1948. Located on the beautiful 384-acre campus and former estate of Frederick Lothrop Ames in North Easton, Massachusetts, it is a community of scholarship and faith, anchored by a belief in the inherent dignity of each person.

Through more than 100 academic programs in the liberal arts, sciences, business and pre-professional field, Stonehill College provides an education of the highest caliber that fosters critical thinking, free inquiry and the interchange of ideas for over 2,500 students.

Stonehill College educates the whole person so that each Stonehill graduate thinks, acts and leads with courage toward the creation of a more just and compassionate world.

Taryn Logan named to President's List at Western New England University

SPRINGFIELD — Western New England University (WNE) is proud to announce that Taryn Logan of Fiskdale has been named to the Western New England University's President's List for the Fall 2023 semester. Logan is one of 26 students to achieve this mark of academic excellence. Students are named to the President's List for achieving a semester grade point average of 3.80 or higher.

Logan is working toward a Doctor of Pharmacy degree.

A WNE education provides career-span agility through a curriculum grounded in professional/experiential studies, enhanced by the liberal arts, and enriched by mentored research that equips graduates to adapt and succeed in the workplace of the future.

Western New England University (WNE) is a private, nationally ranked, comprehensive institution with a focus on preparing work-ready and world-ready graduates. Founded in 1919 in Springfield, as a division of Northeastern College, WNE's 215-acre suburban campus serves more than 3,700 students, including over 2,500 full-time undergraduates. More than 47,000 alumni have earned degrees through its 90+ undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs at Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Engineering, and Pharmacy and Health Sciences, and School of Law. Students come from 39 U.S. states and territories and 23 countries. Of 45,104 living alumni, 30 percent remain within the region, residing in the four Western Massachusetts counties and northern Connecticut.

WNE is classified among nationally ranked universities in US News and World Report, and among the Top 100 Undergraduate Engineering programs, and in the Doctoral/Professional Universities category in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

Julia M. Canty of Charlton named to Dean's List at Saint Michael's College

COLCHESTER, Vt. — Julia M. Canty of Charlton was named to the Dean's List at Saint Michael's College for the Fall 2023 semester. Students who complete at least 12 credits of classes and achieve a grade point average of at least 3.5 in a particular semester are cited on the Dean's List for that semester.

Saint Michael's College, founded on principles of social justice and leading lives of purpose and consequence, is a selective, Catholic college just outside Burlington, Vermont, one of the country's best college towns. Located between the Green Mountains and Lake Champlain, our closely connected community guarantees housing all four years and delivers internationally respected liberal arts together with an innovative Purposeful Learning Program, preparing students for fulfilling careers and meaningful lives. Young adults here grow intellectually, socially, and morally, learning to be responsible for themselves, each other, and their world.

Learn basics of aerodynamics with Ed the Wizard

SOUTHBRIDGE — Learn the basics of aerodynamics and model building with Ed the Wizard, appearing at the Jacob Edwards Library on Thursday, Feb. 22 starting at 2 p.m. In this program library patrons will build their own glider as they learn basic aerodynamics and the forces that affect flight. We will then test our piloting skills with loops, banks, and even straight and level flight paths.

Elm St. Congregational announces upcoming events

SOUTHBRIDGE — On Feb. 11, Tom Lapriore will speak about the Meals On Wheels program, offered by Tri Valley Inc., during the regular 10 a.m. church service at Elm St. Congregational Church. This is a mission that delivers meals to seniors.

Lent begins Feb 14.

Ash Wednesday services will be held at 2 pm in the church vestry with Pastor Kathy and at 7pm in the church sanctuary. Pastor Marcy will be bringing ashes to our home bound friends. To arrange for a visit, call the church at 508 764 8058.

Feb 18, a ZOOM Lenten bible study will be held in conjunction with First Congregational Church of Oxford and First Congregational Church of Brimfield focusing on "The Gospel of Mark: a beginners guide to the Good News" by Amy-Jill Levine. Each week a video will be shown to discuss. The Zoom room opens at 6:45 p.m., session runs until 8 p.m. For more information and for the link, contact the church at 508-764-8058. Pastor Kathy will lead this Bible study.

Local students named to University of Hartford Dean's Lists

WEST HARTFORD, Conn. — The University of Hartford is pleased to announce the students who have been named to the Dean's List for Fall 2023.

Courtney Haire of Brimfield
Andrew Briere of Holland
Grace Farland of Sturbridge
Joyce Woodard of Wales
Emma Fancy of Sturbridge

Emily Warner of Uxbridge

Spread across seven dynamic schools and colleges, the University of Hartford has been guiding the purpose and passion of students for over six decades. On our 350-acre campus alongside Connecticut's capital city, approximately 4,100 undergraduate and 1,800 graduate students representing 48 states and 51 countries come together for a common purpose: to collaborate across different disciplines, diversify perspectives, and broaden worldviews. We're a four-year private university focused on advancing the public good through meaningful connections within our communities. Our unique approach to comprehensive education gives us the critical perspectives that lead to impact change, regionally and beyond. With degree programs spanning the arts, humanities, business, engineering and technology, education, and health professions, we focus on doing the work that matters. Visit hartford.edu to learn more.



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SENIORS NAMED TO BAY PATH HONOR ROLL

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School congratulates the following grade 12 students on being named to the honor roll for the second quarter of the 2023-2024 school year:

High Honors
Kaidra Anderson, Sophia Balestracci, Vincent Brink, Rachel Carpenter, Meredith Clark, Kirsten Congdon, Mariselle Cosme, Emma Davidson, Dylan DeJesus, Emma DeJong, Kacey Flanagan, Jenna Gajewski, Makayla Graham, Tristan Hanson, James Heywood, Carly Impey, Anna Lehtola, Kristina Liberty, Catherine Magnusson, Shaun McLaughlin, Maggie Mullaly, Kayla Nguyen, Peter Nhan, Madison Nolin, Avelyn O'Brien, Nason Omasta, Noalani Perez, Wendy Ramirez, Paige Seymour, Catherine Sirard, Jacob Sirard, Victoria Tinsley, Hailey Williamson, Gabrielle Zopatti

Honors
Alexander Adkins, Kasey Babkauskas, Colton Beauchamp, Alyesia Bellamy, Alex Beshiri, Luke Boliver, Caroline Borgeson, Andrew Bousquet,

Emma Bransky, Ryan Bray, Gabriela Cabrera, Olivia Carrier, Madyson Chicoine, Charles Chivallatti, Natalie Cierpich, Jomar Cintron Perez, Petru Cojocaru, Yanieris Colon Vega, Shane Conti, Richard Corriveau, Zachary Cournoyer, Peter Courville, Kyleigh Czechowski, LeeAnn Dagnese, Daniel Daige, Wyatt Daoust, Jeffrey Denham, Dylan Dietlin, Marissa Dumas, Jayden-James Dunston, Jibril Erraihani, James Ferreira, Robert Fleck IV, Jonathan Forget, Nicholas Gagne, Ethan Gallant, Giovanni Garcia, Devin Gavaletz, Jacob Goodspeed, Rachel Gormley, Simon Greening, Lucas Hafner, Bridget Hast, Riley Heenan, Alba Henriquez Baez, Isabelle Herholz, Valerie Hernandez, Tessa Howard, Caitlin Hubbell, Ian James, Stanislaw Janusz, Eva Jerez, Jadyn Katz, Abigail Kibaru, Jordan Kippax, Madisyn Kozlowski, Matthew Lach, Braeden LaPointe, Benjamin LaTour, Emma Levasseur, Damon Lopez, Radiel Lopez, Albert Luciano, Patrick Luperchio, Hannah Luukko, Sarah Martin, Jenna McLeish, Vincent Messier, Macaylah Miller, Cole Mitchell, Leah Monti, Adrianna Navarro, Christian Nguyen, Alix Norman, Megan O'Shea, Noah Okolita, Brayden Parente, Esteban Pimentel, Colon Planete, Laci Pollone, Jared Powell, Logan Powers, Evan Provost, Emily Quental, Jacob Reed, Gabriela Rivera Burgos, Victoria Roberts, Margaret Russell,

Samantha Russell, Luchia Sargent, Caterina Schiappa, Amanda Seidler, Sydney Seymour, Ryan Sinkewicz, Jason Sinkis, Gerald Splaine, Adriana Stanley, Ashton Stockenberg, Brady Suprenant, Kyle Sylwanovicz, Isabella Taiste, Jack Ugrinow, Landon Walker, Natalie Walker, Ryleigh Warchal, Timothy Welch, Thomas Wilk, Ryley Williams, Sebastian Winer, Charlotte Worster, Stone Zink

Principal's List
Juliana Alcivar, Jacob Anderson, Hailey Benoit, Samuel Brill, Kayla Brown, Caitlyn Burke, Rayanie Castillo, Karoline Corpes Diaz, Pedro Augusto Dasilva, Deanna Davis, Nyasia Delgado, Noah Dupont, William Dwyer, Janelle Ethier, Jared Evora, Arianna Flores, Chase Forehand, Joseph Fritze, Jesse Gillet, Sabien Gonzalez, Renee Hallaman, Nathan Josey, Alyssa Kutzko, Abigayle Linde, Jadier Maldonado, Ava Marotta, Marissa Masciarelli, Matteo Mastrototaro, Gianna Pantalone, Sylas Perreault, Nicholas Pollone, Ismael Porrata, Daniel Russell, Cody Savary, Cody Sexton, Madison Sibert, Brady Staniunas, Alysha Szafarowicz, Christopher Verdolino

Editor's note: Due to space limitations, the honor rolls for the junior, sophomore, and freshman classes will appear in future editions.

AICS's Jackson Haker earns NCBWA Preseason All-Region Honors

SPRINGFIELD — The National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association announced its 2024 Preseason All-Region selections on Tuesday, Jan. 23, including Jackson Haker of the American International College (AIC) baseball team.

The junior from Uxbridge, who is among AIC's four captains for the upcoming season, filled his trophy case last spring. He earned postseason All-Region honors from the NCBWA and the Division II Conference Commissioners Association for his play, in addition to First-Team All-Conference honors from the Northeast-10 Conference.

Founded in 1885, American International College (AIC) is a private, co-educational, doctoral-granting institution in Springfield, 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.



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SPORTS

Shepherd Hill's suffocating defense leads to win over Patriots, provides automatic spot in State Tournament



Nick Ethier photos

Shepherd Hill's Heidi Jarosz taps the ball down the court during the game-opening jump ball opportunity.



Shepherd Hill's Ashely Dickhaut applies tremendous defensive pressure while Olivia Marquis of North Middlesex attempts to inbound the ball.

BY NICK ETHIER
SPORTS EDITOR

DUDLEY — With three weeks of scheduled regular season games remaining, Shepherd Hill girls' varsity basketball head coach Maura Hackenson had a simple message to her team: "It's go time."

And with that proclamation, the Rams defeated Oakmont on Tuesday, Jan. 30 by a final of 52-39. And then, on Friday, Feb. 2, The Hill took care of North Middlesex, 49-20.

The Rams' defense was suffocating against the Patriots. North Middlesex's life was made difficult as they tried to

move the ball down the court. If they were able to do so, hoisting up a quality shot was uncommon. The Patriots' quarter scoring totals were all in single digits: 7, 3, 8 and 2.

"We've gone through a few defenses this year, trying to figure out what our main defense is going to be — we still haven't figured that out yet — we decided to go out in full man (to man pressure) tonight, trap when you can, and the girls did a really good job tonight," explained Hackenson. "We like to press and put pressure on people, and we're coming out ready."

The high-pressure defense was certainly part of the game plan heading into the game against North Middlesex, a team they defeated by 23 points (48-25) earlier in the season.

"We definitely wanted to come out and play hard tonight. We wanted everyone to contribute, take care of the basketball, limit our turnovers, cause some chaos out there, and the girls took care of business," said Hackenson.

Eight Shepherd Hill players (Jaizzy Santiago, 13 points; Heidi Jarosz, 11; Kaitlyn Sullivan, 8;



Jaizzy Santiago of Shepherd Hill flings a pass over to her left side.



Jillian Clarke of Shepherd Hill handles the ball while running the fast break.

Gianna Neri, 6; Ashley Dickhaut, 5; Jillian Clarke, 2; Shayley Szela, 2; Lily Connole, 2) found the score sheet on the offensive end.

"Real big emphasis on team basketball and the girls have really bought into it. Everyone's contributing every single night. We have assists all over the place," said Hackenson.

The victory moved the Rams' record to 10-5,

while North Middlesex dropped to 3-10. The 10 wins means that The Hill has automatically qualified for the upcoming Division 2 State Tournament.

"We're very grateful to have 10 wins. People had us pegged to win four," explained Hackenson. "We lost seven seniors and nine total players (from last season). They've meshed together in a short amount of

time.”

Hackenson noted that the Rams are also competing for the Mid-Wach B Division title. Shepherd Hill's lone loss in league play has come against Westborough — a team without a league loss as of press time — and they will play the Rangers in a rematch on Thursday, Feb. 8. A victory there would give the Rams a chance at sharing or winning the league.



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SPORTS

Solid defense throughout, improved offense in second half enough for Warriors to get by South



Nick Ethier photos

Tantasqua's James Sciaraffa catches a pass out on the wing and then attempts a 3-pointer.



Jack Rapose of Tantasqua elevates toward the rim and drops in a layup.



Tantasqua's Bryce Tessier focuses before taking and making a free throw.



Colm McGrath of Tantasqua looks inside to make a pass on South's defense.

of quality looks in the first half, obviously they just weren't going in, both 3-pointers and things towards the basket. So, at halftime, we stressed that we wanted to get more toward the hoop and we didn't want to shoot jump shots unless it was off of a drive and kick-out. We don't just want to shoot the first shot that presents itself and when that happens you make a higher percentage of shots. Thank God for James Sciaraffa in the second half, he hit probably three or four 3's in the second half which helps when you're struggling to score. I am proud of how those guys responded on the road against a talented team like South."

that go in. There are so many kids who can go one-on-one and create for themselves. They have one in (Alex) Johnson, but we did a fairly good job of containing him for the most part. He got free and scored because that is what he does and he is that good, so you try not to get too upset about that, but you want to make everything contested and if you make everything contested at the high school level it takes a pretty good offensive night for a team to beat you."

The win against South put the Warriors over .500 on the season with six games remaining. Tantasqua is pushing for a spot in the Division 3 State Tournament and Coach Dion believes it is a must for his team to flip the postseason switch on early to gather momentum during the last stretch of the regular season.

"It is huge with the power rankings, the 10-point threshold is what you try and win by. We were fortunate enough to win by more than 10 today and then to get to 7-6. We talked about how this had to be the last six games of the year, we need to put it into postseason mode. We are not guaranteed the postseason by any means at 7-6, so we need to make every game a game like it is the postseason. So, we walked in here tonight on the road and we were able to get this one and we get back to work and hopefully, we play well Friday."

Tantasqua ended up winning on Friday, Feb. 2, 59-39 over Belchertown to improve to 8-6 as of press time.

BY DEAN P. ST. LAURENT
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

WORCESTER — The Tantasqua boys' varsity basketball team found themselves in a defensive battle against South High of Worcester on Tuesday, Jan. 30. After the first two quarters of action, offense was at a premium and hardnosed defense was at the forefront. The Warriors and Colonials went into halftime tied, 12-12.

However, despite the slow offensive start for Tantasqua, they came out in the third quarter on fire and outscored South 17-6 to push out to a comfortable 29-18 lead. The offensive momentum continued and the defensive intensity stayed consistent throughout and Tantasqua was able to hold onto a big 48-32 win on the road.

"At halftime, we talked about that we are a team that prides ourselves on defense, so we shouldn't be too upset that it was 12-12," explained Tantasqua head coach Scott Dion. "We had a ton

A big reason for the offense surge was Sciaraffa, who got going and scored 13 of his team-high 15 points to pace the Warriors. The junior guard hit a pair of 3-pointers in the fourth quarter and converted a needed and-one opportunity early in the third to kick-start the 17-6 run.

Defense is what the Warriors pride themselves on and it was clear against South. Nothing came easy for the Colonels on the offensive end and everything was contested.

"We like to think we do a good job of trying to keep guys in front of you at the high school level," stated Dion. "If guys are going to shoot shots, that is fine, but they have to be contested shots. Like I said, offensively when we drive and kick we get quality shots. So, defensively we try to prevent that for the other team because those are the ones you practice every day and the ones

HIGH SCHOOL NOTEBOOK

Warriors have strong showing in Mid-Wach League Meet

The Tantasqua girls' and boys' swim teams competed in the Mid-Wach League Meet on Thursday, Feb. 1. The boys placed second overall out of 12 teams and the girls placed ninth. Top swims for the boys: Ethan Zhu placed first in the 200 free and broke the school record in the 100 back, Keenan Scherer placed fifth in the 200 IM, Ethan Korenda placed fourth in the 50 free and third in the 100 free, Evan Dambly placed second in the 100 free and fourth in the 100 back. Sam Merchant placed first in the 500 free and third in the 100 breaststroke. The relay teams of Korenda, Merchant, Dambly and Zhu placed first in the 200 medley and the 400 free with state qualifying times in both.

On the girls' side, Sasha Hildago placed seventh in the 200 free and ninth in the 500 free. Abby Korenda qualified for sectionals in the 50 free with a 10th place finish, and placed third in the 100 breaststroke. And the 400 free relay team of Ali Regan, Sasha Hildago, Tori Stendrup and Abby Korenda qualified for sectionals.

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SPORTS

Auburn co-op hockey battles hard in close loss to Longmeadow



Auburn's Elizabeth Rudge controls the puck as she skates down the ice.



Rachel Bowman of Auburn follows through upon the release of her shot on net.



Auburn's Izzy Spencer dumps the puck into Longmeadow's zone.



Maddi Leonard of Auburn looks ahead before firing off a pass down the ice.



Auburn goalie Alex Corey smotheres the puck for one of her 34 saves versus Longmeadow.

BY NICK ETHIER
SPORTS EDITOR

AUBURN — The Auburn girls' varsity co-op ice hockey team opened and closed the month of January with contests against Longmeadow. First, the Rockets lost a 4-2 decision to the Lancers on Jan. 1 at Smead Arena. Then, on Wednesday, Jan. 31, Auburn again did battle with Longmeadow, this time at Horgan Arena. The Rockets fell just short in this one as well, 5-3.

"They're a powerhouse," Auburn head coach Peter LaPrad said of the Lancers. "They're a very good program, and for us to compete at that level in both games, we're thrilled. They're a very veteran team, a lot of upperclasswomen, and we're a very young team. It's a great compete for us."

The Auburn co-op, which also includes student-athletes from Tantasqua, Grafton, Shepherd Hill, Northbridge, Sutton and select Worcester schools, dropped to 6-9-1, while

Longmeadow improved to 9-2.

"I want to play tough teams, I want to play strong teams, because we need to learn how to win against strong teams," said LaPrad of his team that consists of two seniors, five juniors, five sophomores and 10 freshmen.

The Lancers were ranked No. 5 in the Division 2 Power Rankings as of Friday, Feb. 2, proving how strong of a team they are. But it was the Rockets who struck first, as Leah Medeiros won a faceoff and Alice Peck collected the puck. Peck's casual backhand got past Longmeadow goalie Nicole Pollard (11 saves), as Auburn took a 1-0 lead less than two minutes into the contest.

"Any shot on net is a good shot," said LaPrad. "The other thing that I'm thrilled about it is I feel like we have the most talent we've ever had in our history. What we're doing is more advanced stuff, we have systems that we put in place where we're

doing things in certain circumstances, and that was one of them."

After Longmeadow tied the game at 1-1 later in the period on a goal by Ava Saunders, the game moved to the second period. There, the Lancers grabbed a 2-1 lead early when Milana Shuman's snap shot slipped past Auburn goalie Alex Corey.

The Rockets wasted little time tying the score, though, as two-plus minutes later Izzy Spencer and Elizabeth Rudge worked a two-on-one to perfection, with Rudge sliding a centering pass to Spencer, whose shot beat Pollard.

Unfortunately for Auburn, the Lancers' Amelia Hanke, Margo Watkins and Molly Henshon all scored later in the second period as they moved to the third leading, 5-2.

The Rockets did score early in the third to trim the deficit down to 5-3. It was another two-on-one opportunity, this time featuring Maddi Leonard and Olivia Viens, for the

goal. Leonard started the play with a right-to-left pass to Viens, who then quickly passed back to Leonard; Leonard's shot then beat Pollard.

"With all the talent, the next step is the chemistry. The chemistry exists off the ice and on the ice. And those two goals were very good examples of chemistry on the ice," LaPrad said of the two-on-one goals.

LaPrad was proud of the way Corey played in net, as she finished with 34 saves. Corey, a freshman, has been getting spot starts to give normal starter Tori Horne, a senior, a break.

"She's the future for us for sure. Alex, I've been throwing her in in tough pressure situations, and she does great," explained LaPrad.

Despite the sub-.500

record, the Rockets are still in playoff consideration for the Division 2 State Tournament. The top 32 teams automatically qualify, and in the Feb. 2 rankings Auburn was No. 31.

"We definitely want to get in, for sure. Who you play is critical, and this will help us. That's the goal," LaPrad said of making the State Tournament.

Southbridge Lions Club's annual Cartoon Character Breakfast to be held Sunday

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Lions Club will hold its annual Cartoon Character Breakfast on Superbowl Sunday, Feb. 11 at the Southbridge Community Center, 153 Chestnut St., from 7 a.m.-noon.

Bring the kids to meet their favorite cartoon characters. All-you-can-eat breakfast includes, pancakes, French toast and ham. The proceeds from the breakfast will be put into the Lions' Charity account to be distributed within the community to families, individuals and groups in need of help. Tickets are available in advance from any Southbridge Lions member, or at the door. Costs are \$7 for adults, and \$4 for children under the age of ten. Credit and debit cards will be accepted at the door in addition to cash. See you there!

OBITUARY

Every loss holds a lesson

Joan E. Flagg, 83



OXFORD – Joan E. (Ryan) Flagg, 83, died Monday, January 29, 2024, at Harrington Memorial Hospital in Southbridge. She is survived by her husband of 63 years, Charles E. Flagg; two children, Cathy J. Bennett and her husband Richard of Oxford, and Chuck M. Flagg and his wife Kathleen of Holland; three step-children, William R. Smith and his wife Beatrice of Illinois, Phillip C. Smith and his wife Jennifer of Tennessee, and Wendy J. Anderson of Kentucky; her sister-in-law, Elizabeth Briggs and her husband Clifford of Oxford; 11 grandchildren, Justin, Derrick, and Andrew Bennett, George, Devin, and Bradford Flagg, Jessica Wales, Richard Chaffee, Brian Niekirk, Heidi and Tammy Anderson; 11 great-grandchildren, 3 great-great grandchildren, many nieces, nephews, and good friends. She was born in Worcester; daughter of the late Maurice J. and Rita A. (Pelletier) Ryan, and lived in Worcester and Oxford before moving to Florida for 30 years. She graduated from Oxford High School in 1957.

Mrs. Flagg worked as a school bus driver for Cazeault Bus Company in Oxford. Later, she worked at WCIS Bank in Oxford for five years, and worked alongside her husband at Flagg’s Service Station in Oxford for many years. She was a member of the First Congregational Church in Oxford, and served on the church’s Diaconate. While in Florida, she was a member of the Mustang Club, and enjoyed playing cards and Wii bowling on Tuesday nights. She loved the outdoors and enjoyed boating, fishing, puzzles, and working in her yard. Most of all, she enjoyed spending time with her family. She will be greatly missed by her family, and will be remembered as a woman who enjoyed life to the fullest.

Services will be private. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the First Congregational Church, P.O. Box 585, 355 Main St., Oxford, MA 01540, or to the Boston Children’s Hospital Trust, 401 Park Drive, Suite 602, Boston, MA 02215.

Paradis-Givner Funeral Home in Oxford is directing the arrangements.

Loss is a part of everyone’s life, as common as the air we breathe. It’s one of those things we all face – the deep sadness of saying goodbye.

It could be the final goodbye to a family member, a close friend, or someone else we hold dear. We know these moments are coming, but that doesn’t make them any easier. They’re like uninvited guests who show up, reminding us how precious our time is with the people we care about.

As a poet once said, “Sometimes, only one person is missing, and the whole world seems depopulated.”

Then there’s the kind of loss that sneaks up on us, the kind we don’t talk about much. It’s not about the unavoidable end of life but the relationships that drift apart because of what we do or don’t do.

In these moments, we might lose someone and part of ourselves. This is particularly true when we invest so much in our relationships that our identity diminishes. We can lose sight of who we are outside of these connections, and the loss of self can be as profound as the loss of the other.

Take, for instance, the time I lost a business partner. We clashed over a business decision that seemed unfairly balanced and not mutually beneficial to me. I tried to find a middle ground. I sought a compromise, hoping to preserve our partnership, but a compromise was outside his agenda. In

the end, we had to part ways. Why did it happen? That’s something I might never fully understand.

I also recall a friend who suddenly stopped talking to me. We used to spend a lot of time together – sharing meals, attending church, and just enjoying each other’s company. Then, out of nowhere, he cut off all communication. I tried reaching out multiple times – calls, texts, emails – but got very little response. Four years passed before he started talking to me again. Even when I asked him about the reason for his long silence, he never gave me a straight answer.

I was deeply in love with a woman who didn’t share my feelings. Despite my persistent efforts over the years, her feelings didn’t change. I may never fully understand why it didn’t work out.

These experiences, though painful, remind us that not all losses seem preventable. In life, we’re often faced with situations that are beyond our control. But what about the losses we might prevent?

Consider your relationships, not just with your spouse but also with your friends – are you nurturing these bonds with the care and respect they deserve?

Often, we take our closest relationships for granted, not realizing the value of what we have until there’s a risk of losing it. The erosion of trust is a subtle yet pro-

found form of loss, and it isn’t confined to romantic relationships alone. It creeps in when we neglect our partners’ and friends’ needs, feelings, or expectations. Once trust is damaged, whether in a marriage or a friendship, rebuilding it can be a long and challenging road.

And what about your customers? When we lose a customer, it’s the loss of an opportunity to serve and to make a meaningful impact. Are you paying attention to their needs and expectations to contribute positively to their day or solve a problem they’re facing?

Winning back a customer after they’ve left can be significantly more challenging than maintaining that relationship.

So, what can we do in the face of potential loss? We can strive to be kind, communicate openly, and cherish our time with those around us. We can work on being understanding and patient. And when someone steps back into our lives, we can welcome them with open arms, knowing that relationships are sometimes mysterious and require understanding.

Loss, in its many forms, is an inevitable part of life. But each loss carries a lesson.

It’s been said that you learn more from loss than you do from gain.

Ultimately, it’s not just about preventing loss; it’s about embracing the learning and growing that comes from it. And that’s a positive take on one of life’s most challenging experiences.

Bay Path LPN obtains wound care certification



Heather Sheehan

CHARLTON — Heather Sheehan, LPN of Charlton adds a new credential after her name, that of Wound Care Certified (WCC), joining certified nurses, at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy faculty and alumni to date, marking professionalism and expertise.

An alumna of Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, Class of 2018, Sheehan received her WCC recently and has the opportunity to become a member of the WOCN Society (Wound, Ostomy, and Continence Nurses Society;https://www.wocn.org/). In 1998 at Salter School, she received her Certificate in Medical Assisting. She is an alumna of West Boylston High School. Aside from wound care, Sheehan is experienced and also holds expertise in hospice care.

According to the National League for Nursing (www.nln.org) “Certification in any

field is a mark of professionalism. For nurses, it establishes a specialty area of practice and creates a means to demonstrate their expertise in this role.” It communicates to students, peers and the academic and health care communities that the highest standards of excellence are being met. The mission of certification is to promote excellence in the advanced specialty role of the nurse.

By becoming certified in wound care, Sheehan serves as a leader and a role model. Certification is the mark of distinction for a specialty. WCC by the Wound Learning Academy by SNF wound care “is an online education platform with content approved by RN and LPN/LVN Nursing Board nationwide, in all 50 states. WCC offers 30 CEU for license renewal.”

Sheehan demonstrated dedication to the highest standards in wound care management and achieved recognition and elevated her status as a wound care specialist. Sheehan will collaborate and exchange invaluable insight and resources with like-minded wound care industry specialists, gain professional growth, and career advancement opportunities. According to the Wound Learning Academy, “Wound Care Certification demonstrates specialized and

distinguished knowledge in wound management, promoting the highest level of care for all wound care patients. “

About Bay Path RVTHS Practical Nursing Academy

Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy offers a 40-week (10-month), full-time, Monday through Friday, evening program. The program begins mid-August and is completed in late June. Graduates receive a Practical Nursing Certificate and are eligible to take the NCLEX-PN licensure exam. The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy is fully approved by the: Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Human Services of Public Health Board of Registration in Nursing, 239 Causeway St., Boston, MA 02114 617-973-0800; www.mass.gov/dph/boards/rn. The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy is accredited by the: Council on Occupational Education 840 Roswell Road Building 300, Suite 325, Atlanta, GA 30350 Telephone: 800-917-2081 www.council.org Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School is fully accredited by the: New England Association of Schools and Colleges, 209 Burlington Rd., Suite 201, Bedford, MA, 01730-1433 781-271-0022; www.neasc.org.

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The library is reopen! Check out everything that’s going on! Please note: all Zoom programs will be recorded so if you can’t make it to the scheduled presentation, a recording will be sent to everyone who registers.

- For Teens & Adults:
- Monday, February 12 at 2:00pm - Zoom - 3 Questions You Should Ask Yourself When Networking
 - Tuesday, February 13 at 1:00pm - Afternoon Book Group - Exploring the Importance of Place - This month’s book is “Lady Tan’s Circle of Women” by Lisa See.
 - Tuesday, February 13 at 12:30pm - Zoom - The Internment of Japanese Americans: A Visit with the FDR Presidential Library
 - Wednesday, February 14 at 10:30am - Zoom - The Integration of Montage & Music in American Film
 - Thursday, February 15 at 10:30am - Zoom - Creative Couples of Paris: Elisabeth Le Brun & Elizabeth Gardner
 - Friday, February 16 at 10:00am - Zoom - Understanding the Voting Behavior of Young People
 - Tuesday, February 20 at 12:30pm - Zoom - Historic Cities & Alpine Vistas: Armchair Travel to Switzerland
 - Wednesday, February 21 at 6:30pm - Armchair Travelers Book Group - Challenging Boundaries - This month’s book is “Stolen” by Ann-Helen Laestadius.
 - Tuesday, February 27 at 12:30pm - Zoom - Armchair Tour of the Codman Estate with Historic New England
 - Tuesday, February 27 at 6:30pm - World Building Book Group - This month’s book is “This is How You Lose the Time War” by Max Gladstone.
 - Wednesday, February 28 at 10:30am - Zoom - Hydrangea Ps & Qs: Planting, pH, Pruning, Problems & Your Questions with Mass. Master Gardner’s Assoc.
 - Thursday, February 29 at 10:30am - Zoom - Tracking Beavers, Raccoons, Coyotes & Other Wild Mammals in Winter with Mass Audubon

- For Kids:
- Winter Story Times - Tuesdays and Friday’s at 10:45am - Drop in for stories, songs, rhymes, and a take-and-make craft! Children must be accompanied by an adult caregiver. No registration is required.
 - School Vacation Week - February 19 ~ February 23
*There will be no story times this week.
 - Princess Charm School - Tuesday, February 20th at 10:30am. Come enjoy some storytelling, singing and dancing as you learn to be a prince or princess during a royal coronation. Be sure to wear your favorite costume as there will be time for pictures. For children ages infant to 12 years old with an adult caregiver. Space is limited. Registration is required.
 - Tom Knight’s Musical Puppet Show - Thursday, February 22nd at 11:00am. Tom Knight has been delighting children and their grown-ups with his original, interactive, and musical puppet show since 1988. Space is limited. Registration is required.
 - Sing and Swing with Deb Hudgins - Friday, February 23rd at 11:00am. Join Deb Hudgins for a musical storytime! There will be a lot of movement and audience participation. For children, ages infant to 6 years old with an adult caregiver. Registration is required.

Charlton Public Library presents digital file organizing workshop

CHARLTON — Are your digital files getting out of control? Can’t find that photo of dear Aunt Nicole? Overwhelmed by all the clutter on your computer or digital device? Professional Organizer Susan McCarthy will help you get a handle on those pesky files!

On Thursday, Feb. 22, at 6 p.m., Charlton Public Library will host Professional Organizer Susan McCarthy, who will present her Organize Your Digital Files workshop, a non-tech talk about how to organize digital files so you can find them again. The focus here is on organizing techniques that you can apply to any digital device. We’ll also talk about organizing email, bookmarking web pages, and other helpful ways to deal with your devices. Registration is required. Please visit www.charltonlibrary.com and click on Event Calendar for details and to register.

February 5 2023 - February 5 2024

Louise Boilard

Those we love, don’t go away, they walk beside us every day.

Unseen, unheard, but always near, still loved, still missed, and very dear.”

Forever in our Hearts.

From your loving family

Charlton Public Library is located at 40 Main St. in Charlton. Please note that additional parking is available across the street from the Library at Town Hall.

Sturbridge hypnotist talks about her trade

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

STURBRIDGE — Ten years ago, Debra Kizilcan got a shock she'll never forget – her brother died suddenly of a heart attack.

That came just as she was about to embark on hypnosis training. She told her trainer she wanted to postpone it, but her trainer convinced her that was exactly the time she needed to do it.

Today, Kizilcan agrees she was right, and her favorite clients are now those facing “heavy grief, anger and frustration” at losing a loved one similarly without a chance to have a last conversation with them. Using hypnosis, she loves being able to put the deceased person in the chair and help the survivor get relief.

By that time, she'd already studied various non-mainstream healing practices, and was doing some of them, including massage, reiki, yoga, and EFT (“Emotional Freedom Technique” which uses the body’s acupuncture points without needles) and they all fit together. She also has a bachelor’s in psychology from Lesley University.

“I’ve always loved the mental aspect of why we do what we do and how to change that to find our better selves and live a better life,” she said.

In hypnosis, she sees a method that helps people do that in a wide range of ways for various issues. But it has one critical entry point: the client has to “be open to seeing things in a new way and

finding a new modality of being.” It won’t work on those who aren’t willing to do it (in her experience, that includes people brought to her by their partners) and/or those who “are still in the cycle of blaming [others] so they can still use their vice.”

Often, clients come to her after having tried other things, or because they want to avoid taking lots of medication, or they want to address a specific issue (smoking, weight loss/eating issues or chronic pain are very common). It’s not unusual for them to find those starting points are openings to a broader understanding of themselves, sometimes by tapping into one of the other practices she has.

Historically, hypnosis goes back a very, very long time, with elements of it seen in spiritual and healing practices for millennia. As a 2013 American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis paper by D. Corydon Hammond states, “There is evidence for use of hypnotic-like methods in ancient India, China, Africa and pre-Columbian America,” plus Europe, Egypt, Mongolia and most other places. “The power of ideas, beliefs, expectation, imagination and fixation of attention seem to have been discovered and rediscovered through many civilizations with idiosyncratic cultural and religious elements.”

The paper is online at https://www.researchgate.net/profile/D-Hammond/publication/261101191_A-Review_of_the_History_of_Hypnosis_Through_the_Late_19th_Century/links/552ab160cf2e089a3aa0ee6/A-Review-of-the-History-of-Hypnosis-Through-the-Late-19th-Century.pdf.

To Kizilcan, it’s just normal human behavior. But what most people think of hypnosis comes from largely inaccurate portrayal of stage hypnosis or movies, where people “want to have fun and do crazy things.”

“We’re in and out of hypnosis all day long,” she notes, pointing to many common events. For example, how often do people get into “road hypnosis” where they don’t even realize their journey until they get to their destination? Or those who lose time and themselves in a project, an artistic endeavor, a sport, exploring a forest, or countless other things?

On one level, they’re paying attention (or they’d get in accidents), but they’re in what many people see as “the zone” that tunes out extraneous distractions.



Debra Kizilcan

In her case, hypnosis is in a therapeutic setting, where the goal is to help people see origins of the patterns and habits they may have forgotten. As an example, she points to something much less personal: imagine having a mother who routinely cuts the ends off a ham before baking it. Her daughter asks why. Mom doesn’t know, it’s just “they way we do it,” but she got it from her mom. The girl goes to grandma and asks, and learns it was simply because grandma’s pan wasn’t big enough.

Of course, the issues people bring to hypnosis often have much more deeply-rooted origins that are far more emotionally-linked. One thing she likes to do to open the door to discovery is help people identify which sense is their strongest – visual, auditory or kinesthetic. Everyone can use all three, but usually one is stronger, and she said the way people describe their favorite place usually reveals that, sometimes to the person’s surprise.

“We shine a light on it. I tell them what I’m hearing is this, and I’ve seen a lot of a-ha moments. It’s very powerful stuff,” she said. “... You learn so much about yourself and the words you use.”

To her, that’s often the first step to helping people reframe their long-term negative messages to themselves, getting away from the “no and never and it’s always been this way. ... Hypnosis is all about coming off autopilot and getting awareness.”

Kizilcan said she particularly saw that during Covid’s isolation, when people experienced “a lot of things they thought they had control over and didn’t.” As an example, she pointed to one woman who came to her angry about not being able to go to the gym. Kizilcan talked to her to find where she felt she did have some control in her life, and reframed that to include exercise. Later, the woman returned excited that she was taking her young daughter out to the track, running while the girl biked around it.

She said she has them list their “positive traits” and the options they tap elsewhere, then, in hypnosis, reminds them of “things you told me are doable. We’re working together. It’s not something I’m doing to them.”

Hammond’s paper points to a different application of the same idea – “hypnoanaesthesia.” There, the hypnotist and patient work together to neutralize/

reduce upcoming surgical pain. That idea dates back a long time, but was specifically cited in cancerous breast tumor removals in 1829 and 1845. Hammond cites UK surgeon and “mesmerist” (an early term for hypnotist) John Elliotson as an early proponent of hypnosis “as an anaesthetic for minor and major surgeries.” In 1848, Hammond writes, Elliotson wrote about “perhaps the first known application of hypnosis with cancer, predating more recent work in this area by approximately 130 years.”

Kizilcan said she also uses hypnosis to help people with cancer, although not the same way. In her practice, it’s a support system for people dealing with the rigors and side effects of chemotherapy. As an example, she points to one client who came to her complaining of getting pre-emptive nausea en route to treatment sessions and serious body shaking from anxiety from family visits. Kizilcan said she helped the client visualize what they truly want with confidence, and feel what it’d be like to be without whatever issue is challenging them.

“If you do you, be authentic, and live from your heart, that has a trickle effect [on other people],” Kizilcan said. “Fill yourself up with love, and give from that overflow.”

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

TANTASQUA REGIONAL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL HONOR ROLL

FISKDALE — Tantasqua Regional Junior High School has released its honor roll for the first quarter of the 2023-2024 school year.

Grade 7

High Honors: Stella Alyce Angell, Rebecca Eve Ashe, Ellowyn Ann Audette, Jacob Michael Azevedo, Ramielle Valentina Azua, Kaylee Catherine Banks, Lily Anne Barham, Gabrielle Marie Bellofatto, Justin Phillip Berg, Kendall Catherine Boivin, Kelsey Pearl Bouchard, Milayna Vanessa Bousquet, Hannah Rose-Marie Buduo, Natalie Mae Carson, Natalie Marie Casperaites, Benjamin Louis Chechile, Kelsey Irene Clark, Sarah Amy Clark, Charlotte Rosslyn Courtemanche, Ellington Munroe Custance, Emrich Stephen Custance, Madeleine Elle Deatte, Lily Drew Deltoro, Samantha Shay Dion, Zachary Joseph Dores, Owen Nicholas Ehrets, Addison Grace Fiume, Mayson Gaetano Selzo Gambaccini, Caroline Josephine Gaspar, Natalia Jae Giannandrea Mustion, Charlotte Rose Gorton, Ella Marie Gregory, Teagan Abigail Grindle, Nicholas Conrad Hilborn, Tabetha Michelle Hilborn, Jackson Myles Hoenig, Holland Marie King, Elijah Mason Kirk, Ethan Ryan LaFortune, Theodore Michael LaFortune, Neela Grace Lakhani, Charlotte Eleanor Lariviere, Luke Watson MacFarlane, Hailey Elizabeth Mathurin, Cassie May McPartland, Ethan Carlo Melidone, Brennan Michael Mongeon, Kassandra Peninah Joy Mungai, Wyatt Arthur Neill, Owen Thomas Pattee, Ellen Rose Peeler, Kaelyn Nicole Pelliscane, Joseph Scott Pentoney, Harmony Lee Powell, Paul Harrison Quarles, Emma Rose Recknagel, Samvit Thatiparthi Reddy, Sarah Bridget Regan, Lily Cecile Rogers, Kassandra Jean Sluhocki, Vivian Jane Strause, Jack Henry Sullivan, Anna Wang

Honors, Quarter 1: Isaac David Alonzo, Wyatt William Andersen, Hazel Regine Arrastia, Gavin Walter Audi, Teagan Lynn Baker, Elliana Jordan Barnes, Samantha Elizabeth Beckerdite Kane, Avery Rose Belton, Isabella Sophia Benitez, Copley Mary-Rose Bennett, Evan Paul Blair, Jennaliz Naveen Booth, Abigail Mae Boucher, Brynn Elizabeth Boucher, Emilyynn

Rose Bousquet, Austin Michael Bradley, Samantha Elizabeth Branniff, Abigail Jane Buffum, Melody Paige Burdette, John Raymond Burns, Addison Julia Cadieux, Jenna Michelle Cain, Abigail Elizabeth Canada, Cheyenne Rose Cardrant, Madison Lynn Charpentier, Vivian Chen, Michael John Cloutier, Serenity Lynn-Marie Conant, Cheyanne Elizabeth Contois, Melanie Graciela Conway, Hannah Elizabeth Cooper, Henry Michael Cournoyer, Amelia Madeleine Courtemanche, Sean Kenneth Crane, Tessa Maeve Culverwell, Dani-Lynn Suzanne Curboy, Jacob Thomas Custance, Teddy Ross DeMings, Julian Paul Detra, Violet May DiCesare, Carter Thomas Dowling, Annika Michelle Espinoza, Anthony Thomas Farinato, Cadence Irene Ferro, Josie Robin Folcarelli, Ava Marie Fox, Carleigha Rose French, Graciella Nicole Garjian, Adeleine Claire Gaumond, Alessandro Jeffrey Gay, Francesca Irene Gay, Kacey Jean Gemboski, Quinn Matthew Genaway, Owen Edward Gendreau, Abigail Marion Germain, Jackson William Gillette, Joshua Matthew Goody, Jason Richard Guertin, Matthew Paul Guertin, Alana Grace Hebert, Teaghan Sadie Jaquith, Liam Russell Jenkinson, Brodie Hunter Kaplan, Austin Pierce Kimbell, Miles Henry Komssi, Cameron Michael Kozlowski, Lyla Marie Kress, Caraline Rita Lambert, Kayla Joy Lardizzzone, Ryan William Lavoie, Maya Grace Lewis, Autumn Rose MacIntosh, Ella Jane Mackin, Kirsten Mae Maertens, Hazel Beatrice Martin, Jacoby Ryan McPherson, Nicholas Raymond Merriam, Michael Brendan Mooney, Eve Cecelia Morley, Xavier Quincy Mumford, Noah James Nelson, Sofia Chin Nguyen, Brayden Sam Otieno Okuma, Callen Michael Olson, Emma Elizabeth Outland, Anne Sanjana Paiyagala, Aubrey Rain Palmere, Akshar Ashish Patel, Lucas Preston Pearl, Logan dos Santos Peck, Brayden Lucas Pelchat, Sole Kairi Ramos, Kylie Madison Ray, Ryker Kenneth Reissner, Claire Alexandra Remillard, Aiden Christopher Rice, Autumn Rain Robbins, Joshua Kenneth Robdau, Laylah Janal Rodriguez, Spencer John Sacco, Julianna Marisol Sanchez, Adrianna Juliet Santella, Landon Cory Santos,

Samuel Adam Scott, Alessandra Isabel Serret, Dominick Mark Shannon, Remy Keith Shepard, Brady Matthew Silberstein, Trent Alexander Smith, Nicholas James Sokol, Isabel Suzanne St. Peter, Alden Jonathan Stalker, Ava Jeanne Starr, Ely Christopher Surgeon, Alexander Antonio Tarallo Bartolini, Logan Robert Thibault, Genevieve Eily Trimmings, Nicholas Robert Tremblay, Donovan Bruce Trent, Gianna Lee Vega, Kensley Vernet, Marshall Guy Weaver, Noah Nakano Wexler, James Aiden Woloski, Rohn Julian Zeleznok

Grade 8

High Honors: Kayley Lauren English, Summer Rose Ferreira, Greta Louise Gimm, Teagan Marie Gunnerson, Moira Rose Hill, Mason Jon Julian, Liv Katherine Kearns, Mark Andrew Richard Kenton, Samuel Jose Lamas, Westley Brian Nemet, Noah Mitchell Olszta, Jane Kelley Panek, Paul Edward Savage, Violet Caroline Spooner, Christian Anthony Viera Smith

Honors: Ella Robert Achi, Nathan Paul Alicea, Cadence Kay Allen, Madeleine Grace Bachand, Tess Marie Baker, Dylan Kaleb Barrows, Benjamin David Beaudry, Mylinda Blanc, Bret Edward Bond, Leeanna Faith Caouette, Finley Ireland Carlisle, Logan Xavier Cavaliere, Paige Louise Chick, Cameron Joseph Ciandella, Sydney Caroline Cizik, Mia Anne Cohen, Abigail Marie Corriveau, Nathan Stanley Cutler, Taylor Emma Dalrymple, Zachary John Dalton, Emilie Isabelle Dart, Lily Elizabeth David, Alynah Christine Desmarais, Matthew Ryan Ehrhard, Pandora Jade Faugno, Emilio Marco Fiorucci, Olivia Ann Fiske, Kylie Rose Formigal, Lillian Marie Gingras, Joseph John Gomes, Sofia Claire Goodwin, Dominic James Grillo, Austin Joseph Guinta, John David Gunagan, Tyler Bruce Gustafson, Grayson Jude Hand, Norah Eavan Hanrahan, Leah Samantha Hill, Catelyn Robin Holm, Nathaniel Andrew Jacques, Vivan Lara Jaeger, Andrew Colin John, Heather Elizabeth Kennedy, Isabella Rose LaFlamme, Christian James LeBeau, Cameron James Lemanski, Ella Caroline Lemieux, Theodore Jonas Levelle,

Travis Victor Lloyd, Sarah Josephine Mabie, Piper Anne Mathiau, Augustin Dylan Mbouadeu, Keira Ayla McCord, Grant John Meacham, Andrew Do-Jin Miller, Ainsley Ann Mills, Thomas Elliot Moore, Ryan Thomas Mount, Dane Patrick Mullin, Charlotte Eowyn Nameika, Tyler Warren Neifert, William Campbell Neslusan, Olivia Joy Neuen-schwander, Maxwell Thomas Nickl, Alyssa Wendy Noga, Colby Peter Norman, Maeve Ada O’Neil, Miles Stefan, Oprica, Joshua David Ortendahl, Harrison William Parks, Michael David Peloquin, Gibson DiLeo Pettis, Leah Grace Phaneuf, Tyler Aiden Phillips, Patrick Christopher Pope, Kaitlyn Jennifer Reed, Nathan Thomas Regan, Kaleigh Desmarais Sabelis, Madalynn Rose Saksa, Alexis Gabriella Santos, Jonathan Holland Solari, Wyatt Hans Springer, Matilda Rae St. Clair, Elway Andrew St. George, Ariana Starr, Parker Anthony Starr, Madysen May Stratford, Madalyn Ava Strause, Trysten Gabriel Torben Thor, James Alexander Todis, Callie Hana Toro, Tyler Nicholas Truax, Lucas John Tully, Mairenn Rae VonHold, Kayla Marie Weidler, Cameron Charles West, Roman Abram Whitcomb, Olivia Grace White, Roselyn Pokua Whyte, Logan Michael Zaniwski, Easton Hollow Zeleznok

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LEGALS

THE COMMONWEALTH
OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION –
HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC
INFORMATIONAL MEETING
Project File No.602659

A Live Virtual Public Informational Meeting will be held by MassDOT to discuss the Route 20 Reconstruction Project in Charlton & Oxford, MA.
WHEN: Tuesday, February 27, 6:00 PM
PURPOSE: At this virtual meeting, the project team will update the public on construction activities and traffic impacts planned this year for the Route 20 Reconstruction Project in Charlton & Oxford.
PROPOSAL: The project consists of widening the roadway, replacing bridges over the Little River and the French River, adding sidewalks and shared-use paths, installing a median barrier, improving safety and traffic operations at various intersections, and enhancing stormwater treatment.
This meeting is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the meeting.
This meeting will be hosted, or a cancellation announcement posted, on the internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.
JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR
CARRIE E. LAVALLEE
CHIEF ENGINEER
February 9, 2024

**Town of Sturbridge
Zoning Board of Appeals
Public Hearing Notice
Special Permit
Stephen & Rebecca Celuzza**
In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 40A, §11, the Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on **Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at 6:35 PM at the Center Office Building located at 301 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566 and/or by virtual means** if circumstances warrant, in accordance with applicable law; on the application of Stephen & Rebecca Celuzza.

The applicant is requesting a Special Permit pursuant to Article XVIII §300-18.2 (2) and Article XI §300-11.1-11.6 of the Zoning Bylaw to allow the construction of an 843 sq.ft. attached Accessory Dwelling Unit on the property owned by Stephen & Rebecca Celuzza located at **125 Mashapaug Road**, in accordance with the plans and application submitted.
The proposed request can be viewed at <https://www.sturbridge.gov/zoning-board-appeals/pages/recent-filings> or arrangements can be made to view the application packet by contacting the Sturbridge Planning Department at (508)347-2508 or by email at jlacy@sturbridge.gov.
Any person interested or wishing to be heard on this proposal should appear at the time and place designated. Members of the public may watch the meeting online via the Town's on demand video broadcast or via cable television on Channel 191. It is the intent to have this Public Hearing in person. However, if circumstances warrant, the Board may choose to hold this Hearing via virtual or hybrid (in person and virtual) means. In the event of a virtual or hybrid meeting, notice and a link shall be posted on the ZBA website. Please note that the meeting/hearing will not be suspended or terminated if technological problems interrupt the virtual broadcast, unless otherwise required by law.
Diane Trapasso, Chair
Sturbridge Zoning Board of Appeals
February 1, 2024
February 8, 2024

**For Legal Advertising
Information
Call
508-909-4127
email:
legals@
stonebridge press.
news**

PLAN

continued from page A1

age in this area.”
One item brought up at the last hearing session was concern about aircraft. Macksen said he reviewed that and found FAA rules would have required the tower to have lights if it had been about 150 east of where it's being proposed.
The only issue that prompted some discussion prior to the vote was camouflage. Planner Jean Bubon said the balloon test (where the applicant floated a balloon tethered at the height of the tower to see how visible it would be from various locations) told her it'd be “barely visible,” but the board could require colors or design to make it blend in.
One member noted he thought the “monopole pine look” – making a tower look like a fake pine tree – actually stands out more. He said people have largely gotten used to such things as towers and phone poles, even though they don't much like them.
Applicant Francis Parisi agreed, saying, “the more you try to disguise these

things, the more you call attention to them. Although it will be slightly visible from a mile away in certain spots, he noted people won't be able to really distinguish its color at that distance.
The board consensed without voting on not requiring such camouflage, and unanimously voted to give the project a special permit, including 15 conditions and a variance to be 130 feet tall. (The latter came after Macksen noted the average tree height nearby is 90-110 feet.)
Afterward, the board discussed what its role will be in implementing a new Historical Preservation Plan. Bubon said the year-long project was grant and Community Preservation funded, including public forums and a survey, among other outreach. The goal was to help Sturbridge become “more aware of what's worth preserving, because being old doesn't necessarily mean [a place is] worthy of preservation.”
Chair Charlie Blanchard said this will help identify historical assets, which is especially helpful when the board considers reuse projects and the impact of new projects on historical sites.

Member Wally Hersee, who is also on the Historical Commission, said the commission previously (2015) surveyed properties along Routes 20, 131 and the ponds, and that process found several historic buildings, Indigenous sites and scenic roads. He described this plan as giving “us a very good path to take to maintain everything. ... This is a very good tool.”
He added that a consultant company is already doing a historical inventory looking at architecture, historic records, photos and other documents.
Blanchard said the commission did it's first round of such work back in the 1960s around the Common and in Fiskdale. Today, and going forward, Sturbridge will need to consider “what else becomes historical.”
Hersee agreed, saying some old homes have been so completely redone as to not be historical anymore, but should still be recorded. Some more recent places from the 1930s-'60s may have become historic due to the uniqueness of their architecture while others that age are just subdivision homes.
He noted state law desig-

nates “historic” as 50 years, but Sturbridge sets it at 100 years. Also, the town's lone designated historic district – around the Common – doesn't have restrictions on most internal renovations provided people don't change the exterior appearance from the road, Hersee and Blanchard added.
Bubon said her office already consults the historic database, but hopes the ongoing project will compare the records with the Assessors database “and make corrections where we can.” As an example, she pointed to a home the assessors listed as being built in 1839, but was actually built in 1947. One member noted some buildings have been moved over the years.
Bubon said this work will also feed into the demolition delay bylaw, which provides a 12-month delay for sites the commission deems “preferably preserved.” In that time, they hope to encourage adaptive reuse, moving it, and other alternatives to demolition.
Gus Steeves can be reached at gus.steeves2@gmail.com.

Fill your February with love of crafting, music, cupcakes, and magic at Hitchcock

BRIMFIELD — February can feel a bit like the Wednesday of the winter - with the magic of the holiday season feeling like a distant memory, and spring like the weekend that can't get here soon enough. Don't fret! Hitchcock has packed its calendar with healthy distractions to help you warm your spirit and weather the dreariness. Sign yourself up for some crafting, music lessons, cupcake decorating, or a magic show - and feel your spirit brighten.
February Vacation is fast-approaching and Hitchcock has offerings to keep kids busy! The week begins with daily morning programs for kids in grades K – 4. Let the kids embark on a journey of snowy fun and discovery! Our kids' winter wonderland promises days filled with laughter, learning, fresh air, and hands-on fun. The program runs Tuesday through Friday from 9am to noon and is open to kids in all school districts.
That week Hitchcock is also offering cake decorating with Sue Gaulin of Let's Cake Decorate on Wednesday evening, Feb. 21 from 6 to 8 p.m. Sue's class invites participants to learn buttercream piping skills to create super cute cow cupcakes, using fondant to shape the nose, ears, and horns. All

supplies are provided with use of the instructor's decorating tools. Step-by-step instructions will be given. Each registration includes a box of six cupcakes (three vanilla and three chocolate). There will be extra cupcakes on hand for mishaps and snacking. A set of cupcakes can be shared under one registration. It's a great class for a parent and child to do together!

Thursday, Feb. 22 at 3 p.m. is a Birdhouse Building workshop presented in partnership with Opacum Land Trust. This workshop welcomes participants to escape the winter doldrums and think spring as they ready a home for winged visitors. Pinecone bird feeders will be made as well. Registration is required and there is a \$10 fee per house. This program was made possible with support from Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary.
The week closes out on Friday afternoon at 1:30 p.m. with a laughter-filled comedy magic show that the entire family will enjoy with Fran Flynn, Magician Extraordinaire. Children and adults take part in the show



as volunteers to help create the magic. Watch in amazement as a “live dove” and a “live rabbit” make magical appearances! The show is 45 minutes in duration. Each child receives a MAGIC WAND to take home!
Registration for all of these programs can be found at www.hitchcockacademy.org. You can also call 413-245-9977 for more information.
For those looking to explore their creativity we are offering two single evening workshops, Mosaics on Tuesday, Feb. 13 from 6 to 9 p.m. and a winter-themed Stained Glass on Tuesday, February 27 from 5 to 9pm. Did you know that on Tuesday mornings, Hitchcock has a Watercolor Art Group that meets to socialize, paint together, and offer one another feedback? This group comes together every Tuesday morning from 9 – 11:30 a.m. No registration is needed; simply show up to join in.

Physical exercise is a great way to beat the winter blues and we offer a wide variety of ongoing classes that include Yoga, UpBeat Barre, High Fitness, Judo, and Fencing - and for those too busy during the week, Saturday mornings we offer Pilates and Warrior Yoga. Music is also a great way to soothe the soul and what better way than to learn to play an instrument! Tuesday afternoon and evening is Piano with Anne Macon. Anne teaches beginning and intermediate level piano lessons for ages six to adult. She focuses on each student's individual goals and interests in

music while giving them the tools they need to progress, including reading music, music theory, and writing. She has been a pianist for more than 25 years, has a BA in Music Composition and Theory, and has been playing in rock bands for more than a decade.
Wednesday's instructor Tony Valley offers lessons as early as 2 until 8:30 p.m., and teaches Guitar, Bass, Uke, Banjo, Piano, or Vocal Technique for Beginner to advanced, ages seven and up. Tony has been playing music since he was 14. He previously toured with bands throughout the Northeast and still performs as a stand-in for bands. You can find him out at many local performance venues on a solo gig or as a duo. Tony also owns and operates Tony V Entertainment and Tony's Happy Valley Pizza Truck. He also hosts Triple Creek Open Mike at the Palmer Historical Society. Thursdays is Violin/Viola with Linda Day Newland. Linda enjoys teaching all ages and levels and offers a variety of musical styles to suit the interests of her students. Linda was a violinist in the Austin Symphony Orchestra for 22 years and teaches violin and viola to all ages and levels.
Hitchcock Academy is a community center located at 2 Brookfield Road in Brimfield serving the community with educational, recreational, and cultural programming. More information can be found at www.hitchcockacademy.org.

American International College students named to Dean's List

SPRINGFIELD — American International College (AIC) in Springfield, MA, is pleased to announce that 451 students have been named to the Dean's List for the fall 2023 semester. Dean's List students attend full-time and have achieved a 3.3 to 4.0 GPA. AIC commends the efforts and accomplishments of these diligent and hard-working students.
Grace Boisvert of Uxbridge, majoring in General Business
Jackson Haker of Uxbridge, majoring in Health Science
Morgan Martellio of Uxbridge, majoring in Health Science
Kaitlyn Boone of Sturbridge, majoring in Health Science
Jessica Shiers of Wales, majoring in Nursing
Benjamin Lazo of Southbridge, majoring in Athletic Administration and Leadership
Founded in 1885, American International College (AIC) is a private, co-educational, doctoral 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.

LEGALS

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE
TRIENNIAL REVALUATION
OF REAL PROPERTY
AND SUBSEQUENT MAINTENANCE
SERVICES

The Town of Southbridge is accepting proposals for the Fiscal Year 2025 Triennial Revaluation of Real Property within the corporate limits of the Town of Southbridge.

Proposals are to be submitted to the Town Manager, Southbridge Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, Southbridge, MA 01550, no later than 10:00 A.M. on March 1, 2024.

It is the specific intent of the Town through its Town Manager and its Board of Assessors to contract for a complete update of property valuations effective January 1, 2024, for Certification in Fiscal Year 2025, Interim Valuation Assistance in FY 2026 and FY 2027, plus a Town option for 2 optional years in FY 2028 and FY 2029. The Fiscal Year 2025 Recertification Program is to commence on or before March 29, 2024, and is to be completed by September 06, 2024.

The Town reserves the right to waive any informality in the proposals if it is in the public interest to do so, and also reserves the right to award a contract to the bidding company deemed to be best qualified to serve the public interest.

Specifications for the proposed reassessment program may be obtained at the office of the Town Manager, Southbridge Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, Southbridge, MA 01550.

Questions regarding the enclosed specifications should be directed to the Board of Assessors, Assessors Office, Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, Southbridge, MA 01550, telephone number (508) 764-5404. The Board of Assessors urges interested appraisal companies to review the specifications and submit proposals providing for a comprehensive program in full compliance with established guidelines of the Department of Revenue, and the Massachusetts General Laws relating to the taxation of property.

January 24, 2024
February 8, 2024
February 15, 2024

In accordance with the Wetlands Protection Act, Chapter 131, Sec 40, a public hearing by the Conservation Commission will be held on Tuesday 2/13/2024 in the Conservation Commission Room, second floor, in the Holland Town Hall, 27 Sturbridge Rd, Holland, MA. This meeting is to review a Notice of Intent (NOI) filed by Paul & Dawne Whare to knock down and rebuild home with a proper foundation at 36 Massaconnic Trail, Holland, MA. To comply with the Open Meeting Law, all public hearings are scheduled for 7:00 PM and, barring unforeseen circumstances, will be taken in the order in which they appear on the agenda. This meeting will be held in person and virtual; for virtual meeting login information contact Holland Conservation at conservation@hollandma.org or call (413) 245-7108 x114.

Conservation Commission
Town of Holland
October 11, 2023
February 8, 2024

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE
LEASE OF THE DINER AT THE
SOUTHBRIDGE MUNICIPAL
AIRPORT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Town Manager for the Town of Southbridge (the “Town”) is soliciting sealed proposals for the Lease of the Diner located at the Southbridge Municipal Airport. Proposals will be received by the office of the Town Manager, 41 Elm Street, Town of Southbridge, MA 01550 until 3:00 PM local time on Monday, March 4, 2024 at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. All proposals shall be enclosed in an envelope which is clearly marked: “Town of Southbridge Proposal for Lease of the Diner at the Southbridge Municipal Airport”

Fax or e-mail submissions will not be accepted. With proposal, please include Company name, address, main contact name, phone and email address.

The diner is 50’s vintage with a stain-less interior and is 680 sq. feet. It has a counter with 13 stools and (5) tables each seating 4 people with a grill behind the counter. There are (2) bathrooms. Also, there is a 264 sq. foot additional dining room attached with a handicap bathroom. There is also a 62 sq. foot fully equipped kitchen. In the basement, there is a large walk-in refrigerator and several smaller freezers. There is ample parking. The diner is located on the property of the Southbridge Municipal Airport at 220 Airport Access Road, Southbridge, MA 01550.

Proposal packages may be obtained from the Office of the Town Manager,

Monday through Wednesday between the hours of 8:00AM and 4:00 PM, Thursday from 8:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. and Friday 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM (Holidays excepted). The RFP documents may also be obtained from the Town website at <https://www.ci.southbridge.ma.us/Bids.aspx>, by contacting the Town Manager’s Office at graducha@southbridgemass.org or via phone (508) 764-5405. The Town reserves the right to reject any and all proposals if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the Town to do so.

February 8, 2024
February 15, 2024

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE
Mortgagee’s Sale of Real Estate

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Realty Funding Advisors LLC to DCB Realty LLC dated December 15, 2022 and recorded with the Worcester County Registry of Deeds, Book 68611, page 317, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at 12:00 o’clock, p.m. on the **1st day of March 2024**, at Alpine Drive, Southbridge, Massachusetts, Worcester County, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,

To wit:

The land in Southbridge, Worcester County, Massachusetts and all privileges and appurtenances thereto belonging situated on the easterly side of Alpine Drive, formerly called Brick Yard Road, bounded and described as follows:

BEGINNING at the Northwest corner of said parcel, at an iron pipe located on the easterly side of Alpine Drive THENCE S 80° 31’ 51” E, along land now or formerly of Roland W. Julian and Gloria I. Julian for a distance of 103.88 feet to an iron pipe: THENCE S 21° 34’ 54” W, along land now or formerly of Roland W. Julian and Gloria I. Julian for a distance of 188.40 feet to an iron pipe: THENCE S 24° 38’ 54” W, along land now or formerly of Roland W. Julian and Gloria I. Julian for a distance of 137.70 feet to an iron pipe: THENCE S 25° 46’ 54” W, along land now or formerly of Roland W. Julian and Gloria I. Julian for a distance of 175.90 feet to an iron pipe: THENCE S 19° 24’ 54” W, along land now or formerly of Roland W. Julian and Gloria I. Julian for a distance of 146.30 feet to an iron pipe: THENCE N 86° 6’ 02” W, along a stone wall now or formerly of Stanley Dudek for a distance of 21.73 feet to an iron pipe: THENCE N 74° 40’ 00” W, along land now or formerly of Edward J. Paquette for a distance of 105.48 feet to an iron pipe: THENCE N 59° 13’ 00” W, along land now or formerly of Carmen Paquette for a distance of 98.33 feet to an iron pipe located on the easterly side of Alpine Drive; THENCE N 33° 15’ 00” E, along the easterly side of Alpine Drive for a distance of 65.83 feet; THENCE N 34° 08’ 15” E, along the easterly side of Alpine Drive for a distance of 336.27 feet; THENCE N 33° 25’ 27” E, along the easterly side of Alpine Drive for a distance of 240.50 feet to the point of beginning.

SAID parcel contains 2.38 acres. Premises to be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens, and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens, or encumbrances is made in the deed. The premises are also sold subject to the right of redemption of the United States of America.

Terms of Sale:

1. Successful bidder must furnish a deposit in the amount of TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$10,000.00) in cash or certified bank check at the time and place of sale;
2. Remaining balance to be paid at closing;
3. Closing to occur on or before the 30th day after sale;
4. Minimum successful bid in an amount no less than \$55,000.00;
5. Subject to all encumbrances, prior liens and such matters which may constitute valid liens or encumbrances after sale;
6. Foreclosure deed to be delivered to purchaser for recording upon full receipt of the purchase price;
7. Description of the premises set forth in the mortgage controls in the event of

any error in the Notice of Sale;

8. Purchaser responsible for all closing costs, recording costs, deed stamps, accrued or pastdue property taxes, etc.;
9. In the event of default by highest bidder, second highest bidder may purchase provided deposit is paid within five (5) days of notice, otherwise a new auction sale will be conducted;
10. All information pertaining to the sale and any potential postponements will be posted at the property, and all other inquiries can be directed to Joseph P. Carnevale, Esq. via telephone (401) 314-0733 or email jcarnevale@savagelawpartners.com. Any other applicable terms to be announced at time of sale.

DCB Realty LLC
By its attorneys:
Joseph P. Carnevale, Esq.
Savage Law Partners, LLP
564 South Water Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 314-0733
jcarnevale@savagelawpartners.com
February 8, 2024
February 15, 2024
February 22, 2024

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE
TRIENNIAL REVALUATION OF
PERSONAL PROPERTY
AND SUBSEQUENT MAINTENANCE
SERVICES

The Town of Southbridge is accepting proposals for the Fiscal 2025 Triennial Revaluation of Personal Property within the corporate limits of the Town of Southbridge.

Proposals are to be submitted to the Town Manager, Southbridge Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, Southbridge, MA 01550, no later than 10:00 A.M. on March 1, 2024

It is the specific intent of the Town acting through its Town Manager and its Board of Assessors to contract for the complete update with listing, coding and valuation of Personal Property accounts as of January 1, 2024 for implementation in Fiscal Year 2025, with subsequent valuation maintenance services to be performed for Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027 with Town options for an additional 2 years for FY 2028 and FY 2029. The Fiscal Year 2025 Revaluation Program is to commence on or before March 29, 2024 and to be completed by August 31, 2024.

The Town reserves the right to waive any informality in the proposals if it is in the public interest to do so, and also reserves the right to award a contract to the bidding company deemed to be best qualified to serve the public interest.

Specifications for the proposed revaluation program may be obtained at the office of the Town Manager, 41 Elm Street, Southbridge, MA 01550.

Questions regarding the enclosed specifications should be directed to the Board of Assessors, Town Hall, 41 Elm Street, Southbridge, MA 01550, telephone number (508) 764-5404. The Board of Assessors urges interested appraisal companies to review the specifications and submit proposals providing for a comprehensive program in full compliance with established guidelines of the Department of Revenue, and the Massachusetts General Laws relating to the taxation of property.

January 24, 2024
February 8, 2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate
and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO23P2091EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate of:**
Susan Laura Bourdelais
Date of Death: 11/27/2022

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Petition** has been filed by
David C. Bourdelais of Sand Springs OK requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that:
David C. Bourdelais of Sand Springs OK be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve on the bond in **unsupervised administration** .

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/13/2024.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a time-

ly written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

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

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: January 11, 2024
Stephanie K. Fattman,
Register of Probate
February 8, 2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Division
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO22P4033EA
Estate of:**
Frances J. Derby
Date of Death: **06/30/2022**
**CITATION ON PETITION
FOR ORDER OF
COMPLETE SETTLEMENT**

A Petition for **Order of Complete Settlement** has been filed by
Anthony J. Salvidio, II of Worcester MA requesting that the court enter a formal Decree of Complete Settlement including the allowance of a final account, a determination of testacy and heirs at law and other such relief as may be requested in the Petition.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court before: **10:00 a.m.** on the return day of **02/27/2024.** This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

Witness, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy,
First Justice of this Court
January 25, 2024
Stephanie K. Fattman, Register of Probate
February 8, 2024

(SEAL)
**COMMONWEALTH
OF MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL
COURT
24 SM 000371
ORDER OF NOTICE**

TO:
Nancy P. Gallant
and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act: 50 U.S.C. c. 50 § 3901 (*et seq*): Longbridge Financial, LLC claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Fiskdale (Sturbridge), numbered 36 Finlay Road, given by Al J. Gallant and Nancy P. Gallant to Financial Freedom Senior Funding Corporation, a subsidiary of IndyMac Bank, FSB, dated July 31, 2007, and recorded at Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 41608, Page 236, 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 **March 11, 2024** or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the grounds of noncompliance with the Act.

Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of said Court on January 26, 2024.

Attest:
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
February 8, 2024



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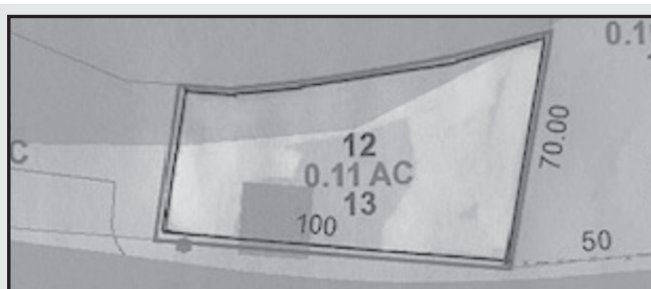
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316 Dresser Road \$425,000



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FORUM

continued from page A1

our press deadline, it appears here in its entirety as a sidebar.

“Every one of our students deserves better than this,” said forum organizer Councilor Jasmin Rivas. “This is not right, and we have to protect them.”

She was speaking generally, but also specifically in response to one girl’s breaking down in tears after saying, “They choose to discipline students for the small things,” but not bullying and sexual assault. The girl alleged there were “no disciplinary actions to the students who did this to me.”

Others alleged the school treats students “like prisoners,” among them responses from recent teacher’s union surveys Rivas cited. Parent Stephanie Rivers was one of them. She alleged her niece was taken from class to the SSC and “locked from within with students inside” with a staff member present.

“No doors in this school should be locked at any time,” Rivers said.

Others agreed, noting that’s at minimum a fire code violation and potentially constitutes kidnapping. Emergency situations do allow it in cases of active shooters or similar trouble.

One male student specifically said he’d been kept “in a room by myself with no windows or nothing.” He alleged the school’s being run not by educators but by “people who don’t like children at all.”

One parent said he’d thought for a long time SSC meant “Student Security Center” because of such complaints.

Student Rebecca Martinez described it as being “used as a jail cell rather than a support center,” with students being sent there “for unnecessary reasons.” In general, she depicted the school climate as being “a non-emotionally-safe environment for every-



Olga Lopez, center, is surrounded by just a few of the many people who attended Saturday’s forum.

body.”

Many present pointed the finger at a certain administrator who’d originally been hired at the middle school and shifted to the high school. One repeated refrain was of him “screaming and yelling” at students and staff for mostly minor infractions and being “disrespectful” of parents who raise concerns.

McKennah Garcia said she has had “a lot of run-ins with [him]” since sixth grade, and alleged he “has not only disrespected me and my parents, but other parents as well.” Garcia said she’s seen him “walking into female bathrooms,” “physically punish the females more than the male students,” and in general, feels students and teachers “have to be robots on his schedule and do what he said.”

McKenzie Parker agreed, saying, “Everyone that goes to school or works there has been disrespected.”

All of this has been simmering for some time, but flared into open rebellion last week when two teachers – Olga Lopez and Bethany Linton — were both walked out the door on the same day. Lopez attended the forum, but Linton was out of town.

Lopez, who’d only been here six months but has 16 years in the field, said her time in Southbridge started with issues. She’d applied to be Dean of Students, but when interviewed, the administration would only talk to her about a

Spanish teacher’s job. She accepted anyway, and found her initial professional development consisted of practicing scripted interactions that focused on having students rigidly meet the teacher’s eyes and even pick up pencils on command. (Those are part of the “Teach Like a Champion” curriculum.) She dubbed that the “Call to Attention,” and recalled going home feeling “This is not who I am as a teacher. This is not who I am as a person.”

But she stayed in large part because of the relationships she built, starting with one student who saw a woman in one of her wedding photos as his grandmother. Despite that, she gave her notice last week, calling Principal Jose Ortiz personally to let him know she was giving 14 days so they could work on transition for the students. But at school Wednesday, after breaking up a student fight between fourth and fifth periods, she was met by human resources, told she could only make one trip to retrieve her personal property, and escorted out.

She said she was told not to talk to anyone en route, despite several of her students seeing it, and asked “Why was I treated like a convict?”

In general, she argued, “the school feels like a totalitarian state” and that evidence “of the corruption of the administrative team is all around,” although she has personally never had issues with Ortiz.

“Southbridge has kids that can give so much,” Lopez said. “We have so much talent, and I stand there for them.”

“It’s sad you have teachers students love, and those are the teachers you dismiss,” said one parent who only identified herself as Pi-etra. “... This is not logical, and doesn’t make any sense.”

Some see the recent furor as bringing the school body closer together, with several at the forum urging students and parents to stay united going forward. Rivas said they need to make sure everything gets documented on paper and reported to various places, including the administration, police, the state and federal education authorities, town council and school committee meetings, and at community forums like this one.

Councilor George Chenier agreed, saying, “the biggest problem I see is if you don’t stay together and do this as a unit, this is going to go away.” But if there’s enough publicity, he added, “someone’s going to get tired of you guys coming and do something.”

From town government, the only councilors present were Rivas and Chenier, plus three School Committee members: Carla Davila, Kathy LaPriore and Andrew Murch.

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

SHS administration responds to community’s concerns

SOUTHBRIDGE — Following is Receiver Jeffrey Villar’s response to an inquiry from Correspondent Gus Steeves into the concerns voiced by parents and community members at last weekend’s forum on conditions at Southbridge High School. It appears separately from our report on the forum due to the fact that the timing of its arrival did not leave our correspondent sufficient time to incorporate it into the article before this week’s edition was due to go to press.

“I understand there’s been a significant amount of hearsay, innuendo, and misinformation circulating. To assist in clarifying these matters, I offer the following insights:

1) Harassment claims: The district strictly adheres to established policies and procedures for investigating allegations of harassment and sexual harassment. We meticulously follow these procedures, conducting and documenting investigations as mandated by law. The district takes all claims with utmost seriousness, ensuring thorough investigations and, if warranted, taking appropriate actions.

2) IEP compliance: IEPs are governed by State and Federal laws, which include accountability measures to ensure all school systems adhere to these plans.

3) Workplace and educational environment: The Southbridge Public Schools Human Resource Department takes charge of investigating concerns related to verbal abuse towards employees. Meanwhile, school administration investigates instances of verbal abuse between students and teachers. At the high school, a robust administrative team collaborates to bolster the school climate and guarantee safety.

4) Student Support Center: This center is designed as a welcoming, spacious, and tranquil classroom aimed at assisting students to reset and reintegrate into their classes. It plays a crucial role in reducing dependence on out-of-school suspensions and other punitive measures. The door remains unlockable to prevent confining anyone against their will, with dedicated staff members supporting this space.

5) Title IX compliance: The district is committed to following Title IX policies and procedures meticulously.

6) Instructional strategies: ‘Teach Like a Champion’ is not a curriculum but a resource offering educators numerous effective strategies for enhancing instruction across all student ages.

7) Hallway supervision and bathroom vandalism: Staff members are positioned in hallways during class times to oversee bathroom usage. Despite these measures, there has been significant vandalism in bathrooms. Cameras are installed in hallways for monitoring, but bathrooms, which lack doors to restrict access during transitions, have been targeted. These bathrooms are designed with privacy stalls like those in highway rest areas.

Misrepresentations of these facts seem aimed at inciting outrage. Routine checks by the administration do not infringe on individual privacy, and the administration includes representatives of all genders to provide mutual support when necessary.

I hope these clarifications address some of the concerns and misinformation that have been spread. Please feel free to reach out if you have further questions or need more detailed information.”

AWARDS

continued from page A1

Southbridge.

The honorees will be retired Shephard Hill Athletic Director and football coach Leo Biron, Mason Road School kindergarten teacher Kim Lundquist, Principal of

Mason Road School Jennifer Desto, former Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation President and the foundation’s founding member John Grondalski, former Shepherd Hill student Emily Dabrowski who will be honored in Memoria, fifth grade teacher at

Dudley Middle School Adrienne Daniels, Head Custodian of Charlton Elementary School Scott Cushing, Loretta Andre who serves as Administrative Assistant at Charlton Middle School and as Shepherd Hill’s cheerleading coach, Heritage School second

grade teacher Elizabeth Hurley, and substitute teacher, parent, and student council member Tammy Ducharme.

Tickets for the Heroes Among Us ceremony will be made available on the Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation’s website.

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The Fire Truck Authority (TFTA) PO Box 905 Spencer, MA 01562

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QCC student finds community and more with Veteran Affairs Office

WORCESTER — Taking the plunge into higher education after 50 years out of school may not be for the faint of heart,

but for Quinsigamond Community College student and veteran Tom Vincent, the support of QCC's Veteran Affairs depart-

ment has made all the difference in his confidence and academic success.

“Before I was in school,
I was depressed. But the

staff and students in Veteran Affairs took me out of that depression and got me excited about school," Vincent said. "The atmosphere in the Veterans Affairs Office is fantastic. We've all been through similar experiences, no matter which branch of the military we were in."

After graduating high school in 1972, Vincent enlisted in the army during the Vietnam War. While his unit didn't end up deploying to Vietnam, they spent years training, which Vincent described as life changing. When Vincent finished his service, he said it was an obvious choice to immediately start working because going to college wasn't an expectation for people in his family.

After decades of working in multiple industries, Vincent wanted to go back to school so he could pursue a career as a virtual bookkeeper. Due to limited physical mobility, he thought a remote bookkeeping job could allow him the flexibility he needs to work from home and take breaks as needed.

Vincent tried enrolling in college a few times before the fall of 2023 but often backed out. However, last September, he officially started classes at QCC. He ended up withdrawing from his courses because he didn't feel ready to navigate some of the online aspects, but signed up again this spring and is determined to complete the classes this semester.

Since starting at QCC,

courtesy

Tom Vincent with the scooter gifted to him by Quinsigamond Community College Veteran Affairs.

the Veteran Affairs office has become a source of community as Vincent navigates higher education. After telling QCC's Director of Veteran Affairs, Matthew Casaubon, that he was having issues walking to his classes, Casaubon obtained a scooter for Vincent to make it easier to navigate campus.

"No one has ever done anything like that for me before and I'm not used to accepting help. But the joy it gave me...I smiled so hard my cheeks hurt," Vincent said when the scooter was delivered to him.

While Vincent said they even helped him find

an agency to install new rain gutters on his house, it is the friendly people he talks to on campus that make him feel like part of a community.

According to Casaubon, the Veteran Affairs office has also provided food, clothing, laptops and other assistance to QCC's veterans.

“We are building a community where veterans can feel they are valued and supported,” Casabon said.

"I would never have come back to school if it wasn't for the Veteran Affairs office," Vincent added.



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Two circular headshots are displayed side-by-side. The left headshot features James Glickman, a man with short grey hair wearing a light blue button-down shirt. The right headshot features Jonah D. Glickman, a man with dark hair and a beard wearing a dark blue blazer over a light pink shirt. Both headshots are set against a white background with a red circular graphic element at the top.



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