

# STURBRIDGE VILLAGER

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Thursday-Friday, September 12-13, 2024



Courtesy

Troop 338 of Charlton pictures during the 2024 Old Home Day, will hold a special Night of Fun on Sept. 19. The Troop welcomes both boys and girls to join their membership.

## Co-ed Troop 338 to hold "Night of Fun"

BY JASON BLEAU  
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — A local scout troop will be holding an open house in September with the hopes of bringing in new members including both boys and girls as the troop has recently become co-ed.

Charlton Troop 338

will hold a "Night of Fun" later this month which will include games, interaction with current scouts, and scouting staples like a campfire and smores. The goal is to increase awareness of the Troop and allow current scouts to share their experiences with potential mem-

ber about how scouting has positively impacted their lives. The event is also a way to spread the word that the troop has now embraced co-ed membership in line with a national movement to eliminate gender limitations in the organization. The change has been a positive one for all ac-

ording to scout leaders who touted the co-ed approach as a way to share the spirit and skills associated with scouting with a wider variety of children and teens. Scout Leader Venessa Noyes stated they have five girls already involved in the Troop.

"It opens up the op-

portunities later on in life for the girls that they didn't have that the boys

have always had," she said.

Turn To **TROOP 338** page A11

## Sturbridge chooses single tax rate again

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

STURBRIDGE — As it has for several years now, the Selectboard voted unanimously to set a single property tax rate without exemptions for fiscal 2025.

Assessor Ann Murphy said it will be about \$15.95 per \$1,000, a reduction from last year's \$16.49, but still needs to be certified by the state.

Of course, that means the property values have continued to rise. At one point, she showed a chart of the last decade where this year's average single-family home is worth \$482,803. Five years ago, it was \$312,150, and in 2015, it was \$255,625.

She said average values have risen 10-12 percent,

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## Charlton offers dementia/Alzheimer's resources

CHARLTON — September is World Alzheimer's Month and Dementia Friendly Charlton wants to let everyone know about the various initiatives and resources available to our community! Charlton Public Library, Charlton Senior Center, and The Overlook, in collaboration with Dementia Friendly Charlton, offer support for those living with Alzheimer's or another dementia.

as well as individual books (for all ages), videos, music CDs, even a couple of "companion pets" (batteries included!)—all designed to provide comfort, spark reminiscence, and encourage conversation. The items are available for checkout to anyone

with a valid library card! Don't have a library card? C'mon in with an ID and we'll set you up!

Our Monthly Caregiver Support Group is held on the third Thursday of every month from 6:00-7:30 in the Community

Meeting Room. It is facilitated by Tri-Valley and the Alzheimer's Support Network of South Central Massachusetts. Led by an experienced professional, attendees will obtain information, resources, and strategies specific to caring for

Turn To **RESOURCES** page A11

## "Separation will only strengthen us more"

### Author talks about father's WWII letters

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — Like many kids of veterans, Royce Singleton, Jr. didn't hear much about his father's war experiences. He noted he only recalls Royce Sr mentioning being in World War II's Pacific campaign years later, briefly, while age eight and watching the "Victory at Sea" documentary series.

But his parents left behind numerous letters of Royce Sr's 13 months at sea as a Navy F6F Hellcat fighter pilot off the USS Suwannee, and their son turned them into a book "At Home and At Sea," which he spoke about at the library last week.

Most of those letters were from his mother, Becky, to Royce Sr, talking about life here in the States (specifically Oklahoma), following the war from newsreels, her pregnancy, son's birth, and various other things, while his father

all-too-often had to be circumspect about what he wrote to avoid Navy censors and "revealed almost nothing," Singleton admitted. They generally "described what parents talk about as they watch their babies grow," he said.

Singleton said his father's unit flew air support for all of the landings but one between the Gilbert Islands and the invasion of Leyte, primarily as combat air patrol and anti-submarine duty. His first combat experience was at Tarawa

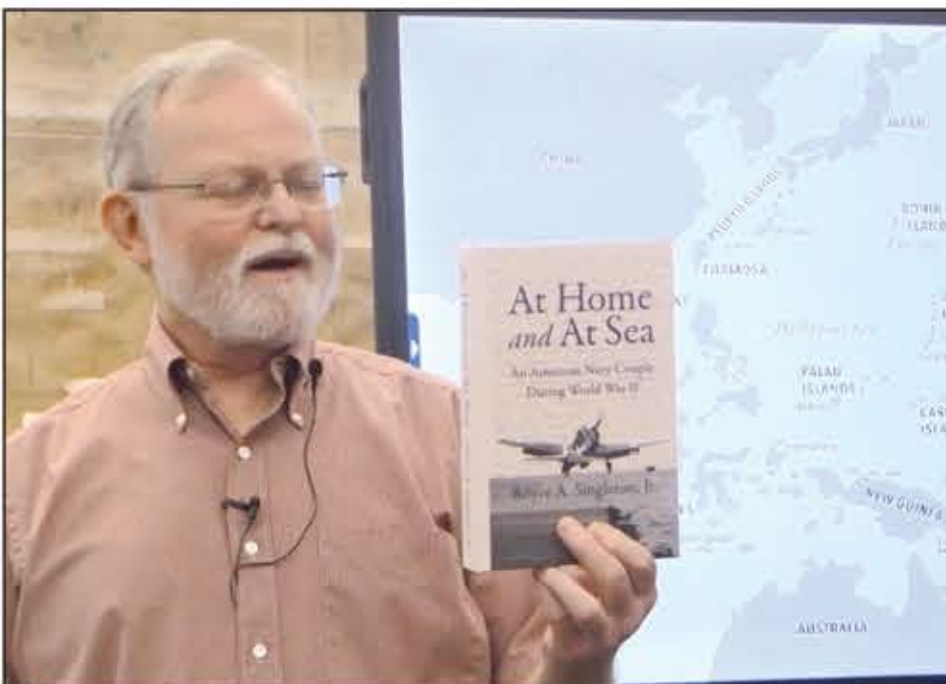
in 1943, coincidentally on Becky's birthday. For that day, Royce Sr wrote home to say "On a carrier, a pilot has a lot of time to think and reminisce." He'd observed he'd been "not too decorous in my religious affairs lately" but had been imagining

"years hence with [our] kids in school."

He wrote he especially valued Becky's six letters to that point — "The ones I get are really dear to me. I've read them all many times." Singleton later noted his father typically got several letters at once because of the way the Navy sent them to various ports. They only exchanged one phone call, during a brief Christmas stay in San Diego, and he noted those were quite expensive in those days.

Becky wrote about working at Oklahoma Natural Gas Co (which Singleton noted was unusual then; women often had to resign while pregnant). She wrote she'd "started [Christmas] shopping early because I heard clothes would be rationed" and considered his phone call her "Christmas gift. I wish I could tell you how much it meant to me."

"As long as the war  
Turn To **WWII LETTERS** page A15



Gus Steeves

Royce Singleton, Jr. talks about his book "At Home and At Sea," a memoir of his father's WWII Navy service. The background map shows the Pacific Ocean, where Royce Singleton Sr was a fighter pilot.

Charlton Library offering(s):

Our Memory Support Collection is specifically designed for those with memory-related issues as well as their caregivers, family and friends. The collection consists of Memory Kits (books, games, puzzles, and other materials on a set theme),



# More than 100 vehicles take part in Harrington Hospital Auxiliary Classic Car Show

THOMPSON, Conn. — The Harrington Hospital Auxiliary held its 15th Annual Classic Car Show on Sunday, Aug. 25 at Bogey's Ice Cream Stand/ Thompson Speedway. A total of 142 vehicles participated in the show.

Judges awarded trophies in several categories; a general raffle and a 50/50 raffle were held. DJ Bruce Marshall of Valley Classic Hits 97.7 FM spun a variety of oldies throughout the day.

First place Mopar went to Dick Langmeyer and his 1974 Plymouth Duster; Second place Mopar was awarded to Joseph Makowski and his 1967 Dodge Dart.

First place GM was given to Jim Nicholson and his 1967 Chevrolet Malibu convertible; Second place GM went to David Borey and his 1967 Chevrolet Chevelle Malibu.

Steve Fiorillo received 1st Place Ford for his 1967 Ford Mustang Fastback and Rich Russell and his 1964 Ford Galaxy 500 XL took home 2nd Place Ford.

First place Open Class went to Phil McClure's 1932 Ford Five-Window Coupe, while Jim Arsenault and his 1990 Mazda Miata walked away with 2nd place Open Class.

Scott Hale and his 1971 Chevrolet pick-up received Best Truck in Show and John Piader's 1933 Chevrolet factory five



Courtesy

Second place Mopar was awarded to Joseph Makowski and his 1967 Dodge Dart.

received Best Street Rod. Kevin and Karen Moran received the trophy for 2000 and up for their 2018 Ford Mustang GT. Thomas and Denise Mottola's 1929 Ford Model A received Participant's Choice.

The Harrington Auxiliary would like to extend heartfelt thanks to the Classic Car Show's sponsors: B & M Excavating Companies; Bogey's Ice Cream; Earthworks Construction and Septic; E.J. Stochaj; Long Subaru; McGee Toyota of Dudley; and The Valley's Classic Hits, 97.7 FM/1250 AM.

Since 1932, the Harrington Auxiliary has supported the patients and community the UMass Harrington Health System serves, through hospital gift shop sales, fundraisers, and special events, such as the car show.

## REAL ESTATE

### Charlton

\$640,000, 76 Jennings Rd, Prop Soln Re & Contractin, to Zborowski, Krystian, and Zborowski, Ashley.

\$170,000, 25 Potter Village Rd, Johnson, Heidi W, and Weagle, Jessica L, to Weagle, Jessica L, and Niemann, Nathan J.

\$85,000, Jennings Rd #51, Gair LLC, to Prop Soln Re & Contractin.

\$599,900, 54 Number 6 Schoolhouse Rd, Prw Enterprises LLC, to Miranda, Teresita A.

\$535,900, 75 J Davis Rd, Clements, Elton K, and Clements, Heather, to Barnett, Craig, and Barnett, Amanda.

\$337,000, 9 Ponnakin Hill Rd, Dahrooge, Kenneth E, and Dahrooge, Sharon L, to 9 Ponnakin Hill Road Rt, and Dahrooge, Jillian J.

\$199,000, 39 Hiland Rd, Geldbaum LLC, to Desousa, Antonio M.

\$93,000, Oxbow Rd #5B, Desaulniers, Marion L, to Hanson, Cory M.

### Holland

\$500,000, 241 Mashapaug Rd, 241 Mashapaug Road Rt, and Hoyt, Robert S, to Tortolani, Paul J, and Tortolani, Beth C.

\$485,000, 24 Lakeshore Dr, Ward, Bryan P, and Ward, Kristin M, to Lecours, David.

\$449,000, 36 Stony Hill Rd, Say Family LLC, to Bourbeau, David, and Bourbeau, Deana.

### Southbridge

\$440,000, 495 Main St, Thomas, Theverthundiyl K, and Thomas, Hima, to Royal House Invs LLC.

\$234,000, 97 Riverview Pl #C, Esper, Jeri, to Houatchanthara, Aaron, and Houatchanthara, Britany.

\$500,000, 33 Oakes Ave, Carpenter Lt, and D-Carpenter, Martha J, to Howard, James, and Howard, Cynthia.

\$445,000, 161 Morris St, Voyles, Myra A, to Santos, Henrique.

\$400,000, 11 Newell Ave, Gaucher, Paul R, and Gaucher, Joann M, to Guasp, Marcus.

\$360,000, 27 Jay Kip Way, Santos John G Est, and Santos, John J, to Lebron, Angel A.

\$293,790, 23 Oakes Ave, Carpenter Lt, and Carpenter, James A, to Mauro, Michael, and Mauro, Amanda.

\$27,000, N Woodstock Rd, Fountain, Tammy A, to Rosario, Jacqueline.

### Sturbridge

\$750,000, 32 Mount Dan Rd, Howlett, Jane F, and Howlett, Jeffrey R, to Mccarthy, Paul E, and Johnson-Mccarthy, Sheila.

\$750,000, 33 Mount Dan Rd, Howlett, Jane F, and Howlett, Jeffrey R, to Mccarthy, Paul E, and Johnson-Mccarthy, Sheila.

\$475,000, 16 Vinton Rd, Mercure Marie Est, and Thiebault, Raymond L, to Pan, Zhao F.

\$265,000, 7 Woodlawn Dr, Seelig Sara D Est, and Seelig, Julie, to Kozaczka, Anna.

\$200,000, 35 Mount Dan Rd, Howlett, Jane F, and Howlett, Jeffrey R, to Steerage Rock Prop LLC.

\$861,250, 66 Bennetts Rd, Quinby Charles Edward Est, and Quinby, Nicholas, to Mills Ft, and Mills, Steven M.

\$861,250, 67 Bennetts Rd, Quinby Charles Edward Est, and Quinby, Nicholas, to Mills Ft, and Mills, Steven M.

\$660,000, 9 Stearns Dr, Placella 3rd, Michael J, and Placella, Laurie M, to Omalley, Joseph, and Ellis, Katelyn.

\$68,700, 20 Mashapaug Rd, Nicholson, Paul, to Nicholson, Joan.

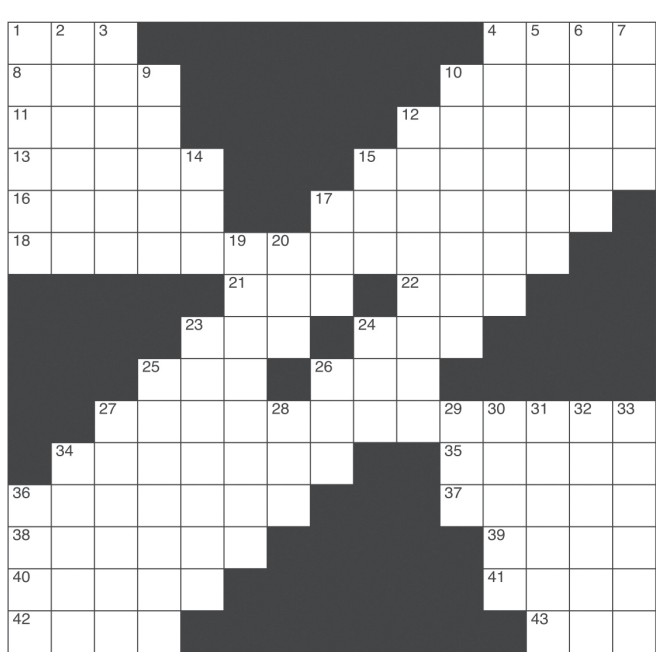


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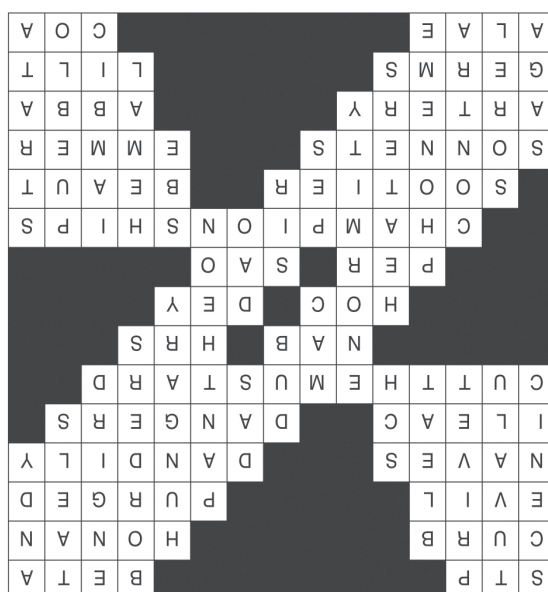
### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Engine additive
- 4. A type of test
- 8. Curtail
- 10. Irish surname
- 11. The opposite of good
- 12. Got rid of
- 13. Central parts of a church building
- 15. Stylistically
- 16. Intestinal
- 17. Negative potential outcomes
- 18. Lived up to a standard
- 21. Snag
- 22. Time units (abbr.)
- 23. Ad \_\_\_
- 24. "Partridge" actress Susan
- 25. For each
- 26. \_\_\_ Paulo, city
- 27. League titles
- 34. More intensely black
- 35. Slang for lovely
- 36. Petrarch is known for them
- 37. Old Eurasian wheat
- 38. Body part
- 39. Swedish rock group
- 40. They're worth avoiding
- 41. Rising and falling of the voice
- 42. Wings
- 43. Enzyme import for respiration

### CLUES DOWN

- 1. Idyllic
- 2. South Pacific island nations
- 3. Shrub of the olive family
- 4. Boundaries
- 5. Encircle
- 6. Weights
- 7. Samberg is one
- 9. Sheep sound
- 10. European country
- 12. Respected group of people
- 14. Trigraph
- 15. Prosecutors
- 17. Assign a nickname
- 19. Huge size
- 20. Partner to cheese
- 23. Fastballs
- 24. Principle underlying the universe
- 25. Distinct units of sound
- 26. Title of respect
- 27. Against
- 28. Foot (Latin)
- 29. One point east of due south
- 30. Concerning the blood
- 31. Type of pentameter
- 32. North American peoples
- 33. Layers of rock
- 34. Georges \_\_\_, French philosopher
- 36. Lengthy tale

PUZZLE SOLUTION



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## Join Edward Street for Worcester's 13th Annual Day of Play Family Festival

WORCESTER — Edward Street is proudly hosting Worcester's 13th annual Day of Play Family Festival on Saturday, Sept. 14 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Elm Park.

Families and children can immerse themselves in the power of play with more than 50 activities to explore and performers to enjoy.

"This festival brings our community together and it is an honor for Edward Street to host this festival for the 13th year," shared Eve Gilmore, Edward Street CEO. "We look forward to welcoming the children and families of Central Massachusetts once again to join in the joy of play."

Day of Play was founded by Edward Street in 2010 and continues to unite the Worcester community year after year. The festival features eight key areas of play for children and their families:

- Active Play;
- Construction;
- Creative Arts;
- Health & Wellness;
- Mindfulness;
- Performance;
- Reading; and
- STEM

Community volunteers and organizations help bring these play activities to life.

"It's an enduring tradition in the Worcester community because it brings young children and families together in a natural way," shared Karen O'Neill, Planning Committee Member and Professor of Early Childhood Education at Quinsigamond Community College. "Play is universal and foundational to being human. The Day of Play provides time away from screens and the busy demands we all have in our lives."

This year's Community Read is centered around the Pete the Cat book series by Eric Litwin and will feature a special appearance by Pete the Cat himself!

Scheduled performers include: Betty Machete and the Jumping Fleas;

- Janoah the Juggler;
- The Wormtown Mugwumps;
- The Traditional Lion Dancers;
- Dan & Imogene Gay;
- The InDaZone dance team; and
- Cory "the Pied Piper" Scott.

Life Skill Martial Arts will lead demonstrations and workshops, and other featured activities include:

- An obstacle course;
- Stomp rockets;
- Bubble making; and
- A soccer skills clinic run by volunteers from Cultural Exchange Through Soccer (CETS).

Along with these activities, Crocodile River Music will host a "musical instruments petting zoo," Mass. Audubon will run an interactive nature table, and Skins & Scales will return



# September arrives at Old Sturbridge Village

## Celebrate the season with apples, animals and agriculture

STURBRIDGE—This September, Old Sturbridge Village invites the public to experience autumn at the Village with a range of family-friendly activities that highlight the region's agricultural heritage, with a special focus on bees, apples, and traditional fall activities.

On Sept. 14 and 15, Old Sturbridge Village will host Bee Weekend, a special event dedicated to the vital heroes of farms and gardens everywhere. Throughout the weekend, visitors can join Jim Dawber of Hillcrest Apiary, the Village's beekeeper, as he demonstrates honey harvesting and explains bees' critical role

in maintaining healthy ecosystems. Visitors can see "The Beehive: The Secret Life of Bees Revealed," an exhibit that delves into the history and importance of beekeeping. Guests can also explore the Village's gardens, featuring hundreds of heirloom plants, see baking demonstrations, a quilting bee, and enjoy a "build-a-bee" craft.

Tickets are now on sale for Fall Fest, set to take place on Sept. 21 and 22. From 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day, Fall Fest offers a fun and educational experience for visitors of all ages. This year's festival theme, "Apples, Animals and Agriculture," highlights the Village's



vibrant agricultural heritage. Visitors can look forward to several seasonal activities, including cider-making demonstrations, apple tastings, and tours of the Village's heirloom orchard. A variety of family-friendly activities will be available throughout the weekend, including hands-on crafts, a farm-

themed Olympic event and up-close encounters with oxen.

In addition to activities, guests can explore a selection of historical artifacts from the Village's collection, specially displayed for the event. Plus on Sunday, Sept. 22, author Melissa M. Cybulski will talk

about Johnny Appleseed and her new book, "Appleseeds: A Boy Named Johnny Chapman."

A special apple-themed menu will be available to enjoy including apple pork pie in Bullard Tavern and fresh-baked apple sweets in the Ox & Yoke Café. More than five different varieties of New England hard ciders will be available for purchase.

The festival will also feature musical performances on both Saturday and Sunday by New England artists, including Beecharmer, Jake Swamp and the Pine, Rachel Sumner & the Traveling Light and The Clements Brothers. Fall

Fest is sponsored by Southbridge Credit Union.

As part of its September 2024 offerings, Old Sturbridge Village is extending a special 50 percent discount on standard daytime admission for seniors aged 55 and over. From Sept. 1 through 29, seniors can enjoy all the Village has to offer for just \$14. The discount is available Wednesday through Sunday for standard daytime admission only.

For more information about September events at Old Sturbridge Village or to purchase tickets, please visit <https://www.osv.org/>.

# Five years later, Bay Path LPN reflects on professional success

CHARLTON — In June 2019, David Macharia, LPN was with his fellow graduates and their families at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy Graduation and Pinning Ceremony at the Great Room of The Overlook. There was a mixture of excitement and uncertainty in the air. The graduates were excited about the moment, but aware of the challenges of successfully passing the NCLEX-PN and entering the workforce.

"Starting a career especially in healthcare is a challenge," stated Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, Academy Director. "There are no quick fixes or standard remedies but as much as it is challenging, it is also a privilege. A privilege because our graduates then dig deeper to discover more gifts that they have and shine further."

"With a certificate in practical nursing from Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, our graduates had everything they needed to get started. They are ready to change the world," she said. "Our nurses can help our struggling healthcare system, provide health teaching, help us lead a health revolution, develop new health strategies, further promote healthy lifestyle, alleviate suffering, and inspire others."

In the five years since, David Macharia, LPN, from the class of 2019 has



grown in many ways and blazed his own trails he himself did not even consider at the time.

"I am abundantly blessed, and I am forever grateful. I have a great sense of responsibility. I strive to improve the quality of life of all residents," said Macharia.

After graduating from Bay Path, Macharia passed the NCLEX-PN on his first try.

"I secured a job as an LPN at Bench-

mark community in Framingham, transitioned to nurse supervisor at their memory care unit (Tatnuck park community), moved to Washington state and began my Skilled Nursing career at Alderwood Manor, Columbia Crest Center, Manorcare Skilled and Long-Term Center, Franklin Hill's Health and Rehabilitation, finally getting an opportunity to lead as a Resident Care Manager at Touchmark Community. After a year and a half, I stepped away to open and run my adult family home ARAMAH AFH LLC. All in the span of five years," Macharia said.

Macharia's care, leadership, demeanor, and focus are what have made him a top nurse. He was instrumental in facilitating scholarships for practical nursing students at Bay Path. He continues with his philanthropy, which he says is very uplifting.

"David is caring, attentive, patient and gracious, and he does it all with the utmost humility," Bolandrina explained.

"He was equally attentive when he was a student at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy. I am glad he continues

to update us with his nursing journey and successes. We are proud of his accomplishments," Bolandrina added.

While at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, Macharia was elected Student Representative, was a member of the UNICEF Club, a member of the Mock Code Team, a recipient of MassHire Grant, District & State Champion for SkillsUSA Medical Math earning silver medals, attendee for SafeTALK and Innovation Summit at Northeastern University, nominee for Clinical Excellence Award and the Massachusetts Vocational Association Outstanding Post-Secondary Student of the Year Award. He is certified in Mental Health First Aid and Dementia Care.

Macharia concluded that attending Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy "was one of the best opportunities God gave to me, through it my life and the lives of my family have been positively impacted. I thank God for the men and women who guided me throughout the journey and the patient centered approach they emphasized, it has allowed me to serve so many in my community."

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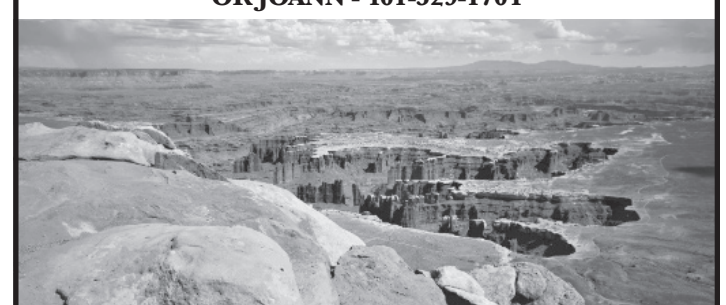
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News, really close to home



# Local nonprofits receive \$91,000 boost from Webster Five Foundation

AUBURN — The Webster Five Foundation is pleased to announce that 18 Massachusetts nonprofit organizations will benefit from \$91,000 in grants during the Foundation's third cycle of grants this year.

Each quarter, the Foundation provides grants to nonprofit organizations or programs that support expanding or improving access to education, culture and the arts, social services, charitable activities and community development.

The following organizations were awarded funding from the Webster Five Foundation in this grant cycle:

Community Legal Aid – \$10,000 to support its Language Access Project, which provides necessary and free legal services to low-income and elderly residents in Worcester County regardless of their primary language.

Legendary Legacies – \$3,000 and a match of up to \$2,000 to support its Reintegration, Food Transport and Employment Preparation programs for formerly gang-involved and previously incarcerated individuals in Worcester.

Mustard Seed Catholic Worker Community Inc. – \$2,500 towards its Summer Enrichment Programming for Low-Income Youth. The Mustard Seed Catholic Worker is a house of hospitality inspired by the vision of Dorothy Day.

Old Sturbridge Village – \$7,000 for its Educational Outreach to grades 3, 4, 5 and 8 Webster Public School students and teachers for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Pakachoag Music School of Greater Worcester – \$2,500 to support the Music Matters Financial Aid Program, which provides tuition assistance to program participants from low-and-moderate income families.

Pernet Family Health Service – \$4,000 for its Youth Program Enrichment Activities, which ensures summer activities are accessible to low-income students and their families by removing the barriers of transportation and fees.

Regional Environmental Council, Inc. – \$5,000 as the first installment of a \$25,000 multi-year grant to support the organization's capital campaign to develop the Center for Urban Agriculture and Food Security, located in Worcester's Main South neighborhood.

RIA, Inc. – \$1,500 towards its SheFund: Supporting Emergency and Basic Needs, Housing, and Education for Survivors, which offers community-based services to adults with experience in the commercial sex trade.

Safe Exit Initiative (f/k/a Living In Freedom Together, Inc.) – \$5,000 for its HARBOR Drop-In Center, which provides individuals with experience in the sex trade and sex trafficking and individuals at a higher risk of entry



Courtesy

Participants in United Way of Central Massachusetts – Women's Initiative, which received \$2,500 from the Webster Five Foundation. The awarded grant monies will be utilized to support the Dollar Scholar program, which provides girls aged 10-14 with basic financial literacy skills and valuable knowledge to support their college, career and life plans.

into the sex trade with access to health and social services.

Southeast Asian Coalition of Central Massachusetts, Inc. – \$5,000 to support its Food Security program, which provides foods and meals meeting the cultural and dietary needs of its food-insecure clients.

Tri-Valley, Inc. – \$6,000 to support its Money Management Program, which assists low-income elders who are at risk of losing their independence due to an inability to manage their own finances.

United Way of Central Massachusetts – Women's Initiative – \$2,500 to support the Dollar Scholar program, which provides girls aged 10-14 with basic financial literacy skills and valuable knowledge to support their college, career and life plans.

United Way of South Central Massachusetts – \$1,500 and a match of up to \$1,000 towards the purchase of capacity building software for its program applications, known as eCimpact.

Worcester Area Mission Society, United Church of Christ – \$3,000 to support the Pre-K Plus program, which prepares children who do not have access to early education to enter kindergarten successfully.

Worcester Earn-a-Bike, Inc. (WEAB) – \$1,000 to support its Youth Earn-a-Bike

program, a mentoring and skill building program designed to empower Worcester's youth.

Worcester Youth Center, Inc. – \$3,500 for its Core Programming, which provides free structured programs and support groups to youth aged 14-24.

YWCA Central Massachusetts, Inc. – \$15,000 to support the Financial Literacy for Domestic Violence Survivors program, which empowers participants to learn resources and strategies to address the financial and safety challenges when ending an abusive relationship.

Friends of the Gladys E. Kelly Library, Inc. – \$15,000 as an installment of the ten-year \$150,000 gift to the Friends of the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library. Each grant installment has been used for the library's building enhancements as well as additional services.

"At Webster Five, our role as a community bank is to be a supporter of progress in our community," said Don Doyle, President/CEO, Webster Five. "These grants are our way of acknowledging and amplifying the profound impact these nonprofits have. We are deeply grateful for the opportunity to contribute to their essential work and to support their continued success."

## Cornerstone Bank committed to helping families achieve financial wellness

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank is once again proving its deeply rooted commitment to the economic well-being of the community it serves. The bank recently donated \$5,000 to the Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation (QVDC), a non-profit organization that helps local small businesses grow and prosper.

Cornerstone's donation is focused on giving low-to-moderate income residents unique access to financial security. The contribution goes to the QVDC's Harrison and Diane Quirk Financial Fitness Club, a program that offers a free, 12-month matched savings plan along with advice from professional advisors on spending, borrowing and reducing debt.

"This program not only sets participants up for personal financial growth, but it also has a direct impact on their families, and a positive ripple effect on the local economy," said Cornerstone Bank CEO Todd Tallman. "Industry studies suggest that a healthy financial life leads to good mental and physical well-being."

This donation marks Cornerstone Bank's second gift to the Financial Fitness Club, which has generated positive results. Participants typically spend a year learning about how their relationship with money affects their lives. The program shows them how to make a habit of saving every month, sticking to a household budget and working to protect credit scores.

"We're thrilled to have a hand in helping individuals and families reach their financial goals," said Tallman. "We're confident the economic security people gain from the Financial Fitness program will lay the foundation for achieving even bigger dreams."

Since its inception in 1996, the Foundation has awarded \$4,128,370 to 298 organizations. The next round of grant recipients will be awarded later this fall.

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**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., 508- 248-5550, Sunday worship 10:30 a.m. Summer worship is 9:30 a.m.  
[www.charltonfedchurch.org](http://www.charltonfedchurch.org)
- **Charlton Baptist Church**, 50 Hammond Hill Road, 248-4488, [www.charltonbaptist.org](http://www.charltonbaptist.org), Sunday worship 10 a.m.
- **Charlton City United Methodist**, 74 Stafford St. 248-7379, web site: [CharltonCityUMC.org](http://CharltonCityUMC.org)  
Sunday worship and Children's church 10am
- **St. Anne St. Patrick Church**, 16 Church St., Fiskdale (508) 347-7338  
[www.stannestpatparish.com](http://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](http://www.stjosephscharlton.com), Saturday Vigil Mass 4:30 p.m., Sunday Mass 8 a.m., Sunday Family Mass 10 a.m., Sunday Life/TEEN Mass 5 p.m., Weekday Mass Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 a.m.
- **Hope Christian Fellowship**, 6 Haggerty Road, 248-5144
- **Assemblies of God Southern New England District Headquarters**, Route 20, 248-3771, [snedag.org](http://snedag.org), Office hours Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Living Word Church of Charlton**, 10 Main Street - Grange building 1st Floor, Charlton, Ma 01507, Pastor Craig Bellisario, (508) 233-8349  
Sunday Service 10:00am.  
[www.livingwordcharlton.com](http://www.livingwordcharlton.com)  
[info@livingwordcharlton.com](mailto:info@livingwordcharlton.com)
- **New Life Fellowship A/G, SNED Chapel**, 307 Sturbridge Road, Rt. 20, Charlton, MA, Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.
- **Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale** - 8 Maple St. Sturbridge, 774-304-1021  
[www.sturfed.org](http://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](http://www.bethlehemsturbridge.org)  
Services - Sunday 9:00 am  
Pastor Dan Purtell
- **Holland Congregation Church**  
"Where the Bible is preached."  
11 Sturbridge Road, Holland, 413-245-9926  
[Hollandchurch.org](http://Hollandchurch.org)  
Sunday Service @ 10:00 am  
Pastor Dan Maketansky
- **Holy Trinity Episcopal Church**  
446 Hamilton St., Southbridge, MA 01550  
Phone: 508-765-9559  
Web: [www.holytrinitysouthbridge.org](http://www.holytrinitysouthbridge.org)  
Sunday Service 11:00 am  
Pastor Dan Purtell

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## Fill the bucket!

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Lions Club of Southbridge will be out on the streets of Southbridge holding our Annual Bucket Brigade on Saturday, Sept. 14 from 9 a.m. until noon at the following streets: Main, Elm, Central, Foster, Everett, Chapin and Hamilton or stop by our table outside the Big Bunny.

The proceeds from this event benefit local people with sight and hearing difficulties. Please help us continue to support those in need by contributing to our bucket challenge.



# Foraging, Part 2: Finding food underfoot

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — Continuing down to the ground from last week, long-time forager Karen Monger often finds food in forms that many people literally step on or over.

Some of them are super-common, like dandelions; some are commonly seen as a nuisance, like burdock; and some have the reputation of being toxic, like mushrooms. But in fact, many of them are both edible and tasty.

As she noted while speaking at Charlton Library two weeks ago, “Edible does not always mean palatable. It just means ‘does not have toxins.’” That’s especially true of mushrooms, which our society has a tendency to avoid harvesting for fear of poison. Monger said she specifically looks for about 40 tasty species, but hundreds of them are edible (with the above caveat), about 40 will make you sick, and fewer than 10 will kill you. There are thousands of mushroom species worldwide.

“Americans can be pretty cavalier about what’s out there,” she noted, adding that many more plants are toxic than mushrooms. “... It’s very important to me everybody stay safe” while picking and eating wild foods.

A key part of that is finding good information. “I’m not your mom, and I’m not the foraging police,” she said before noting there are a very wide variety of written resources on foraging out there. AI is writing “a lot of bad things to sell on Amazon,” so people need to make sure the



Gus Steeves

A few samples of edible mushrooms. Monger also had some mushroom jerky the audience could try.

writer is a real human with some experience foraging.

That said, many plant and fungi species are entirely edible, and often have multiple uses. Take chicory, noted for its blue flowers. That’s been long used as an additive in and substitute for coffee, with its root being ground and roasted until it’s “black and crispy.” The plant is a perennial and “mildly invasive, so you’re doing a good thing if you’re digging up chicory,” she said.

Maybe even more common is the dandelion, whose ground and roasted root is also sometimes a coffee substitute, while the flowers and leaves can be turned into tea, jelly, wine or a salad vegetable. Typically, dandelions are best when eaten young; they tend to become fairly bitter with age.

Often right next to it, you’ll find chickweed, which she noted “tastes a little bit like corn.” It’s notable for having five-part “very deeply-split white flowers” and a tiny line of hairs down the length of its stem “like a mohawk.”

Not far away is likely to be the very invasive garlic mustard, which Monger described as

“such a bully.” It was brought over from Europe intentionally by colonists who wanted edible plants they recognized (it’s called “Jack by the hedge” in England); it tastes “a heck of a lot like horseradish” or wasabi. People can eat the first-year roots or leaves, but they need to be cooked/boiled to eliminate cyanide.

## Mushrooms

At the same level, many mushrooms are edible, Monger said. One of her favorites is maitake, sometimes called “hen of the woods,” but the name in Japanese means “the dancing mushroom.” That’s identifiable by the fact it’s a “polypore,” having many holes on the underside of its umbrella; other species do, too, including the two “chicken mushrooms” (“chicken of the woods”) which are also edible.

Maitake is “slightly parasitic,” favors red oaks, and has a “savory, meaty, roasty flavor” where “really well-cooked maitake feels like bacon.” She noted it “can get ridiculously large,” showing a photo of her husband carrying an 80-pound maitake. (That shroom produced two



Gus Steeves

Library Director Karen Wall and forager Karen Monger talk after the presentation.

quart jars of dehydrated mushrooms.)

The “chicken mushrooms” (*Laetiporus* species) are best noted for being bright orange on top and growing often on dead trees and tasting vaguely like chicken. (Be careful, though; there’s another orange species that’s toxic; as she noted later “There are always things that look like what you want.”) Monger noted it’s best when collected young; old and dry specimens contain a chemical that tends to make it inedible and chalky.

One somewhat un-

usual species is known as “shaggy mane.” That needs to be cooked and eaten quickly; if allowed to sit, it will digest itself and liquefy to spread its spores. Another, called honey mushroom, also needs to be boiled before sauteeing or cooked with tomatoes to avoid sliminess; that’s popular in Polish and Russian rural communities.

She noted the three “lion’s mane” species (*Hericium* spp) are tasty and supposed to help the brain, while oyster mushrooms (*Pleurotus* spp) fell “like you’re eating a juicy pork chop”

when crushed and fried. Another popular type is the porcinis, recognizable by their “hamburger-bun-shaped cap” and “white netting on the stem.”

Going underground, Native Americans often dug up and ate groundnuts (*Apios americana*, with various common names including American potato bean), a legume in the peanut family. This plant has very thin, flowering vines and the edible roots “look like teeny, tiny potatoes” that taste like water chestnuts, Monger said.

Burdock roots are also edible; Monger digs those in the fall, finding the first-year plants best. Those are identifiable by their fuzzy leaves; the roots can be cooked in stews or pickled, among other uses. She noted the gobo found in Asian markets is cultivated burdock.

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

## Hitchcock Academy invites golfers of all levels to Fourth Annual Golf Tournament

BRIMFIELD — The fourth annual Hitchcock Classic Golf Tournament will take place at Chicopee Country Club on Sunday, Sept. 29 at 12:30 p.m. The fee is \$120/player with the option to sign up as a foursome or individual. This includes entry to the tournament, cart, dinner, contests, prizes, and snacks. The tournament will be played in scramble format. Players or foursomes can register at <https://www.hitchcockacademy.org/golf-tournament1.html>.

Established in 2021, FORE a Great Cause Golf Tournament is a fun day on the course! Designed for golfers of any and all abilities who simply want to support the work of Hitchcock Academy. The day consists of 18 holes of golf, cart, and a delicious dinner, as well as a variety of fun contests - some free, some for an additional fee, and of course, great raffle prizes!

This year’s tournament is generously sponsored by Soggy Dog Spa, Michael L. Wales Painting, Dexter-Russell, Inc., and McCurdy Group Insurance.

Hitchcock Academy is a community center located at 2 Brookfield Rd. in Brimfield serving the community with educational, recreational, and cultural programming. More information can be found at [www.hitchcockacademy.org](http://www.hitchcockacademy.org).

## Ranting Parents Comedy Tour comes to Charlton Arts & Activities Center

CHARLTON — If your kids drive you nuts, this show is for you.

The Ranting Parents Comedy Tour, a parent-focused comedy show for adults, comes to the Charlton Arts & Activities Center, 4 Dresser Hill Rd., Charlton, on Saturday, Oct. 12 at 7:30 p.m.

According to Ranting Parents’ promotional material, “We love our children, who were put here to torture us.”

In a night of stand-up and more, four Boston comedians share their best, worst, and weirdest moments as parents. They also share stories and parenting advice that you probably don’t want to take.

Join Paul Nardizzi (NBC, Comedy Central, SiriusXM, etc.), Dave Rattigan (SiriusXM, NESN), former Roller Derby Queen Mona Forgione, and Cape Cod’s favorite comedian Jim Ruberti for 90 minutes of great comedy.

The show is suitable for adults.

Tickets are \$30 (\$28 for seniors), available online at [ScampsComedy.com/shows](http://ScampsComedy.com/shows), or at the box office.

Paul Nardizzi came up with the idea for the Ranting Parents Comedy Tour when he was at the doctor’s office paying for his son’s surgical operation to remove an Xbox controller from his hands. Nardizzi is one of the country’s top comedians, with multiple standup appearances on NBC’s “Late Night with Conan O’Brien,” Comedy Central, and Fox Sports’ “Best Damn Sports Show Period,” as well as regional appearances on NESN. A former winner of the Boston Comedy Festival, Nardizzi is in demand for theater shows, corporate functions, colleges, golf tournaments, and fundraisers. His CD has been played on Sirius Satellite Radio and he’s a prolific author of humor books, including “602 Reasons to be Ticked Off.”

Dave Rattigan is the father of a college art student, so is sure to be taken care of in his twilight years. Known for his dead-pan delivery and quick, dry

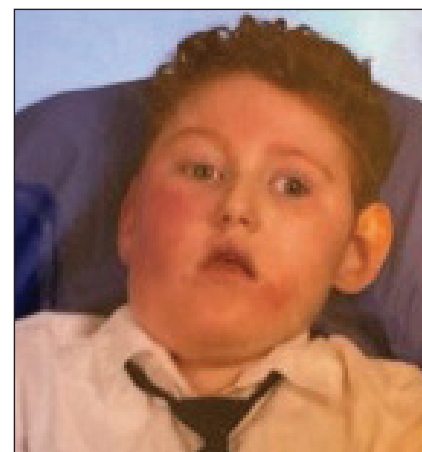
wit, he’s performed in top clubs and theaters, opened for The Beach Boys, Jeff Dunham and Nick DiPaolo, and created the themed stand-up comedy show “How Men Think (Or Do They).” His CD, “Dave Rattigan Thinks He’s Funny,” received airplay on SiriusXM Satellite Radio and on stations around the world. He’s appeared in television commercials and independent film projects; written funny columns for the Boston Globe, Christian Science Monitor and others; and his video clips have run on Nickmom.com and Rooftop Comedy.

After retiring from competitive Roller Derby with two busted up shoulders, city girl Mona Forgione is now a New Hampshire mother of three and has fully embraced the mid-life crisis of standup comedy. Audiences approve. She’s advanced up the ranks of the New England Comedy scene, sharing the stage with headliners such as Mike McDonald, Dave Rattigan and Kathe Farris. She was a semifinalist in the 2020 Boston Comedy Festival and performed at the 2022 Portland Maine Comedy Festival.

Jim Ruberti says the impact of his parenting is most evident in the fact that none of his three sons has the desire to ever reproduce. He’s a Boston comedian and actor who has been entertaining people for well over 30 years, starting as a child in the theaters of Cape Cod performing with Broadway actors such as John Raitt or Theodore Bikel, and progressing into roles as an adult at venues like the Barnstable Comedy Club. He hosts his own comedy series at the Co-tuit Center for the Arts and has been a comic fundraising auctioneer and event host as well as a stand-up comedian working stages around New England.

For more information, go to [ScampsComedy.com/shows](http://ScampsComedy.com/shows).

## Friday's Child



**Korben**  
Age 7  
Registration # 8266

**Hi! My name is Korben and I love when people read to me!**

Korben is a sweet boy with complex medical needs. He enjoys having books read to him and loves to listen to music and TV shows. He is reported to enjoy being around other peers and will babble as a form of communication. The adults in Korben’s life describe him as a happy, silly, and loving young boy. Korben loves to have preferred adults read to him and spend time with him.

<https://adopt.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/child/8266>

### Can I Adopt?

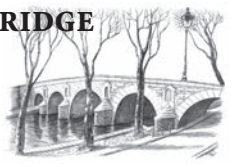
If you’re at least 18 years old, have a stable source of income, and room in your heart, you may be a perfect match to adopt a waiting child. Adoptive parents can be single, married, or partnered; experienced or not; renters or homeowners; LGBTQ+ singles and couples. As an adoptive parent, you won’t 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](http://www.mareinc.org). Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) can give you guidance and information on the adoption process. Reach out today to find out all the ways you can help children and teens in foster care.





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FRANK G. CHILINSKI  
PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE  
EDITOR

## Raising the bar for decency and leadership

There was a time when being American meant standing for something bigger than ourselves—when looking out for one another, showing respect, and upholding certain standards was simply the way things were. But somewhere along the way, we've lost our way a bit. The tone of our politics has shifted from a place of professionalism and decorum to something more like a never-ending reality show.

The truth is, politics was never meant to be a joke. It's about the serious business of leading a country—of shaping policies that affect all of us, from the farmers in the heartland to the teachers in our towns. Yet lately, it feels like decency and respect have taken a backseat to personal attacks, name-calling, and divisiveness. It's not just embarrassing—it's harmful. We deserve better, and it's time we demand better.

As Americans, we need to band together and make kindness a priority once again. Not just in our daily lives, but in the way we engage with politics. Our leaders should be held to higher standards. They should represent us with dignity and professionalism, not petty squabbles and cheap shots. Politics should be about problem-solving, not point-scoring.

Imagine what we could accomplish if we focused on bringing people together instead of tearing each other down. Kindness doesn't mean we all have to agree on everything, but it does mean treating each other with respect—even when we disagree. The strength of America has always been in our diversity of thought and background. But diversity only works when there's a foundation of decency and empathy.

We have to stop lowering the bar and start raising our expectations. Our political leaders should exemplify the best of us—people who are informed, compassionate, and ready to fight for what's right, without losing their humanity in the process. Let's return to a time when class, integrity, and decorum mattered in public life. When we disagreed with one another civilly, knowing that, at the end of the day, we're all on the same team.

America is at its best when we care about our neighbors, when we stand up for those who can't, and when we hold our leaders accountable to a higher standard. Together, we can make America kind again. Not just in the way we treat one another, but in how we demand professionalism, decency, and class from our leaders.

The future of this country depends on all of us—not just the people we elect, but the expectations we set. Let's set them high.

### 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

## Gambling memorabilia



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

Gambling has a long history. Tiles from 2,300 BC were found in China and are believed to have been used in a game of chance, according to gambling.net. Slips like current day Keno tickets from 200 BC were found and may have been used to fund government projects. Dice were discovered in an Egyptian tomb in 3,000 BC and the Greek poet Sophocles mentions them in his writings from around 500 BC. Gambling was banned in Ancient Rome and penalties were imposed on those caught participating. The citizens began using chips so authorities wouldn't see that they were playing for money. Playing cards were invented by the Chinese in 800 AD.

Gambling has of course developed and progressed since. An early version of Baccarat migrated from Italy to France in the 1400s. In 1601, Miguel de Cervantes (the author of Don Quixote) wrote about a Spanish game called veintiuna that was like blackjack, according to gambling.net. A gambling house (an early form of casino) opened in Italy in 1638. Roulette was invented in France in 1796. Poker may have developed over time, but one of the first times a recognizable form of the game was played occurred in New Orleans in 1829. Slot machines started being used in New York in 1891. The Golden Gate Casino, the first casino in Las Vegas, opened in 1906. In 1910, U.S. gambling laws halted gambling until the Great Depression of the 1930s, when it became legal again.

There are many reasons that people collect gambling memorabilia. They may like the history and focus on an era like Victorian gambling memorabilia. Casinos were also extravagant social spaces with "debonair personalities, luxury, and high-society figures," according to the "Island Echo" of the United Kingdom's Isle of Wight. Many collectors are attracted to that lifestyle.

Some recent auction results attest to the desirability of gambling memorabilia. A 1930s wood gambling carnival



wheel sold for \$500 last month. A rare early 1900s bicycle competition mechanical parlor gambling machine sold for \$2,500 in June. We sold a vintage Mills Novelty quarter slot machine for \$500 in our June auction.

A colorful painted saloon wheel described as being circa 1900 "from an Indian Territory in Oklahoma" brought \$10,000 in 2016. A Desert Inn \$25 casino chip sold for \$25,000 in 2013. A 1936 Evans Roll-ette machine described as "one of the rarest and most sought-after 20th century casino machines" went for \$28,000 in 2016. A Charles Fey slot machine, considered to be the first 3-reel gambling machine, hit the jackpot, selling for \$145,000 in 2017.

We'll have a collection of gambling memorabilia from a local estate in our major auction starting this month. That auction will also feature a wide variety of other items including gold jewelry, sterling silver, art, coins, and historical items. We are always accepting quality consignments of all kinds for future auctions. I'll be appraising items for the public at the Scandinavian Culture Center in Newton from 1 to 3 p.m. on Sept. 21. Please visit our Web site, <https://centralmassauctions.com>, for links to 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](mailto:info@centralmassauctions.com) or (508-612-6111).

## Peace Pilgrim

POSITIVELY  
SPEAKING

TOBY  
MOORE

It's easy to feel like everything is falling apart these days. The economy is uncertain, with prices climbing and jobs becoming more unstable. We hear endless news about war and global unrest, and as elections approach, the sense of instability only grows. Many of us lie awake at night, wondering how we'll make it through these difficult times.

Wouldn't it be nice to let go and trust that everything will be OK?

That's precisely how Peace Pilgrim lived her life. In 1953, she set out on a mysterious journey that would last nearly 30 years, walking over 25,000 miles zig zagging across the United States.

She gave up her name, her possessions, and her home, choosing to live with nothing but the clothes on her back, a comb, a pen, and a few small pieces of paper. She had no money, no food, and no specific destination, yet she walked without fear, relying on the kindness of others for food and shelter.

Her mission was to spread a message of peace, and through her unwavering faith, she trusted that everything she needed would be provided.

Peace Pilgrim lived in simplicity. "Unnecessary possessions are unnecessary burdens. If you have them, you have to take care of them!" she would often say.

Her life was proof that there is great freedom in simplicity.

She believed that "those who have enough but not too much are the happiest." With nothing but her faith and her message, she showed that peace and contentment come from with-

in, not from material things.

Throughout her journey, she encountered challenges that would have caused most people to lose hope, but her trust never wavered. She believed that "a pilgrim is a wanderer with a purpose."

Her purpose was to spread peace, and she trusted that life would support her in that mission. And time after time, the help she needed arrived—often in mysterious ways.

Once, while walking through the Rocky Mountains, she was caught in a fierce snowstorm with no shelter in sight. It seemed impossible that she could make it through the night. But instead of panicking, she kept walking, trusting that something would come. Sure enough, just as the storm became unbearable, a stranger appeared, offering her a warm coat and a place to stay. The stranger had no reason to be there but had felt an inexplicable urge to drive down that road.

Another time, while walking through the Mojave Desert, she went days without food. Hunger gnawed at her, but she remained calm. She knew that help would arrive when she needed it. And sure enough, a man driving down that empty road stopped to offer her food and water. He had felt a nudge to take a detour, not knowing why, but was surprised to find her there.

She once said, "for light, I go directly to the Source of light, not to any of the reflections." She trusted not in the material world but in a deeper, spiritual source. She showed that peace comes from within, which can produce

Turn to **PEACE** page A11

## How to be a 'seasonal' investor



FINANCIAL  
FOCUS

TREVOR  
NIELSEN

As we transition from summer to autumn, change is all around us — leaves are taking on new colors, temperatures are dropping, and the days are getting shorter. But you can also experience different seasons in various aspects of your life — including when you invest. What are the seasons of an investor's life? And how should you respond to them?

The first such season may happen when you are in your 20s and just starting out in the working world. At this stage in your life, it's especially important to prioritize your financial goals. At the top of your mind may be a short-term goal, such as saving for a down payment on a house. To help achieve this goal, you'd generally want to save in "cash" accounts and invest in fixed-income vehicles that offer preservation of principal. At the same time, you don't want to disregard a longer-term goal — in particular, saving for retirement. While you may not be able to afford to put much away, every amount helps. And you'll want to invest for growth.

Now, as the seasons of your life progress, let's consider your early middle years. At this point, you've moved past the down payment on your home and you're well into paying a mortgage regularly. And you might even have retired your student loans. But now, you may have another major goal — helping build resources for your children's college education or other post-secondary training. For this objective, you could consider several options, one of which is a 529 education savings plan, which can provide federally tax-free earnings and withdrawals if the money is used for qualified educational expenses. But you're also moving closer to retirement, so, if you can afford it, you may want to increase your contributions to your IRA and your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan.

As the seasons continue to move on, and you find yourself in your later middle years, your financial situation may have changed significantly. Now, your children may be out of school, your earnings may have grown to their highest level, and you might even have paid off your mortgage. Given these factors, you may now be able to devote more of your resources toward your retirement by ramping up your IRA and 401(k) contributions even further, and possibly also considering other investment vehicles. And you may want to inject more balance into your portfolio, possibly lowering its overall risk level somewhat, especially in the years immediately preceding your retirement.

Once you move into your retirement season, you may need to continue, and possibly accelerate, the movement toward a more balanced portfolio — one that provides you with more income-producing opportunities. Some investments provide current income, while others provide it in the future, but all of them can contribute to your ability to enjoy your retirement lifestyle. However, you still need some growth-oriented investments to help keep you ahead of inflation. Plus, it's a good idea to keep at least a year's worth of living expenses in cash and another few years' worth in short-term, fixed-income investments. By doing so, you can help avoid having to sell assets in a down market.

The seasons of your life may come and go more quickly than you realize — but you can be prepared for them by making the appropriate investment moves.

*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.nielson@edwardjones.com](mailto:trevor.nielson@edwardjones.com).*



# Tips for preventing vole damage in your landscape



GARDEN MOMENTS  
MELINDA MYERS



Melinda Myers

Damage to a lawn caused by voles.

Matted down, grassy trails in the lawn and missing bark on trees and shrubs in late winter and early spring might be when you first become aware of voles in your landscape. Fall is an important time to protect plants from damage.

Voles are herbivores actively feeding on plants, seeds, bulbs, and the trunks and roots of various trees and ornamental plants year-round. Soon after planting you may discover voles have devoured young plants and dug up newly planted seeds and bulbs.

Moles are often blamed for the damage caused by voles. Unlike voles, moles feed on earthworms and some soil-dwelling insects. They travel in interconnected tunnels three to 12 inches below ground whereas voles typically use above-ground surface runways.

Although short-lived, voles are very productive, and their populations tend to peak every three to five years. You'll often see a rise in the number of voles and damage they cause when winters are mild and there is a consistent cover.

The damage to lawns is irritating but usually only cosmetic and can be repaired. Allow the surrounding grass to fill in narrow trails or overseed the trails and damaged areas in spring.

Reduce the risk of damage to your plants by pulling mulch away from the trunk of trees and stems of shrubs. Enclose susceptible plants, typically new plantings and young trees, with a cylinder of hardware cloth. Sink the wire several inches into the ground to keep the voles out.

Keep the grass surrounding flower beds mowed to reduce the risk of voles moving into the garden. Cut tall grasses shorter in the fall so they do not fall over and create homes for these pests. The same is true for branches lying on the ground. Trimming these off the soil surface also helps eliminate vole habitats.

Boost your success by including Plantskydd (plantskydd.com) in your efforts to prevent vole damage. This organic odor-based repellent is snow and rain-resistant. Apply a liberal amount of the granular Plantskydd over the soil surface around your plantings. Apply it in the fall to protect your plants over winter and early in the growing season to protect new plantings. As always, read and follow label directions for the greatest success.

Some gardeners choose to use a snap trap to manage these rodents. When populations are high there can be hundreds of them, limiting the success of this option. If you opt to use a rat trap baited with peanut butter and oats and placed on one of their trails, set it inside a pipe. The pipe or a similar cover prevents birds from feeding on the oats and being killed by the trap.

A variety of animals including hawks, owls, and foxes feast on voles, helping to manage their populations. Avoid using rodent poison that puts them as well as cats and dogs at risk when feeding on a poisoned vole.

Working with nature and adapting your landscape management strategies can help you reduce vole damage while growing a beautiful landscape.

Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, including *Midwest Gardener's Handbook*, 2nd Edition and *Small Space Gardening*. She hosts *The Great Courses* "How to Grow Anything" instant video and DVD series and the nationally syndicated *Melinda's Garden Moment* radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine. Myers' Web site is [www.MelindaMyers.com](http://www.MelindaMyers.com).

# All About Corn on the Cob



TAKE THE HINT  
KAREN TRAINOR

Corn on the cob is not only one of the tastiest pleasures of the summer; it's also one of the most popular, with American per capita consumption averaging a little over four pounds of fresh corn each year!

If fresh corn on the cob is on your menu this season, read on for some tips and tricks to make the sweet treat even more enjoyable. From picking prime corn on the cob to serving up the irresistible ears, the following hints, both old and new - help you serve up your share of the classic summer pleasure.

**Freshness Check:** Want to ensure fresh, sweet corn on your table this season? Take these tips from farmers: Look for bright green husks that are slightly moist. The silk should be slightly sticky and a pale golden color. If you press gently against the husk you should be able to feel the kernels. Also check out the bottom of the ear, where it was cut off the stalk. If it is brown, the ear was likely not picked that day. If corn kernels are exposed, look for plump kernels in even rows.

**Corn Rules:** Did you know corn on the cob will lose up to 25% of its sugar content after just six hours of storage at room temperature? That is because from the moment it is picked, the sugar in the corn begins to convert to starch. To keep corn at optimum taste, keep corn chilled at about 36 degrees. Keep corn in the refrigerator with the husks intact until you can cook it. This helps to slow down the sugar to starch conver-

sion, thus maintaining its sweetness longer.

**Corn off the Cob:** While cutting the corn off the cob removes half the fun of eating it, sometimes it's a necessary task. Ever wonder what is the most efficient way to carve a cob? Lay the cob down on its side on a cutting board and use a sharp chef knife or serrated edge knife to cut off the kernels, rotating the as you go. This way, there is less mess than if you held the cob vertically.

**Milky Way:** If you're cutting corn off the cob for a recipe, be sure to get all the milky liquid this way: After the kernels are removed, simply run the flat edge of a knife down the cob, applying a bit of pressure.

**Cooking Corn:** If you're boiling corn never salt the water, as that can toughen the kernels. Want to add heighten sweetness of bland corn? Add a teaspoon or two of sugar to the boiling water. Cook for three to five minutes.

**Steaming Hot:** Steaming corn is a favored way to serve up fresh corn on the cob. If you don't have a steamer, simply put about two inches of water in a large stock pot. Stand ears upright in the pan. Cover and cook on high until water boils. Turn off heat and allow to steam with cover on for about 7 to 9 minutes.

**Cooler Corn:** Several years ago, a reader sent in this effortless trick for cooking corn for a crowd. It employs an ice cooler and a little patience and is perfect for camping trips as kettles of hot water are readily available.

**To do:** Shuck corn and place into a clean cooler (not Styrofoam). Pour in enough boiling water to cover corn. Cover cooler (make sure it has a tight fitting lid). Keep lid on for 30 minutes (don't peek)! When lid is opened, corn should be cooked to perfection. With the lid on the corn will stay hot for about two hours.

**Husk-free Hack:** Several years ago, this trick to cook corn quickly in the microwave was making the internet rounds, and is still my favorite easy method to cook corn for one or two servings:

Cut about one inch off the cob on the stem end (make sure you cut into at least the first row of kernels). Cook corn in the microwave (I put one ear in for four minutes; two ears in for five). Remove from microwave and using an oven mitt or potholder, hold the corn up over a plate by the silk leaves and shake hard; the cob will slide right out of the husk, leaving a clean, cooked cob!

**Freezing corn for the winter?** A couple of years ago, reader Howard Whitcomb of Brookfield passed along this timely tip that bears repeating:

A handy way of putting up kernel corn for the winter is to first blanch the corn in a pot, and

Turn To **HINT** page A11



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# Investing during an election year

**BY CHRISTOPHER MALLON**  
SVP & PROGRAM MANAGER  
THE CAPSTONE PLANNING GROUP

Presidential elections, with their high stakes and intense media coverage, can create a sense of urgency and uncertainty that tempts investors to make emotional decisions. The idea that the outcome of an election will dramatically alter the investment landscape is pervasive, but history and financial theory suggest otherwise. While the upcoming election has the potential to increase short-term volatility, long-term investors should be cautious about making rash decisions on presidential elections.

It's natural to want your candidate to win, but when it comes to investing, be leery about placing too much emphasis on this one factor. Historically speaking, staying invested has a much larger impact on your long-term investment returns. The chart below shows how U.S. stocks have performed under different parties dating back to 1933. Although past results are not predictive of future returns, a \$1,000 investment in the S&P 500 Index made when Franklin D. Roosevelt took office would be worth almost \$22 million today.

During that time there were eight Democratic presidents and seven Republican presidents. The key takeaway? Over the long-term, U.S. stocks have trended higher regardless of which political party has been in the

oval office.

Unfortunately, some individuals can become so emotionally attached to one political candidate and party they'll make extreme decisions on their entire portfolio. These individuals will say things like, "If [blank] gets elected I will take all of my money out of the market" or "I will only invest if the [blank] party wins". They'll often move money to the sidelines and sit in cash for extended periods of time. Below we'll analyze the potential consequences of this mindset in more detail.

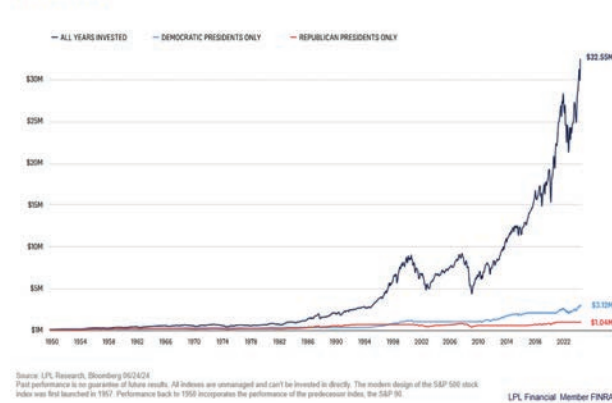
What would happen if an investor placed \$100,000 in the S&P 500 back in 1950, and only kept their money in the market when their "preferred political party" was in the White House? Well, they would have around \$3.0 million if they only invested during Democratic presidency years and \$1.0 million if they only invested in Republican presidency years. Not bad...but for perspective, they would have \$31.7 million

if they bought and held the S & P 500 over the entire timeframe!

Contrary to what the media may portray, research indicates that markets do not consistently favor one political party over the other. While some argue that Republican administrations are more favorable for business due to their policies on taxation and deregulation, others will note there have been periods of strong market performance under Democrats due to fiscal stimulus and social spending.

Investors who focus solely on the presidential race may also overlook the importance of congressional elections and the potential for a divided government. Historically, the stock market has delivered higher average returns when Washington is split (i.e., a Democrat President with Republican Congress, or a Republican President with Democrat Congress). Why? Because Wall Street prefers clarity, and splitting control makes radical policy change less likely.

S&P 500 vs. Political Party Portfolios (1950-YTD)



ly. Come this November, there will be 34 seats in the Senate along with 435 seats in the House up for election.

Ultimately, markets are influenced by a complex array of factors—economic data, corporate earnings, global events, monetary policy, technological innovations, and more.

Sophisticated investors typically adhere to a long-term strategy that is based on fundamentals rather than short-term events like elections. Warren Buffett, one of the world's most renowned investors, also advises against making investment decisions based on political events. Come this November, focus on maintaining an appropriate asset allocation based on your financial goals and risk profile.

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](http://www.thecapstone.group) or call 508-764-0046.

Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Hypothetical illustrations are ex-dividends. All indexes are unmanaged and can't be invested in directly. The modern design of the S&P 500 stock index was first launched in 1957. Performance back to 1950 incorporates the performance of the predecessor index, the S&P 90. Sources: LPL Research, Bloomberg 06/24/24, Capital Group, "3 mistakes investors make during election years"

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## Mosquito-borne illnesses on the rise

**BY KEVIN FLANDERS**  
STAFF WRITER

REGION — With fall youth sports back in session and community harvest festivals getting underway, residents are urged to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

Last week, the state Department of Public Health (DPH) announced two additional human cases of West Nile virus (WNV), bringing the total number of human cases to six in 2024.

Last month, the state confirmed its first human case of Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) since 2020. The man in his eighties resides in Worcester County.

WNV and EEE are both typically spread to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito.

"The risk of West Nile virus in Massachusetts will continue until the first hard frost. While the temperatures may be a bit cooler, September is still within the peak time for West Nile virus activity in Massachusetts," said Public Health Commissioner Robbie Goldstein.

"As we all adjust to our post-summer schedules, one routine that everyone should continue is using mosquito repellent when outdoors."

According to the DPH, the risk of human infection with WNV is currently elevated in parts of Barnstable, Bristol, Essex, Hampden, Plymouth, and Worcester Counties.

For EEE risk levels,

the towns of Leicester, Charlton, and Southbridge were all listed in the moderate-risk zone, as of press time.

Webster, Oxford, Sutton, and Douglas were listed in the state's critical-risk zone for EEE. Meanwhile, Uxbridge and Northbridge were listed in the high-risk zone.

Many towns in the high-risk and critical-risk zones have rescheduled sporting events and other activities to daylight hours. Communities are also taking several other measures to reduce mosquito populations.

"Webster is fortunate to be involved with the Central MA Mosquito Control Project, who conducted town-wide spraying on August 20, 2024," read a statement released by the Webster Health Director. "However, ground-based mosquito spraying cannot and does not eliminate risk, and must not be viewed by the public as a solution to EEE risk."

Local communities saw no shortage of rain this past summer, which led to increased mosquito activity, experts said.

While EEE can infect people of all ages, individuals under 15 years of age or over 50 are at greatest risk for serious illness. Symptoms of EEE include high fever, muscle pain, headaches, and seizures. Symptoms can occur up to two weeks after a person is bitten by an infected mosquito.

There were 12 human cases of EEE in Massachusetts in 2019, leading to six deaths.

In 2020, five human cases and one death were reported.

WNV can cause fever, headaches, and rashes. The illness can sometimes be serious or fatal.

Tips for protecting your family against mosquitoes include avoiding outdoor activities during peak mosquito hours from dusk to dawn. If you must be outside during these hours, be sure to apply insect repellent and maximize clothing coverage of exposed skin.

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

It is also important to make sure that window and door screens fit tightly and do not have holes or openings, officials said.

Local officials continue to add resources to help residents prepare their properties and access the latest updates on EEE. Many towns, including Spencer, feature information on their websites.

Additional information about EEE and WNV, as well as reports of current and historical virus activity in Massachusetts, can be found on the state's Web site: [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov).

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## Country Bank appoints Marco Bernasconi, Jr. as Chief Operating and Innovation Officer

REGION — Mary McGovern, President and CEO of Country Bank, announced Marco Bernasconi, Jr. as its Chief Operating and Innovation Officer. This new role and its announcement mark a strategic decision in the bank's journey of growth and innovation.

"We are excited to welcome Marco as our new Chief Operating and Innovation Officer. He has extensive experience in technology, banking, and fintech and a proven track record of transformative leadership. Marco will be invaluable as we continue to enhance our digital services and product offerings. His commitment to innovation and forward-thinking vision perfectly align with our Corporate Values of Integrity, Service, Teamwork, Excellence, and Prosperity. We are confident that his exceptional skills will undoubtedly contribute to Country Bank's growth and deliver outstanding value to our customers," said Mary McGovern, Country Bank's President and CEO.

Bernasconi's distinguished career spans more than 30 years, during which he has held various senior positions in the banking industry. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Eastern Connecticut State

University. He has a double major in Finance and Marketing and a minor in Economics. With an impressive technology, banking, and fintech background, Marco brings knowledge and a proven track record to this pivotal role.

His journey began at Chelsea Groton Savings Bank, where he excelled in roles ranging from teller to senior positions in Retail, Loan Operations, and Credit. He further honed his expertise as a Conversion Specialist at the FDIC, focusing on loan conversions and audits. Marco's leadership skills were enhanced during his tenure as the Chief Service Officer at COCC, where he led a significant organizational transformation that resulted in increased revenue and a substantial team and customer base expansion.

Bernasconi's leadership was further demonstrated during his two-year tenure as the President and CEO of North Brookfield Savings Bank. Before joining Country Bank, he was a Principal of Fintech and Digital Transformation at Wolf & Company, Inc., where he continued to drive digital transformation and innovation. His achievements have been recognized with numerous awards, including the

2021 Best of Central MA from the WBJ, and the 2022 Banker Award from Extraordinary Banker.

"Joining Country Bank as Chief Operating and Innovation Officer is an incredible opportunity. I am excited to contribute to the bank's growth and innovation plans. I aim to drive transformative solutions that enhance operational excellence and deliver exceptional value to our customers. I look forward to working with the team to build on Country Bank's legacy of excellence and innovation," said Marco Bernasconi, Jr.

In addition to his professional achievements, Marco actively supports Seabury's Charitable Foundation and various fintech advisory roles, reflecting his dedication to community and industry development. Marco's commitment to making a difference in the community and industry is truly inspiring.

Bernasconi resides with his wife Renee' in West Harford, Conn. He cherishes time on the Cape with his wife of 28 years, their twins Marco and Ibrianna who live in Boston, and their beloved dog Ruger. In his spare time, he enjoys relaxing on the beach, boating, and other water activities with his friends and family.

## Cahill celebrates 10-year work anniversary at Bay Path

CHARLTON — Cheryl Cahill, MSN Ed, RN, of Oxford celebrates her 10-year work anniversary at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy. She joined Bay Path as part-time faculty in 2015. Prior to Bay Path, Cahill was a Clinical Instructor at Worcester State University, and an ENPC Instructor & PALS Instructor at UMass Memorial Medical Center in Worcester.

Cahill worked as a staff nurse in both the Pediatric Emergency Room and Adult Emergency Room at UMass Memorial Medical Center.

Since 2014 she has had multiple presentations such as "Prezi Technology," "Curriculum Analysis," "Can simulation replace clinical experience," "Demonstration Teaching Strategy," "An Act for Patient Limits in all Hospital Intensive Care Units," "American Association of University Professors," and "National Nurses United," all at Framingham State University. At Bay Path she presented "Geriatric Pharmacology," and "Civility-Self Learning Module." She is an active Advisor to practical nursing students, represented Bay Path in Best Practice for Simulation, and have taught many courses such as Structures and Functions of the Human Body, Principles of Pharmacology,

Dementia Care Certification, and Domestic Violence training. She was a past UNICEF Club



advisor and is active with the Mock Code Team preparation and training. She had also taught clinicals at Harrington Hospital and Southbridge Rehabilitation.

Cahill obtained her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. She completed her Master of Science in Nursing Education at Framingham State University. She is a member of the Massachusetts Nurses Association, the National Nurses United, and the Sigma Theta Tau Nursing Honor Society (Theta Kappa Chapter).

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:

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0900 or <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/board-of-registration-in-nursing>. The Bay Path Practical

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by M.L. Stedman. Sponsored by the Friends of the Joshua Hyde Public Library.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 FROM 6:00PM TO 8:00PM. Seascapes in Pastel with Greg Maichack. This pastel painting workshop serves sheer beginners to advanced artists. All materials provided, including professional grade pastels, paper and pencils. Registration is required. This program is supported in part by the Sturbridge Cultural Council, a local agency, supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Go to [sturbridgelibrary.org](http://sturbridgelibrary.org) for more information.

## Tour Sturbridge Old Burial Ground

STURBRIDGE — On Saturday, Sept. 21 at 10 a.m., join local historian Bill Barnsey for an Old Burial Ground walking tour through 170 years of Sturbridge history. Through 21 stones we will explore some notable people who shaped our Town, and some unique stones that illustrate the development of stone carving and belief in the afterlife. Note: We will be "off-

trail" on some very uneven surfaces. Wear your study shoes!

This program is sponsored by the Sturbridge Historical Society. Registration preferred, please contact [sgibquig@gmail.com](mailto:sgibquig@gmail.com). Rain date: Sept. 28 at 293 Main St., Sturbridge. Park along the road in front of the Old Burial Ground, or behind the Center Office Building at 305 Main St., or

in the Public House parking lot off Haynes St. and behind the Old Burial Ground.

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## Local real estate professional completes Weichert® Fast Track training to elevate client services

WORCESTER — Weichert, Realtors® - Hope & Associates, located in Worcester, is proud to announce that Rebecca Tuffour successfully completed the Weichert Real Estate Affiliates, Inc. Fast Track training program. The training helps quickly bring new and existing Weichert® affiliated agents up to speed on the latest information, resources and technology available to real estate professionals to help them effectively list, promote and sell properties and offer exceptional service to their clients.

"Our Fast Track program covers everything a real estate professional needs to know to help them start out on the right track towards a successful career in real estate," said Bill Scavone, president of Weichert Real Estate Affiliates, Inc. "This program is designed to offer a unique learning experience to get our new associates productive as quickly as possible."

Program participants learn best practices to get started in the real estate industry, find sellers, capture a buyer's attention and list properties to sell quickly. Agents that complete the Weichert Fast Track training also gain the confidence and competitive edge to succeed in real estate.

Weichert, Realtors® - Hope & Associates is an independently owned and operated Weichert affiliate. For more information about Weichert, Realtors® - Hope & Associates, please contact Julia Acquah-Harrison at (508) 795 - 3885 or [jharrison@hope-homes.com](mailto:jharrison@hope-homes.com).

About Weichert Real Estate Affiliates, Inc.

Weichert Real Estate Affiliates, Inc. is a top real estate franchisor established in 2001 by Jim Weichert, president, chairman and CEO of Weichert Companies, which has been in operation since 1969. The company provides a clearly defined business model for operating, managing, and marketing a real estate brokerage, along with industry-leading technology, marketing tools, and support. Its first affiliate opened in 2002, and the franchise network has since grown to more than 350 offices, serving markets in over 40 states. The company has been named one of the top traditional residential real estate franchises by Entrepreneur magazine for 20 straight years and identified by Franchise Business Review as a top franchise for owner satisfaction nine years in a row. For more information about Weichert, visit [Weichert.com](http://Weichert.com). For more information about franchise opportunities, visit [WeichertFranchise.com](http://WeichertFranchise.com).

## LEGALS

The Brimfield ZBA will hold a public hearing at 5:30 pm on September 19, 2024, at Hitchcock Academy, 2 Brookfield Rd. on behalf of ODED Light of 55 Good Rich St, Hamden CT, for the vacant land on Warren Rd, Parcel ID #846, 2-B-6. The applicant seeks a variance to put in common driveway(s) due to hardship or wetlands. Abutters and members of the public are encouraged to attend and provide feedback.

September 6, 2024  
September 13, 2024

### NOTICE OF INITIAL SITE INVESTIGATION AND TIER II CLASSIFICATION DPW YARD 1 NEW BOSTON ROAD EXTENSION, STURBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS RELEASE TRACKING NUMBER 2-0022425

A release of oil and/or hazardous materials has occurred at this location, which is a disposal site as defined by M.G.L. c. 21E, § 2 and the Massachusetts Contingency Plan, 310 CMR 40.0000. To evaluate the release, a Phase I Initial Site Investigation was performed pursuant to 310 CMR 40.0480. As a result of this investigation, the site has been classified as Tier II pursuant to 310 CMR 40.0500. On or about September 4, 2024, The Town of Sturbridge has filed a Tier II Classification Submittal with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). To obtain more information on this disposal site, please contact Lori McCarthy, LSP of O'Reilly Talbot & Okun Associates, Inc., 293 Bridge Street, Suite 500, Springfield, MA 01103, 413-788-6222. The Tier II Classification Submittal and the disposal site file can be viewed at MassDEP website using Release Tracking Number (RTN) 2-0022425 at <https://eeonline.eea.state.ma.us/portal/dep/wastesite/viewer/2-0022425> or at the Central Regional Office of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, located at 8 Bond Street in Worcester, Massachusetts 508-792-7650. Additional public involvement opportunities are available under 310 CMR 40.1403(9) and 310 CMR 40.1404.

September 12, 2024

### LEGAL NOTICE MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue of and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Jose J. Peralta to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Land Home Financial Services, Inc., its successors and assigns, dated April 10, 2020 and recorded in Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 62189, Page 219 (the "Mortgage") of which mortgage Land Home Financial Services, Inc. is the present holder by Assignment from Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Land Home Financial Services, Inc., its successors and assigns

to Land Home Financial Services, Inc. dated August 26, 2022 and recorded at said Registry of Deeds in Book 68166, Page 130, for breach of conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same, the mortgaged premises located at 277 South Street, Southbridge, MA 01550 will be sold at a Public Auction at 1:00 PM on October 3, 2024, at the mortgaged premises, more particularly described below, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

The land, with the buildings thereon, situated in Southbridge, Worcester County, Massachusetts, located at the southeasterly corner of South Street and Newell Avenue, shown as Lot A on a Plan entitled "Plan of Land in Southbridge, Massachusetts, owned by Paul Triba, April 20, 1987, Para Land Surveying, Incorporated, Southbridge, Massachusetts, Scale 1" = 20'"; said Plan being recorded with Worcester District Registry of Deeds, at Plan Book 575, Plan 70; and said Lot being more particularly bounded and described as follows:

BEGINNING at the Northwest corner of land herein described, at the intersection of South Street and Newell Avenue and running  
THENCE S. 73 deg 52 min. 00 sec. E along the Southerly side of South Street a distance of 114.95 feet;  
THENCE S. 01 deg. 57 min. 57 sec. W. along land now or formerly of Francis E. and Gertrude E. Holden, a distance of 89.55 feet;  
THENCE S. 86 deg. 15 min. 33 sec. W. along Lot B on said Plan, a distance of 88.32 feet;  
THENCE N. 69 deg. 40 min. 06 sec. W. along said Lot B, a distance of 32.85 feet to a point on the Easterly side of said Newell Avenue;  
THENCE N. 05 deg. 42 min. 44 sec. E. along said Newell Avenue, a distance of 116.36 feet to the point of beginning. CONTAINING an area of 12,500 square feet.

BEING THE SAME PREMISES CONVEYED TO THE MORTGAGOR BY DEED OF MARIA ISABEL BERNARD RECORDED WITH THE WORCESTER DISTRICT REGISTRY OF DEEDS HEREWITH.

For mortgagor's title see deed recorded with the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 62189, Page 216.

The premises will be sold subject to any and all unpaid taxes and other municipal assessments and liens, and subject to prior liens or other enforceable encumbrances of record entitled to precedence over this mortgage, and subject to and with the benefit of all easements, restrictions, reservations and conditions of record and subject to all tenancies and/or rights of parties in possession.

Terms of the Sale: Cashier's or certified check in the sum of \$5,000.00 as a deposit must be shown at the time and place of the sale in order to qualify as a bidder (the mortgage holder and its designee(s) are exempt from this requirement); high bidder to sign written Memorandum of Sale upon acceptance of bid; balance of purchase

price payable by certified check in thirty (30) days from the date of the sale at the offices of mortgagee's attorney, Korde & Associates, P.C., 900 Chelmsford Street, Suite 3102, Lowell, MA or such other time as may be designated by mortgagee. The description for the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

Other terms to be announced at the sale.

Land Home Financial Services, Inc.  
Korde & Associates, P.C.  
900 Chelmsford Street  
Suite 3102  
Lowell, MA 01851  
(978) 256-1500  
Peralta, Jose J., 22-040632  
September 12, 2024  
September 19, 2024  
September 26, 2024

### Town of Brimfield Conservation Commission Public Hearing Notice

In accordance with the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Brimfield Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting on **Wednesday October 09, 2024, at 6:00 PM** to review a Notice of Intent submitted by McClure Engineering, Inc. c/o Doug Findlay. The Notice of Intent requests to build a Self-Storage Facility.

**Project Location:** 49 Palmer Road, Brimfield, MA (Assessor's Map (13-A-8))

**Meeting Location:** Public Participation will be In-Person at Hitchcock Academy at 2 Brookfield Road, Brimfield, MA 01010 on October 09, 2024, at 6:00 PM.

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

Roger deBruyn &  
Joseph Venezia Co-Chairs  
09/04/2024

September 13, 2024  
September 20, 2024

### A.C. 92A Commonwealth of Massachusetts WO24E0064PP Petition to Partition WORCESTER, SS. PROBATE COURT

To Jason Burdett and Jennifer M. Burdett and to all other interested persons. A petition has been presented to said Court by Mark J. Zarzecki and Deborah B. Zarzecki of Charlton in the County of Worcester representing that he hold as tenant in common undivided part or share of certain land lying in Charlton in said County Worcester and briefly described as follows: The premises shown as Lot 17 on a Plan titled "Definitive Plan" Larnerd Hill Farm, Charlton, MA, prepared by Tau-

per Land survey dated February 24, 1994 and recorded at the Worcester District Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 686, Plan 82. Sheet 2

Granting the right to pass and repass over all roads shown on said plan for the purposes public ways are used in the Town of Charlton.

Being the same premises as conveyed to the Grantors by deed dated February 18, 1997 and recorded with Worcester District Registry of Deeds Book 18615, page 399.

A life interest in the building addition where the Grantees reside, or will reside upon completion in the premises shown as Lot 17 on a Plan titled "Definitive Plan" Larnerd Hill Farm, Charlton, MA, prepared by Tauper Land survey dated February 24, 1994 and recorded at the Worcester District Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 686, Plan 82. Sheet 2

Granting the right to pass and repass over all roads shown on said plan for the purposes public ways are used in the Town of Charlton.

Being the same premises as conveyed to the Grantors by deed dated September 10, 2019 and recorded with Worcester District Registry of Deeds Book 61235, Page 50.

setting forth that he/she desires that all the aforesaid described part of said land may be sold at private sale for not less than \$775,000.00 dollars, and praying that partition may be made of all the land aforesaid according to law, and to that end that a commissioner be appointed to make such partition and be ordered to make sale and conveyance of all, or any part of said land which the Court finds cannot be advantageously divided either at private sale or public auction, and be ordered to distribute the net proceeds thereof.

If you desire to object thereto you or your attorney should file a written appearance in said Court at Worcester before ten o'clock in the forenoon on the Eight day of October, the return date of this citation.

Witness, LEILAH A. KEAMY, Esquire, First Judge of said Court, this thirteenth day of August 2024.

Stephanie K. Fattman  
Register of Probate  
September 5, 2024  
September 12, 2024  
September 19, 2024

### DUDLEY CONSERVATION COMMISSION Public Hearing Notice

A Public Hearing will be held at the Dudley Municipal Complex, 71 West Main Street in Dudley, MA at **6:00 PM on October 2, 2024** to consider a **Notice of Intent** of R & S Blue Skies LLC for the property located at: 384 West Main Street for Repair of Septic System

This is a Public Hearing under the requirements of G.L. CH. 131 §40, as amended. Plans are available at the Conservation Commission's office at the Dudley Municipal Complex from 9 AM to 4 PM on Mondays and Tuesdays. For more information, call 508-949-8011.

September 13, 2024

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# OBITUARIES



## Bruce S. Loranger, 78



OXFORD – Bruce S. Loranger, 78, died on Wednesday, September 4, 2024, at UMass Memorial Medical Center – University Campus in Worcester. He is survived by his wife 13 years, Paulette C. Cole-Loranger; two daughters, Jane, and Sarah and her husband Mark; a sister, Patricia Parks; two grandchildren, Logan and Chloe; Paulette's children, Gail, Paul, and Rick; Paulette's grandchildren, Samantha, Olivia, Paul, Rick Jr., and Alex; and many extended family members.

He was born in Southbridge, son of the late Armand J. and Virginia M. (Freudenthal) Loranger, and lived most of his life in Oxford. He graduated from Oxford High School and was a U.S. Army Veteran.

Bruce was employed by Drake Petroleum and Marane Oil; safely driving gasoline tankers for over two

decades before becoming the owner/operator of American Tree Service. During retirement, he worked for Central Mass Auto Auction in Oxford.

Mr. Loranger was an active member of St. Roch's Church, where he also served as an usher and collector. Bruce was a member of the American Legion Post 58 in Oxford, the Legion Riders, and Singletary Rod and Gun Club. His interests included trucks, tractors, trailers, and motorcycles.

A funeral service will be held at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at Paradis-Givner Funeral Home, 357 Main St., Oxford. Burial will follow at West Ridge Cemetery in Charlton. Calling hours are Tuesday from 9:30-11:00 a.m. at the funeral home prior to the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Oxford Fire/EMS, 181 Main St., Oxford, MA 01540 or to St. Roch's Church, 334 Main St., Oxford, MA 01540.

## Carolyn Milligan, 80

OXFORD – Carolyn (Hazzard) Milligan, 80, of Russell Lane, died Tuesday, August 27, 2024, at St. Vincent Hospital in Worcester, after a long illness. She was predeceased by her husband, Harry G. Milligan Jr. who died in 2010. She is survived by a son, Scott H. Milligan of Oxford; her niece and nephew whom she raised, Carolann Hazzard of Florida, and Robert Hazzard of Tennessee; and her cousin, Joan Marchand of Webster. She was predeceased by her brother, Roy Hazzard who died in 2005.

She was born in Worcester, daughter of the late Lewis E. and Catherine V. (Sibley) Hazzard, and was a lifelong resident of Oxford.



Mrs. Milligan was a homemaker who cared for her husband, children, and home throughout her life. In her younger years, she worked at Bates Shoe in Webster and Paula's Cleaning Service in Oxford. She was a member of the Jehovah's Witness Kingdom Hall in Oxford.

A private service will be held at the Jehovah's Witness Kingdom Hall in Oxford. Burial with her husband will be private at North Cemetery in Oxford. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Jehovah's Witness Kingdom Hall, 52 Old Webster Rd., Oxford, MA 01540.

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

## Maggie Wilson, 81

Newton-Maggie Wilson, 81, formerly of Westview Commons in Killingly and Lebanon Hill Housing, Southbridge, passed away at Saint Elizabeth Medical Center, Boston, MA.

Maggie leaves her two sons, David K. Ayau and his wife Skiyea L. Ayau, Joel T. Ayau and his wife Cheng-Yin Lin, and her five grandchildren Kahlil K. Ayau, Kalai K. Ayau, Makani K. Ayau, Keoni K. Ayau, and Ian L. Ayau, as well as her former husband Thomas L.C. Ayau, Jr. She was predeceased by her husband of 9 years, Theodore M. Harakaly Sr.

Maggie was born and raised in Southbridge, MA. She graduated from Mary E. Wells in 1960, and completed degrees at Clark University and Chaminade University. Maggie was a profoundly sympathetic and compassionate woman who found her calling late in life as a social worker, assisting the elderly through Tri-Valley



Elderly Services. She came to sobriety through Alcoholics Anonymous, an organization which became central to her social life and network of caring for many other women. Maggie had a life full of zest, and was known for her quirky sense of humor and love for her children and grandchildren.

Calling hours for Maggie will be held on Wednesday, Sept. 4th, from 5:00 to 7:00 pm in the Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge, followed by a Funeral Service in the funeral home at 7:00pm. Burial in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Southbridge, will be held at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Salvation Army, 640 Main Street

Worcester, MA 01608 or online at <http://salvationarmyma.org/Worcester>

## HINT

continued from page 7

I suggest putting a teaspoon of sugar in the pot because it makes it a little bit sweeter. Boil it for about three minutes. To avoid the mess when cutting kernels, I use a bundt pan. I put the pointed end of the cob in the hole in the middle of the pan and cut the kernels off with a knife. They fall right around that circle inside of the pan and no mess!

\*\*

### Corn Fun Facts

\*The more silk on the cob, the more the kernels!

\*The number of rows on a kernel is always an even number.

\*There are about 800 kernels in 16 rows on each ear of corn.

\*It takes about two ears

of medium sized corn on the cob to equal a cup of kernels.

\*The corncob (ear) is actually part of the corn plant's flower.

\* The world record for eating corn on the cob stands at 61.75 ears consumed in 12 minutes by American competitive eater Carmen Cincotti.

\*\*

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 I receive enough tips for a column) will win a fabulous three course dinner for two at the renowned restaurant, located on

Route 131 across the town common in historic Sturbridge. Because I'm in the business of dispensing tips, not inventing them (although I can take credit for some), I'm counting on you readers out there to share your best helpful hints!

Do you have a helpful hint or handy tip that has worked for you? Do you have a question regarding household or garden matters? If so, why not share them with readers of Stonebridge Press newspapers? Send questions and/or hints to: Take the Hint!, C/o the Southbridge Evening News, PO Box 90; Southbridge, MA 01550. Or E-mail [KDRR@aol.com](mailto:KDRR@aol.com). Hints are entered into a drawing for dinner for two at the historic Publick House Inn.

## PEACE

continued from page 6

a knowing that everything will be taken care of.

The true mystery of Peace Pilgrim wasn't just how she survived physically, but how she radiated such calm and positivity in every situation.

"When you find peace within yourself, you become the kind of person who can live at peace with others," she said.

And indeed, wherever she went, people felt drawn to her message of peace. Her calm, centered presence inspired thousands of people.

Though her identity remained unknown for many years, it wasn't until after her death in 1981 that people learned she had been born Mildred Lisette Norman. She had lived a normal life before experiencing a spiritual awakening that led her to dedicate her life to peace.

Despite her hardships, she always remained positive, saying, "Keep your feet on the ground and your thoughts at lofty heights."

The secret may be found in trusting the journey and believing in the goodness of others and the world. By following the example of Peace Pilgrim, we can learn to embrace uncertainty, knowing that even in the most trying times, life provides exactly what we need.

## RESOURCES

continued from page 1

someone with Alzheimer's and other dementias at all stages along with support for transitioning to different care settings. This is a drop-in group and pre-registration is not required. For more information, contact Alzheimer's Support Network at 1-800-286-6640 extension 3123, or [info@alzsupportnet.org](mailto:info@alzsupportnet.org).

Charlton Senior Center offering(s):

Join us for a free Fit Minds program on Monday, Sept. 23, 1 p.m. (Sign up is required by calling 508-248-2231). This program provides mental stimulation for seniors and senior living communities and supports a wide range of cognitive abilities, from independent seniors to those challenged with Alzheimer's and other types of mild, moderate and advanced dementia. Fit Minds exercises five key areas of cognition:

Language and Music, Visual/Spatial Orientation, Memory, Critical Thinking, and Computation. We will practice activities that keep your brain sharp—mental exercise! This program will be led by Charlton Senior Center Director Michelle Drumm, who is a Certified Dementia Practitioner and Cognition Coach.

Dementia Friend Information Session will take place on Thursday, Oct. 3, 1 p.m. at the Senior Center. Registration is required by calling the Center at 508-248-2231. This is a free one-hour informational session to learn more about living with dementia and the simple things you can do to make a difference in your community. You'll learn what dementia is, what it's like to live with it, and some tips for communicating with people who have dementia. Tri-Valley Options Counselors will be available for memory screenings and future planning following the session. Dementia Friends is a global movement developed by the Alzheimer's Society. To learn more, visit [www.dementiafriendsma.org](http://www.dementiafriendsma.org).

The Overlook offering(s):

Looking for a "dementia-friendly" outing with your loved one? Look no further than the Memory Cafe hosted by The Overlook! The Charlton Memory Cafe is a monthly social gathering for individuals living with dementia, and their caregiver, in a safe, relaxing and welcoming setting. We offer music, refreshments and an environment that fosters interactions, connection and friendship. The Cafe meets the 2nd Thursday of each month from 1-2 p.m. in the Vista Adult Day Program space at The Overlook. For more info contact Kathy Walker at 508-434-2551 or [kawalker@overlook-mass.org](mailto:kawalker@overlook-mass.org).

Charlton Public Library is located at 40 Main St.  
Charlton Senior Center is located in Town Hall, 37 Main St.  
The Overlook is located at 88 Masonic Home Rd.

## TROOP 338

continued from page 1

Kenzie Hirtz, a former Girl Scout who moved over to Troop 338 when the opportunity presented itself, said she has greatly enjoyed her experiences and encourages everyone to get involved.

"Scouting in general is a lot of fun. I actually like working with both boys and girls. It's a lot of fun and I feel like everyone just has a good time. I feel like we're all friends in the troop. We do a bunch of things to learn life skills we will use all the time in life. I've used real skills in real life. I feel like what we learn is really important," said Hirtz.

Troop 338 has been a staple at many town events and programs in Charlton most recently selling fried dough during Old Home Day and celebrating the Eagle Scout project of one of its members, Adam Rydlak, who helped spearhead a new pickleball court in town. The troop has also partaken in many educational and outdoor programs including partnerships with local first responders, numerous hiking trips, and even a trip to Gettysburg in 2023.

Those interested in learning more about Troop 338 can attend the special Night of Fun on Thursday Sept. 19th at the Troop's normal meeting place of St. Joseph Church. Interested parties can also email the troop at [bsatrop338charlton@gmail.com](mailto:bsatrop338charlton@gmail.com). Troop Membership is open for boys and girls ages 11 to 17.

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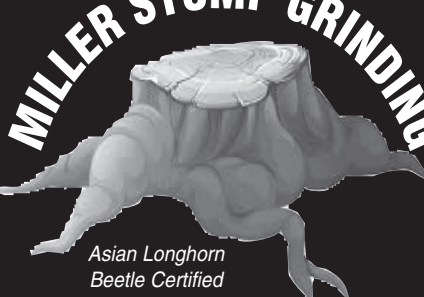
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## STURBRIDGE

continued from page 1

with lakeside properties seeing the largest jump. As an example (one that will only figure in the rates next year, as it happened after last January's cutoff date for calculations), she saw a lake property assessed at \$496,000 sell for \$1 million. Under this year's average rise, it should have been about \$600,000.

"The last three years, the sales have been crazy," Morgan said. "...I have never seen [sellers say] give us your best price by Friday. There are a lot more people wanting to buy than there are houses on the market."

Chair Jamie Goodwin attributed that to "a combination of Covid, the collapse around 2008 of the housing bubble, and Eastern Mass exploding in cost." He predicted the prices will give towns "whiplash for the foreseeable future."

Morgan agreed, adding, "The people to complain to would be the ones who are buying the properties, and selling for crazy money."

Earlier, she'd summarized how actual tax rates get set this way: "Here's the values, here's the town's levy, what does the tax rate have to be to equal that levy? The budget's set at Town Meeting. The values are set out in the market." In this case, that means the Town Meeting approved budget back in June, but "we don't look at the budget when we're setting [property] values," she noted.

By law, those have to be based on sale prices of similar properties at "fair market value" and the assessors' own inspections of the properties to verify accuracy. What the town assesses is supposed to be within 10 percent of selling value (and Morgan didn't know why the lakeshore property sold so high).

As part of Morgan's presentation, she summarized the fiscal impacts of setting a split rate and three kinds of exemptions – for open space, residential and small commercial properties.

Regarding splitting the rate, she said Sturbridge has had it before and she's seen it in other towns. "Normally, it's a 30 percent CIP value that makes it feasible to do a split tax rate," she said, with CIP being an abbreviation for the "commercial, industrial and personal property" tax classes.

In Sturbridge, CIP accounts for 15.11 percent of all property. Morgan noted that of the 108 split-rate communities, 101 have a higher CIP percentage than Sturbridge does.

If Sturbridge were to do that this year at the highest allowed shift (150 percent), it'd reduce the residential rate by \$1.42 and increase the CIP rate by \$7.97. That would mean the average home would save \$684.72, but the average CIP property would pay \$3843.13 more in taxes.

Regarding the open space discount, Morgan said all applicable land is already covered by Chapter 61, where owners are "assessed at 25 percent of fair market value or lower." That means a 20 acre parcel worth \$71,900 is assessed only as \$5433, saving the owners about \$1000 a year.

Regarding the residential exemption, she noted 3,153 residences would see a tax reduction and 959 would see increases, and the first \$146,169 of a property's value would be exempted. If an average-value property qualifies, it'd get a \$389 reduction, but the same value property that doesn't qualify would get a \$2,787 increase.

Those figures, she said are averages.

"Some will see more of an increase, and some people will see less of a decrease," Morgan said, adding this exemption would hit the Retirement Co-op particularly hard. "They get a discount, but because of their value, they don't see a credit" and would end up paying more taxes.

Regarding the small commercial exemption, Morgan said 41 of the town's 226 firms might qualify under the criteria of being in business as of Jan. 1 that has under 10 employees and less than \$1 million in value. But there are two catches – all of the businesses sharing a property have to qualify and the break goes to the property owner (who doesn't have to be there), not the qualified business(es).

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

# Bay Path LPN receives DAISY Award

CHARLTON — Kelsey Roman, LPN, an alumna of Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy and an LPN at the Baystate Medical Center, has received the prestigious DAISY Award.

A national program, the award is presented to nurses who go above and beyond for their patients and community. She was nominated by Katie Dambeck, RRT, for her determination and life-saving patient advocacy.

Roman's recognition is particularly special because it is the first time in Baystate Medical Center's history that an LPN has been honored with the DAISY Award. The DAISY Award recognizes the outstanding professionalism and com-

passion that nurses bring to patients and families every day. It was established by the DAISY Foundation in California in memory of J. Patrick Barnes, who died at age 33 of an autoimmune disease. DAISY is an acronym for "diseases attacking the immune system."

According to Dambeck, "Kelsey activated RRT to the bedside of a patient with concerns regarding his extremely large, semi rigid abdomen. He had increasing pain and shortness of breath. My immediate assessment, as a seasoned surgical nurse, was completely in line with her concerns. I knew upon sight of this patient's abdomen that we were moving towards a surgical emergency.



KELSEY ROMAN

I was able to discuss the plan of care with the providers at bedside, who agreed to consult surgery. The following day, while rounding, Kelsey brought me back to the bedside with

continued concern. I agreed with her and assisted in administering a Harris drip enema per the medical recommendations. I had to leave the bedside for an emergency, but upon my return that evening, it was very clear that Kelsey continued to strongly advocate for her patient throughout the day. As it turned out, the patient had an impending perforation. Kelsey continually communicated with her providers, performed multiple time-consuming interventions, and brought RRT to the bedside to support her concerns."

Dambeck added that that the patient was out of Surgical ICU, "alive and ambulating on the post-

op unit, all because Kelsey trusted her instincts and did not give up and showed tremendous compassion to her patient."

Roman graduated from Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy with the Class of 2019. While at Bay Path she was a Horatio Alger CTE scholarship recipient, an officer for the UNICEF Club, a student representative, and a district champion for SkillsUSA Health Knowledge Bowl earning a Gold Medal. She volunteered for MRC, the Paxton Fair, the Bay Path College Fair, and the Safety Fair in Marlboro. She is certified in Mental Health First Aid and Infusion Therapy/Central Line Care.

## PLAY

continued from page 2

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For more information, visit <http://www.worcesterdayofplay.org/> or the Day

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Edward Street is a private, non-profit agency that collaborates to improve the quality and impact of early education and care, enhancing the development of young children and strengthening families in Central Massachusetts. Learn more at [www.edwardstreet.org](http://www.edwardstreet.org).

About Worcester Family Partnership

Worcester Family Partnership is funded through a MA Department of Early Education and Care grant to provide support services to families with children birth to school age. Worcester Family Partnership offers free playgroups, the opportunity to participate in a free screening for your child, and many other programs. Learn more at <https://worcesterschools.org/about/>

## WWII LETTERS

continued from page 1

goes on, we'll have to make the most of it," she wrote, noting she hoped he'd be home before next Christmas. "...I think the separation will only strengthen us more."

A later letter talked about Singleton's birth in April 1944 (he'd be the first of six kids). Becky noted she'd spent 10 days in the hospital, and Singleton said she was generally "very careful not to talk about her anxiety" over her husband's dangers. Singleton said his father "wrote more in the latter half of his tour than in the first half."

Singleton's talk wove between his parent's letters and some of the history of the Pacific Campaign. He noted the battle at Tarawa was particularly bloody because the Marines faced "dozens of pillboxes, bunkers and emplacements" that were well-hidden from air assault. According to

Wikipedia, 1,009 Marines died and 2101 were injured of the US force's 35,000 troops. Meanwhile, 4,690 Japanese defenders died (including construction workers, some of them Korean); only 17 soldiers survived.

The military learned from that experience. Singleton said the next invasion in the Marshall Islands "was much more successful with fewer casualties." Royce Sr later flew at Kwajalein, four of the Mariana landings and Leyte in the Philippines. That place, Oct. 20, 1944, hosted "the largest naval battle ever fought" and destroyed much of the remaining Japanese Navy. Royce Sr returned to the US soon afterward for reasons Singleton said are in the book, but he continued in the Navy for another 30 years, including visits to Japan and Korea.

"I remember him expressing admiration for the Japanese" as people, but also noting they were "brutal to

prisoners."

The Suwannee was part of Carrier Division 22, mostly "escort carriers" (designated CVE, as opposed to regular carriers, which are CV) that were in fact converted oilers, he said. He noted the crews said CVE meant "combustible, vulnerable and expendable," and accidents were common among the planes; his squadron lost 11 planes overboard and "operational losses exceeded combat losses throughout the war."

Singleton said reading his parents' letters and researching the background prompted this thought: "for the first time in my life, I began to see the heroism in my father's service." That took a long time; not only did Royce Sr say very little and Singleton got the letters after his death, but most of the military details were still classified until the 1990s.

Regarding the book itself, he said he contacted several regular publishers, but opt-

ed to self-publish after they "kept telling me there's not a big enough market for the book."

"I think their story is worth telling," he said. "So much of what you read about the war is admirals and generals, not the everyday people. ... Only recently have we had the capacity to report everyday lives."

Historically, he's published a couple sociology textbooks and "written a lot" (he's a retired Holy Cross professor), but this is his first "trade" book.

"When you do self-publish, unfortunately, you're not going to be able to sell in bookstores," he said. (That largely applies to the major chains; local stores often will support local authors. But self-published authors generally don't get the corporate distribution that major authors have; they have to do it themselves.)

Gus Steeves can be reached at [gus.steeves2@gmail.com](mailto:gus.steeves2@gmail.com).

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## SOUTHBRIDGE POLICE LOG

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Police Department reported the following arrests from Aug. 26 to Sept. 9.

A 57-year-old male from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on Aug. 26.

Jose Luis Rosario III, age 26, of Southbridge was arrested on Aug. 27 for Assault & Battery with a Dangerous Weapon.

A 50-year-old male from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on Aug. 27 in connection with multiple warrants.

A 38-year-old male from Southbridge was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Aug. 27 for Receiving Stolen Property valued at less than \$1,200 and Improper Storage of a Firearm.

A 34-year-old male from Southbridge was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Aug. 28 for Possession of a Class B Drug (subsequent offense). Rosa Arroyo, age 69, and Ramon Garcia, age 67, both of Southbridge, were arrested during the same incident for Distribution of a Class B Drug (Crack Cocaine).

John W. Varnum, age 31, of Southbridge was arrested on Aug. 28 for Assault with a Dangerous Weapon, Disorderly Conduct, and Disturbing the Peace.

A 57-year-old female from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on Aug. 29.

Justin W. Eilert, age 28, of Worcester was arrested on Aug. 30 in connection with a warrant for Enticing a Child Under the Age of 16.

Nathaniel Alexander Concepcion, age 27, of Fitchburg was arrested on Aug. 30 for Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of license, Disorderly Conduct, Resisting Arrest, Assault & Battery on a Police Officer, Trafficking in More than 18 but Less Than 36 Grams of Cocaine, Carrying a Loaded Firearm Without a License, being a Felon in Possession of a Firearm, Possession of Ammunition Without an FID Card, Carrying a Firearm Without a License, and Improper Storage of a Firearm.

Amanda I. Gray, age 41, of Uxbridge was arrested on Aug. 30 in connection with a warrant.

Alisha M. Remillard, age 30, of Southbridge was arrested on Aug. 31 for Disorderly Conduct, Disturbing the Peace, and Threatening to Commit a Crime, To Wit, Assault.

A 50-year-old male and 43-year-old female from Southbridge were issued summonses in lieu of arrest on Sept. 1 for Possession of a Class B Drug (subsequent offense) and Distribution of a Class B Drug, respectively.

A 50-year-old male from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on Sept. 1.

Laura Lee Dembowski, age 36, of Southbridge was arrested on Sept. 2 for Operating Under the Influence of Alcohol and a Marked Lanes Violation.

Cassandra T. Powell, age 29, of Worcester was arrested on Sept. 2 for Disorderly Conduct, Disturbing the Peace, and Assault. Angelina Serrano, age 49, also of Worcester, was arrested during the same incident for Assault & Battery on a Police Officer. Also arrested during this incident was a juvenile, age 16, for Simple Assault & Battery.

Steven Anthony Gardner, age 59, of Southbridge was arrested on Sept. 2 for Leaving the Scene of Property Damage, Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle, and Operating Under the Influence of Alcohol.

Rosa Arroyo, age 69, of Southbridge was arrested on Sept. 2 for Distribution of a Class B Drug (Crack Cocaine).

Joshua R. Cable, age 40, of Southbridge was arrested on Sept. 3 in connection with a warrant.

Thiena T. Morales, age 24, of Southbridge was arrested on Sept. 4 for Domestic Assault & Battery and in connection with a warrant for operating an Uninsured Motor Vehicle.

A 46-year-old male from Southbridge was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Sept. 5 for Violation of an Abuse Prevention Order.

James Belliveau, age 34, of Woodstock, Conn. was arrested on Sept. 5 for Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of license (subsequent offense), Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle, and Operating Under the Influence of Alcohol (third offense).

A 55-year-old male from Southbridge was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Sept. 6 for operating an Uninsured Motor Vehicle and Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of registration.

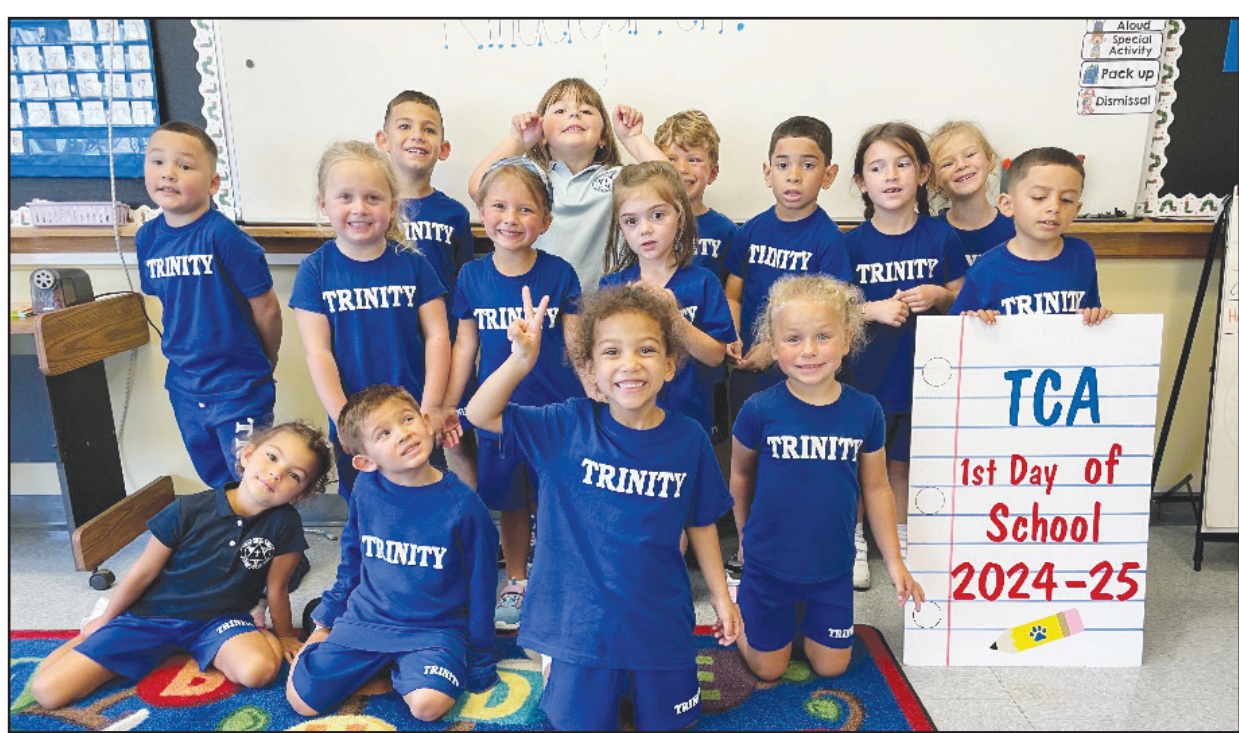
Aneudi Joel Perez Torres, age 31, of Southbridge was arrested on Sept. 7 in connection with a warrant for operating an uninsured motor vehicle.

Anthony Petruzzi, age 51, of Fiskdale was arrested on Sept. 7 in connection with a warrant for Possession of a Class B Drug.

A 40-year-old male from Hyde Park was issued a summons in lieu of arrest on Sept. 8 for operating an Uninsured and Unregistered Motor Vehicle.

Jennifer Crystal Mary Routhier, age 36, of Southbridge was arrested on Sept. 8 in connection with a warrant for operating an uninsured motor vehicle.

Richard Lee Poe, Jr., age 29, of Southbridge was arrested on Sept. 8 for Vandalization of Property.



### HAPPY NEW "SCHOOL" YEAR!

Trinity Catholic Academy was happy to welcome students back on August 26th. Students and families were excited to meet the new teachers and reconnect with classmates. The year is off to a great start, and we are thrilled to have everyone back together again!

# Master Masons invited to 200th anniversary of General Lafayette Tour

CHARLTON — On Tuesday, Sept. 2, the Rider Tavern in Charlton was packed with people who wanted to witness the reenactment of General Marquis Lafayette's visit 200 years ago.

The Charlton Historical Society, Old Sturbridge Village, and the American Friends of Lafayette collaborated to commemorate Lafayette's reception in Charlton on Sept. 3, 1824. The Rider Tavern, then known as Stone's Coffee House, is where General Lafayette stopped at 255 Stafford Street, which still exists today and is maintained by the Charlton Historical Society. Across the street is the field where the Charlton Militia drilled in 1824.

From a distance you can hear the fife and drums corps of General Lafayette's precession marching down the street. As the sounds of the fife and drums were getting louder and closer you could hear the cadence of the officer giving marching commands. The crowd of people that were sitting, got up from their lawn chairs, started moving towards the road to see and get a look at this distinguished gentleman walking in front of his marching soldiers to-



Courtesy

Masonic members soldiers of The Sons of the American Revolution club, middle to right back: Masonic members in civilian era clothing the Colonial Craftsman Club of Colonial Massachusetts, front right: with hat on General Marquis Lafayette and gentleman with blue suit coat is the Most Worshipful Grand Master of The Grand Lodge of Massachusetts of Boston and his lovely wife.

wards the Rider Tavern. The soldiers marched up the steps single file and lined up in front of the tavern. The Rev. Rich, played by town selectmen David Singer, said a few words as General Lafayette stood on the sideline waiting for his turn to speak. The General walked up to the podium, bowed his head to the people, and gave an elegant and mesmerizing speech about the American people and the time he spent in this country.

Special guests who were also invited to participate in this reenactment were Masonic clubs who dress as costumed interpreters. These Master Mason social clubs are fraternal and charitable Masonic

clubs operating within the jurisdiction of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. Participants included The Sons of the American Revolution Club, soldiers dressed in revolution era uniforms of that time, the Colonial Craftsman Club of Colonial Massachusetts, which are civilians dressed up to look and play the part of the 1824 era. These Masonic clubs travel the state to authenticate that time era when invited to these time frame events. Other guests in attendance were Senator Ryan Fattman, State Representatives Paul Frost and John Marsi.

The distinguished gentlemen who played General Marguis Lafayette was Michael Hal-

bert. Also, for all you history buffs General Marquis Lafayette was a Master Mason. It has been disputed for centuries where Lafayette became a Master Mason. There are no definitive records showing exactly when and where Lafayette was initiated. Lafayette was hero of both The American Revolution war and later two French Revolutionary wars. Freemasons from both countries are anxious to claim him as their own. The French claim he was a Mason prior to coming to America and enlisting into the continental army. However, there is documentation supported by Lafayette own writings and backed by American Masonic scholars place the time of the initiation during the winters of 1777-1778 when Washingtons army was camped at Valley Forge in Pennsylvania. There is a lot of information on the websites and stories and books about Lafayette and different versions of how he became a Master Mason. The bottom line is he was a Master Mason. If you would like more information about Freemasonry, go to [www.massfreemasonry.org](http://www.massfreemasonry.org) to find a lodge nearest you.

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# “When I make something, it feels like my baby”

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

**SOUTHBRIDGE** — Although this month's Hispanic Heritage Month art show at Jacob Edwards Library is from a Dominican artist, people from the local Puerto Rican community are pretty likely to see elements they'll recognize.

That's in part because artist Maria Payano taps some of her Taino ancestry, which Puerto Rico shares, in a couple of pieces. One called “Casada a su labor” (Married to her labor) features the traditional muñeca, a female doll that's always faceless “but always carries something” (a flower here) and often wears fruit on her head. Payano said it symbolizes the blend of Taino, African and Spanish culture on the island and is “everywhere.”

Another, a couple paintings away, is more directly Taino — a depiction of the fertility goddess Abatey. Payano said women there, when they've struggled “after a certain time frame” with fertility, they may pray to her. Today, she said, that's important because she “sees more fertility issues.” (Indeed, health experts have reported declining fertility in recent years among men and women, especially in more advanced cultures. Causes are uncertain, but often linked to pollution.)

To Payano, though, it's also a metaphor for creativity.

“When I make some-



Gus Steeves

Maria Payano with “Casada a su labor” in the background.

thing, it feels like my baby,” she said. “... I was starting to lose that element of perfection with Abatey, and felt I was exposing part of myself. You don't have to be perfect.”

The idea of art as baby is especially linked to the piece “Despertar” (Awakening), which she calls her “favorite child.” For some time, it sat on the floor of her studio, with Payano thinking it was incomplete. Then her sister's best friend saw it “and it was his reaction that did it.” His reaction said it was basically done, it just needed a little tweak. After that, Payano started taking time to see her art from other people's perspectives, which she described as “an out of body experience.”

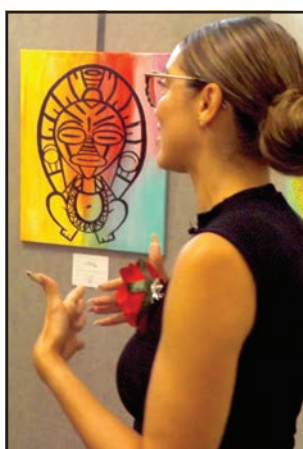
That piece and “La Loba” (Wolf-woman) were “kept hidden a long time,” Payano said. For La Loba, that was partly because it's one of her darker pieces with a flavor of art nouveau, and very personal. “I had just gone through a

breakup,” and the piece features a woman crying, but also she “wanted her to look strong.” “The moon is shielding her and protecting her.”

That's very much Payano herself. She loves going outside at night to “chase the moon, howl at the moon,” which “feels safe.”

Payano's art goes back deep into childhood. Early on, she recalled playing with finger paints and “a teacher noticed I was lost in my art. He told my mom ‘Leave her alone. She's in her element. This is her happy place and she's gifted.’” It took a little longer for her to find that out for herself though; she said she saw it in fourth grade, when she enlarged one of her pieces.

Physically, Payano's element is water, as seen in a somewhat cartoony fish she painted for her nephew. She describes that as “swimming in my own little ocean when it comes to art. ... I wanted him to like the fish, but I wanted to like the fish, too.”

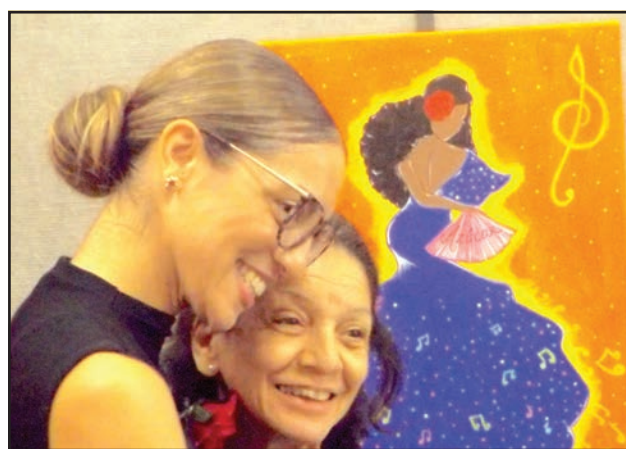


Gus Steeves

Maria Payano talks about “Abatey,” the ancient Taino fertility goddess.

Her family is a key inspiration. That's expressed in “Familia” (Family), a colorful tree depicting the old mango tree her clan gathers around. Although it no longer bears edible fruit, it's “strangely still very strong and living.” Payano depicts it, and her family, as “rooted through the music, the blend, the flavor.”

She said she likes painting larger pieces generally, and is now working on a mural in Central Falls, RI, with a friend. She lives down



Gus Steeves

Maria Payano gives her mother, also named Maria, a hug with one of her pieces in the background.

there, and has been getting more involved in the Rhode Island art scene in various ways, including a current show in a gallery there, helping with the Providence street art festival, and other things. Historically, she's done chalk art, watercolors, mixed media and other formats, but one thing that runs through them all is her love of color.

She said she hopes her art inspires others to create their own stuff, be it art or music.

“I want to leave this

place, when I leave some day, better than I found it,” she said.

“You can't move around without knowing your roots,” which for Payano means feeling “the culture and celebration of being Dominican.”

She later noted, “I'm proud to share it with others and carry it wherever I go.”

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

## Old Sturbridge Village announces spooktacular “Phantoms by Firelight” event

**STURBRIDGE** — Old Sturbridge Village has announced the lineup for its highly anticipated Halloween event, “Phantoms by Firelight,” with tickets now available for purchase. The event, running Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from Oct. 4 through Oct. 27, promises 12 nights of haunted history and entertainment, with new attractions and a lineup of distinguished performers.

“Phantoms by Firelight” offers a journey into Halloween myths and folklore, inviting visitors to explore the Village by firelight. Attendees can look forward to an exciting array of live performances, such as hand balancing, fire breathing and spinning, aerial acrobatics and Cyr wheel demonstrations. This year, Old Sturbridge Village is introducing new chilling attractions, including a labyrinth through the dark countryside, eerie carnival games and twisted tales of real-life tragedies.

Beyond the performances, visitors will have the opportunity to explore Halloween traditions, witness coffin-making in the Cabinetmaking shop and

learn about early American mourning rituals through a depiction of an 1830s wake. “Phantoms by Firelight” will include the return of beloved activities, such as Clues and Candy and spooky ghost stories by the bonfire. Visitors can enjoy a seasonal menu of delicious food and on-theme adult and non-alcoholic beverages.

Directed by P.J. Griffith of ClockJack Productions for the third consecutive year, the event will feature stunning live acts and theatrics by a talented troupe of artists known as Cyrkus Vampyr: The acclaimed artists appearing at this year's event include Richard Hanke and Ashlee Montague, Joel Herzfeld, Eleanor Parker, Joseph Kerr and Samantha Bergman, Brian Klimowski and Andre Sguerra.

“This year's ‘Phantoms by Firelight’ is a Halloween experience like no other. We have crafted an event that is not only visually stunning, with daring stunts and spectacular firelight performances, but also deeply immersive,” said Rhys Simmons, Director of Interpretation at Old Sturbridge Village. “We are proud to work with ClockJack Productions

to offer an experience that blends breathtaking performances with the true, dark historical elements of Halloween.”

“This October, every corner of the Village will come to life and offer something interesting for all ages,” Simmons continued. “It's truly a feast for the senses.”

Phantoms by Firelight will take place from 4:30 to 9 p.m. on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays throughout October. Tickets are available at a discounted rate to members (\$28 Adult/\$14 Youth) and the public (\$34 Adult/\$16 Youth) until Oct. 3. Beginning opening night, Oct. 4, tickets will be full price at the door (\$40 Adult/\$20 Youth on Fridays or Sundays and \$45 Adult/ \$20 Youth on Saturdays) or available for purchase online, in advance (\$36 Adult/ \$18 Youth).

“Phantoms by Firelight” is made possible by Country Bank, a full-service financial institution in Massachusetts. For more details and to buy tickets, please visit <https://www.osv.org/event/phantoms-by-firelight/>.

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