

# WEBSTER TIMES

Free by request to residents of Webster, Dudley and the Oxfords

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©2026, Issue #2

Friday, January 9, 2026



Retiring Oxford Fire Chief Larry McDonald was honored by colleagues last week for 45 years of dedication and service to the community. Photo courtesy of the department's Facebook page.

## DOT to host virtual hearing on Route 12 project

OXFORD — A Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT Web site Tuesday, Jan. 13 at 6:30 p.m. to present the design for the proposed roadway rehabilitation project on Route 12 in Oxford.

The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

The proposed project consists of improvements to Main Street (Route 12) between Fairlawn Avenue and Front Street. The project will reconstruct the roadway with new pavement and implement Complete Streets features to improve safety and accessibility for all users. Improvements include new ADA/AAB-compliant sidewalks, separated 6-foot bicycle lanes in accordance with applicable design guides, upgraded street lighting, and new bus stops. The project will also improve safety and traffic flow at the intersection of Main Street, Charlton

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## Webster Public Schools outline winter programs and upcoming calendar items

WEBSTER — The Webster Public Schools are moving into the heart of the winter term with a series of scheduled programs, instructional initiatives, and calendar items that will shape the remainder of the school year.

According to information posted by the district, January marks a return to regular classroom routines following the holiday break, along with the continuation of academic support services and enrichment opportunities for students across grade levels. Winter months are traditionally a period of steady instructional focus, with schools emphasizing curriculum pacing, assessment preparation, and student engagement ahead of spring testing and end-of-year activities.

District calendars show several upcoming dates of note for students and families, including professional development days, early release schedules, and school committee meetings. These calendar items are reviewed and updated regularly to ensure families

have advance notice of schedule changes or events that may affect transportation and after-school programming.

In addition to academic instruction, Webster Public Schools continue to offer non-sports extracurricular activities during the winter season.

These may include student clubs, arts-related programming, and academic enrichment opportunities that operate during or after the school day, depending on school level.

Participation in these programs provides students with

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## Auburn selectmen set Jan. 12 public hearings

AUBURN — The Auburn Select Board has posted public hearing notices for Monday, Jan. 12, 2026, including hearings tied to a motor vehicle-related license application and a separate notice connected to utility infrastructure locations.

The town's meeting calendar lists a Board of Selectmen meeting scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 12 in the Select Board Meeting Room at Town Hall, 104 Central St. The calendar entry also provides options for remote participation, including a call-in number and an online meeting link.

One posted notice states the Select Board will hold a public hearing regarding a Motor Vehicle Class II License at 85 South St., Auburn. The notice indicates the hearing will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 12, and includes remote participation instructions (telephone and online access) associated with the Select Board's meeting setup.

A separate notice posted for the same date describes a public hearing connected to a petition for joint or identical pole locations. Like the other notice, it identifies the Select Board, the Jan. 12 date and 6:30 p.m. time, and the Town Hall location, with the purpose of the hearing tied to pole location procedures.

While the two notices address different subjects, they share a common procedural goal: giving the public a clear time and place to weigh in before the board takes action within its authority.

For residents who plan to attend, Town Hall is located at 104 Central St. For residents planning to participate remotely, the town's calendar entry includes the dial-in number and access code as well as the online meeting link for the Select Board room.

Public hearings are typically structured to allow the applicant or petitioner to present the request, for board members to ask questions, and for members of the public to offer comment within the rules of the hearing. Residents who have questions about participation logistics can also use the town's calendar listing as a starting point, since it consolidates meeting time, location, and remote participation details in one place.

Since posted notices can be supplemented by additional meeting materials as the date approaches, residents who want the most current packet information should monitor the town's online postings leading up to Jan. 12.

## Bartlett Class of 1976 planning 50-year reunion

REGION — Attention, classmates of Bartlett High School, graduating class of 1976!

We have been searching high and low for you! We are planning a 50th class reunion for the summer of 2026 and would like to see you there.

We have been busy doing Google searches, Facebook searches, LinkedIn searches, general searches, "Hey, does anyone know where \_\_\_ has been?" searches and yes, sadly, even obituary searches, to find you. Yet, there are still a few of you that we still have been unable to locate.

Whether you are now living out of state or are using a different name, we are hoping that some of your family or friends are still in the area and can let you know we are looking for you and your contact information.

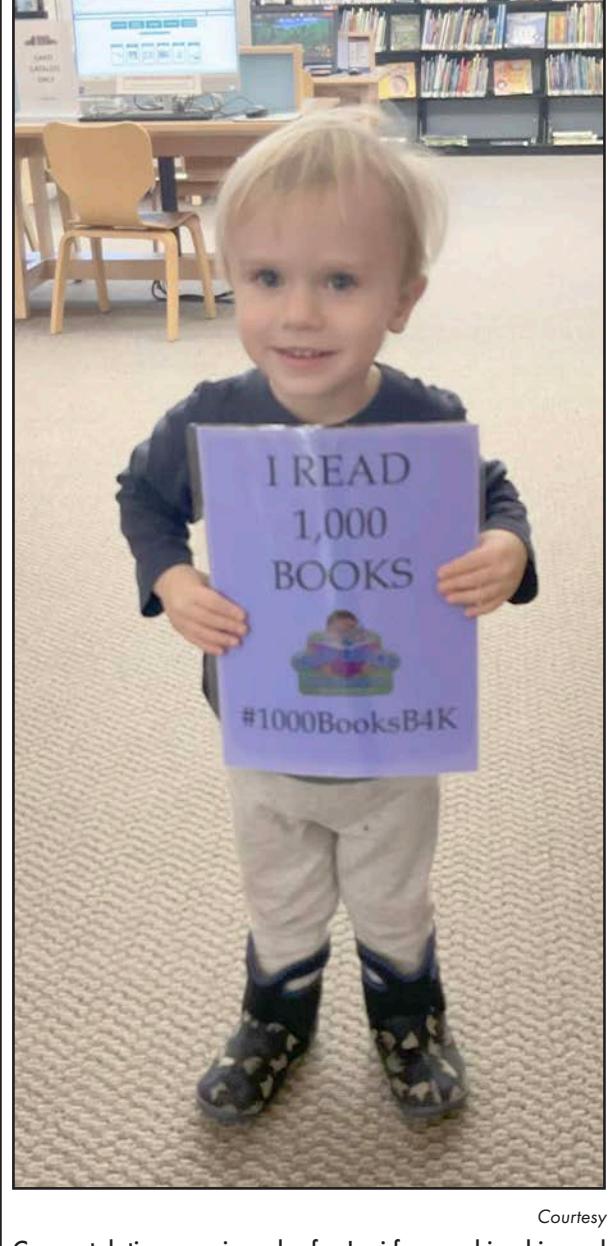
If you have not been contacted by one of us or have not reached out to connect with us, we would very much like to hear from you to see if you would be interested in attending the reunion.

If you also have information on a classmate and can share it with us, we would be very appreciative.

Patricia (Patty O'Connell) Battista (e-mail: pattybattista123@gmail.com ~OR~ Facebook: Patty O'Connell Battista)

Donna Shutts (email: dshuttsre@gmail.com or Facebook: Donna Shutts)

Kathleen Jewell-Kelleher (email: Kkelleher251@gmail.com or Facebook: Kathleen Jewell-Kelleher)



Congratulations are in order for Levi for reaching his goal of completing the "1,000 Books Before Kindergarten" program at the Pearle L. Crawford Memorial Library. Levi worked hard and finished on the very last day of 2025 — way to go, Levi! The 1,000 Books Foundation's mission is to promote reading to newborns, infants, and toddlers, and to encourage parent and child bonding through reading. The 1,000 BBK challenge at the Crawford Library is funded by the Friends of the Pearle L. Crawford Memorial Library.

# Cornerstone Bank, Athol Savings Bank finalize merger

## WORCESTER

Cornerstone Bank today announced the closing of its merger with Athol Savings Bank (ASB), effective Dec. 31, uniting the two long-standing community institutions. The completed transaction results in an expanded banking network that brings Cornerstone

Bank's full suite of digital services to the North Quabbin region while preserving ASB's trusted local identity and five branch locations.

"As of today, our partnership is officially complete, and we are excited to move forward as one organization," said Todd Tallman,

CEO of Cornerstone Bank. "This merger strengthens our ability to serve customers with improved technology, expanded products and deeper community investment, while staying true to the values that define both banks."

With the closing, Daniel J. Zona, former President and CEO of ASB, has begun his new role as President of Cornerstone Bank, succeeding the retiring Randal Webber. The Cornerstone Bank Board of Directors has also expanded to include four new members, including Zona, broadening leadership representation across the regions the combined bank

now serves.

"This is a meaningful moment for both banks," said Zona. "Our teams share a strong commitment to customers, employees and the communities we call home. With the merger now finalized, we can begin fully delivering the enhanced services and opportunities that come with joining forces."

All ASB employees have been retained, ensuring continuity for customers. Customers can expect ongoing communications and a smooth transition as Cornerstone and ASB align systems and expand access to digital banking tools, financial planning resources and new product offerings.

Luse Gorman, P.C. served as legal coun-

sel for Cornerstone Bank while Piper, Sandler & Co. served as Financial Advisor. Updike, Kelly & Spellacy, P.C. served as legal counsel for Athol Savings Bank.

About Cornerstone Bank

Cornerstone Bank was formed in 2017, born of a long history of supporting the community, and providing a strong foundation to help people and businesses thrive. Serving Worcester County, Massachusetts, Cornerstone Bank's local presence and community-based banking model enables a unique ability to deliver outstanding service, with a personal touch. Cornerstone, which is a subsidiary of PeoplesBancorp, MHC, operating independently under its own name

and brand, provides the highest level of service and expertise for individuals, businesses, and community organizations with branch locations throughout Central Massachusetts. Cornerstone works to connect customers with opportunities through a broad range of deposit and loan products and services. Built on Trust is not just a tagline, but also one of our guiding corporate values. Whether a business or personal partnership, Cornerstone stands on the foundation that relationships are built on trust. To learn about Cornerstone Bank's personal and business banking offerings, please visit [cornerstonebank.com](http://cornerstonebank.com) or call 800-939-9103.

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## Job change?

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- Leave it in your former employer's 401(k) plan, if allowed by the plan.
- Move it to your new employer's 401(k) plan, if you've changed employers and your new employer plan allows for it.
- Roll the account over to an individual retirement account (IRA).
- Cash it out, which is subject to potential tax consequences.

We can talk through your financial goals and find the option that works best for you.

### Dennis Antonopoulos

Financial Advisor  
5 Albert St  
Auburn, MA 01501  
508-832-5385

IRT-1948M-A AECPAD 27359482



## CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Lakes
- 6. Electromotive force
- 9. Invests in little enterprises
- 13. Longtime Utah Jazz coach
- 14. Small sailboat
- 15. Actor Idris
- 16. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls
- 17. System that detects objects under water
- 18. Harsh, grating noise
- 19. Steward
- 21. A fencing sword
- 22. Infections
- 23. Actress Ryan
- 24. Sodium
- 25. Swedish castle
- 28. A lump of slime
- 29. African antelope
- 31. Insurance providers
- 33. Choosy
- 36. Ringworm
- 38. Unpolished
- 39. Drenches
- 41. Pant style
- 44. Son of Noah
- 45. Spiritual being
- 46. Upton Sinclair novel
- 48. Journalist Tarbell
- 49. Popular sports highlight show
- 51. Born of
- 52. Rich tapestry
- 54. S. China seaport
- 56. State of being unclothed
- 60. Surrounded by
- 61. Residue
- 62. Away from wind
- 63. Dried-up
- 64. Visionary
- 65. A very large body of water
- 66. Garden tools
- 67. Screen type
- 68. Ancient Scandinavian poet

## CLUES DOWN

- 1. Millisecond
- 2. Spanish city
- 3. A sudden very loud sound
- 4. "The Indiana Jones of beer"
- 5. Tin
- 6. Sea eagles
- 7. Volcanic crater
- 8. Type of coat
- 9. Women's apartments in Ottoman palace
- 10. Divulge a secret
- 11. Norwegian playwright
- 12. "It's a Wonderful Life" director
- 14. Poisonous perennial plant
- 17. 18-year astronomical period
- 20. Clothes
- 21. Places to sit
- 23. Family of regulator genes
- 25. New York ballplayer
- 26. Impressive in size or scope
- 27. Jacques \_\_\_, French biologist
- 29. One from the Big Apple
- 30. Genus of woolly lemurs
- 32. Songs to one's beloved
- 34. Indigenous person of N.E. Thailand
- 35. Supplemented with difficulty
- 37. Farewell
- 40. Investment account (abbr.)
- 42. One from Utah
- 43. Begets
- 47. A male child
- 49. Break apart
- 50. Brief appearance
- 52. Partner to "ooed"
- 53. A light informal meal
- 55. Fabric with smooth, shiny surface
- 56. One billionth of a second
- 57. Ancient Italian-Greek colony
- 58. Close tightly
- 59. Mail out
- 61. Language
- 65. Computer characteristic

## PUZZLE SOLUTION



## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

JANUARY 7-14

### Webster

Thursday, Jan. 8

- Webster Water Sewer Commission meeting 2:30 p.m.

Flex Room, Gladys E. Kelly Public Library, 2 Lake St., Webster

### Auburn

Tuesday, Jan. 6 (relevant because it falls just before the calendar week)

- Knitting Group 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Merriam Room, Auburn Public Library, 369 Southbridge St.

Wednesday, Jan. 7

- Yoga Classes 9:00-10:30 a.m.

Camp Gleason, 261 Central St.

- Internal Meeting 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Conference Room 1, Town Hall, 104 Central St.

- Auburn School Committee meeting 5:30-7:30 p.m.

School Committee Room (Randall), 5 West St.

Monday, Jan. 12

- Auburn Board of Selectmen meeting (pending) 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Select Board Meeting Room, Town Hall, 104 Central St. (remote participation info posted)

Tuesday, Jan. 13

- Planning Board meeting (pending) 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Select Board Meeting Room, Town Hall, 104 Central St.

### Dudley

Wednesday, Jan. 7

- Dudley Conservation Commission meeting 6:00 p.m.

Rm 315, Dudley Town Hall, 71 West Main St.

Wednesday, Jan. 7

- Dudley Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners meeting 6:30 p.m.

Dudley Town Hall, 71 West Main St.

### Oxford

Tuesday, Jan. 6 (just before the week)

- Oxford Board of Selectmen executive session 6:00 p.m.

Oxford Memorial Town Hall

- Oxford Board of Selectmen meeting 7:00 p.m.

Oxford Memorial Town Hall

Wednesday, Jan. 7

- Oxford School Committee special budget meeting 5:00 p.m.

Oxford High School Community Room, 75 Southbridge Rd.

Wednesday, Jan. 14

- Oxford High School Council meeting 2:30 p.m.

Oxford High School Conference Room

## REAL ESTATE

### AUBURN

\$583,000, 8 Garden St, Blackstone Dev Group LLC, to Atukunda, Irene, and Kisingo, Abbey H.

\$560,000, 8 Shirley St, Ethel H Rothmel RET, and Leonard, Kathryn S, to Ayer, Kasey, and Darcy, Ariana.

\$381,000, 36 Central St, 36 Ctr Street Auburn LLC, to MI Realty Group LLC.

\$372,500, 20 Alpine Trl, Porcella, Nicholas, to Daley, Katlyn.

### DUDLEY

\$665,000, 57 Eagle Dr, Soltys, John M, to Wright, Paul, and Wright, Aylin.

\$600,000, 11 Lempicki Rd, Farmer, Joshua, and Farmer, Amy, to Vandenberg, Halsey, and Becker, Miryam.

\$450,000, 8 Ridge Dr, Shaw Development Inc, to Craver-Harnois, Nancy V.

\$400,000, 220 W Main St, Roberts, Dan, and Roberts, Heather J, to Dunn, Mitchell.

\$350,000, 12 Budd Dr, Card, Mary M, to Fournier, Kristopher.

### OXFORD

\$469,000, 190 Federal Hill Rd, Nelson, Jonathan P, and Nelson, Melissa A, to Salkovitz, Jenna, and Logan, Aaron.

\$460,000, 11 Sutton Ave, Dias, Sergio, to Andersen, Melissa.

\$350,000, 10 Friar Tuck Ln, Dulmaine Thomas P Est, and Dulmaine, Jason, to Bell, Leah, and Bell, Shane.

\$121,000, 9 Wallace Ct, Oxford Town Of, to Nordborg, Steven R, and Nordborg, Theresa.

\$110,000, Coughlin Rd #6, Barton Ctr For Diabetes E, to Mancini, Adam M.

### WEBSTER

\$570,000, 303 Treasure Island Rd #303, Phillips, Terry, to Sturdevant, Jonathan, and Sturdevant, Amanda.

\$515,100, 48 Ray St, Cournoyer, Melyssa E, to Simo, Carita M.

\$485,000, 14 Hill St, McCausland Edith R Est, and Dodge, Jonathan R, to Vargas, Kenia, and Vargas, Sirleny D.

\$445,000, 53 Bigelow Rd, Fanning, Jeffrey, and Fanning, Kirthana, to Gallivan, Brendan.

\$433,750, 6 Henry Rd, Heavenly Hm Solutions LLC, to Gaine, Meagan.

## ALMANAC

### OPEN TO CLOSE

#### DUDLEY

DUDLEY TOWN HALL (508) 949-8000

Monday: 8:00 AM-6:30 PM (second floor offices),

Tuesday-Thursday: 8:00 AM-4:00 PM, Friday: 8:00 AM-12:00 PM.

DUDLEY POLICE DEPARTMENT (943-4411)

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DUDLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT (949-8040)

Monday-Sunday ..... 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

#### OXFORD

OXFORD TOWN HALL (508) 949-6027

Board of Selectmen and Town Clerk Hours

Monday, Tues., Thurs. ..... 9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday ..... 9 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Friday ..... 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

OXFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT (987-0156)

For emergencies, call 911

OXFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT (987-6012)

Monday-Friday ..... 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

#### WEBSTER

WEBSTER TOWN HALL (508) 949-3850

Office Hours:

Monday ..... 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Tuesday-Thursday ..... 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

# Pasture Prime Players to hold auditions for “The Hot L Baltimore”

CHARLTON — Pasture Prime Players, Inc. is pleased to announce open auditions for “The Hot L Baltimore” by Lanford Wilson. The production will be directed by Don Konopacki.

Auditions will be held Tuesday, Jan. 13 at 6 p.m. and Saturday, Jan. 17 at 10 a.m. at the Charlton Arts & Activities Center, 4 Dresser Hill Rd., Charlton, MA. Performances will be held April 17, 18, 19, 24, 25 and 26. This play is produced by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., of New York, N.Y.

The scene is the lobby of a rundown hotel so seedy that it has lost the “e”

from its marquee. As the action unfolds, the residents, ranging from young to old, from the defiant to the resigned, meet and talk and interact with each other during the course of one day. The drama is of passing events in their lives, of everyday encounters and of the human comedy, with conversations often overlapping into a contrapuntal musical flow. In the resulting mosaic each character emerges clearly and perceptively defined, and the sum total of who they are, or wish they were, becomes a poignant, powerful call to America to recover lost values and to store itself in its own and the world's eyes.

The play won the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award for Best American Play of 1972-'73, multiple Obie Awards and the John Gassner Playwriting Award.

There are roles for seven females and 10 males although three of the male roles are of the walk-on variety. Auditions will be cold readings from the script. We are also looking for people to fill non-performing roles. For more information, contact us at [pasture.prime.players@gmail.com](mailto:pasture.prime.players@gmail.com).

## Dudley Woman's Club meets Jan. 8

DUDLEY — Please join us for the Dudley Woman's Club Jan. 8 meeting, 6:30 p.m. at the Dudley Town Hall, 71 West Main St. Our January meeting is all about health and wellness in the new year. Please join us in welcoming authors Brad & Pamela Thompson as we explore their book: Stress Less, Thrive More: Discover the Secrets to Physical, Emotional, and Mental Wellness. Our January voluntary Giving Project is new socks for the Webster-Dudley Food Share.

Don't let our name dissuade you - the club and all our meetings are open to gals from all towns. Our more than 70 members hail from Webster, Dudley, Southbridge, Charlton, Uxbridge and several Northern Connecticut communities. We are just a group of volunteers who do what we can, where and when we can, to support and uplift our communities.

Our club year runs from September to May, and as you'll see in our Charitable Giving report: [www.dudleywomansclub.org](http://www.dudleywomansclub.org), we accomplish a lot in those months. All this, and we have fun along the way! Bring a friend or five and join us on January 8 at the Dudley Municipal Complex. Nothing for you to do, just walk in the door and be welcomed. We hope to see your smiling faces there!

## DUDLEY POLICE LOG

DUDLEY — The Dudley Police Department reported the following arrests during the month of December.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Dec. 3 for Domestic Assault & Battery and Strangulation or Suffocation.

Trinity Millett, age 26, of Worcester was arrested on Dec. 6 in connection with a warrant.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Dec. 12 for Assault & Battery on a Family or Household Member.

Sean O'Neill, age 38, of Dayville, Conn. was arrested on Dec. 16 in connection with an Out of Agency warrant.

Paramall Persaud, age 43, of Worcester was arrested on Dec. 19 for Leaving the Scene of Property Damage, Operating Under the Influence (liquor), Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle, Leaving the Scene of Personal Injury, driving at a rate of speed greater than was reasonable and proper, and a Marked Lanes Violation.

Savannah M. Egan, age 28, of Dudley was arrested on Dec. 23 in connection with an out of agency warrant.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Dec. 24 on multiple counts of Assault & Battery on a Family or Household Member.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Dec. 29 for Assault & Battery on a Family or Household Member, Assault & Battery with a Dangerous Weapon, Possession of Ammunition Without FID Card, and multiple counts of Possession of a Firearm Without FID Card.

## 2026 dog licenses available in Oxford

OXFORD — 2026 dog licenses are available starting Jan. 6! Please remember to include an updated rabies certificate if the dog was recently vaccinated. Also, if the dog has recently been spayed/neutered,

please include the certificate.

New dogs cannot be registered online and may be registered by mail or in-person.

The fee is \$15 if the dog is not altered and \$10 if the dog is altered.

## Shepherd Hill Drama presents “Letters From the Titanic”

WEBSTER — The Shepherd Hill Regional High School Drama Club will bring “Letters From the Titanic” to the stage Friday, Jan. 9 and Saturday, Jan. 10 at 7 p.m. in the school auditorium. Tickets are \$10 in advance through the school's Web site or \$15 at the door.

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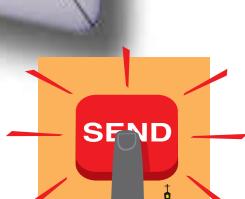
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OR VISIT [NEPROPANE.COM/SAVERS](http://NEPROPANE.COM/SAVERS)

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### PAW of the WEEK

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Meet Bronc! He's a 4 year old, 50 pound, Lab/Terrier mix who is the definition of "worth the wait." Bronc is a handsome, soulful boy looking for a calm place to land.

While he can be a bit shy in new situations, don't let his initial bashfulness fool you.

Once Bronc knows he's safe, he transforms into the absolute sweetest, mushiest companion you could ever meet. He is a true "velcro dog" who loves for head scratches and quiet moments by your side. Bronc gets along great with other dogs and is respectful of cat friends. Bronc will thrive in a calm, low-traffic environment

where he can feel secure and relaxed. **\*\*This dog is currently in foster care. If you're interested in meeting Bronc, please email [info.pawfectlife@gmail.com](mailto:info.pawfectlife@gmail.com) \*\***



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**PAW of the WEEK!**

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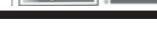


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BRENDAN BERUBE  
EDITOR

## EDITORIAL

# A modest start still counts

The arrival of January often comes with a familiar sense of expectation. A new year is supposed to feel different, more purposeful, more hopeful. There is pressure, subtle but persistent, to make declarations, set goals, and turn the page decisively on whatever came before.

That pressure can be motivating, but it can also be unrealistic.

Winter in New England does not naturally lend itself to grand reinvention. It is a season defined by restraint rather than abundance. Days are short. Roads are slower. Schedules are shaped by weather and daylight. Expecting sweeping personal or civic transformation in early January may ignore the reality of where we are, both physically and mentally.

There is nothing wrong with starting small.

A modest start still counts. Small changes made with intention are often the ones that last. A decision to be more patient behind the wheel. A renewed effort to stay informed about local issues. A commitment to attend a meeting, support a local organization, or lend a hand when it is needed. These actions may not feel dramatic, but they are meaningful.

Communities like ours are sustained by these kinds of steady contributions. Progress here rarely comes from sudden breakthroughs. It comes from consistency. It comes from residents showing up, paying attention, and doing their part, even when it is inconvenient or uncomfortable.

January is also a reminder that improvement does not require perfection. Resolutions are often framed as all-or-nothing propositions, but real change is rarely so clean. Setbacks are inevitable. Missed goals are not failures; they are part of the process. What matters is the willingness to adjust and continue.

On a community level, this mindset matters as well. Civic engagement ebbs and flows. Some weeks are quiet. Others bring difficult conversations or slow-moving decisions. Staying involved through all of it, not only when outcomes are exciting or immediate, is how towns remain healthy and responsive.

As the new year unfolds, there will be opportunities to revisit priorities and set new ones. January does not have to carry the full weight of reinvention. It can simply be a place to begin, thoughtfully and realistically.

If the year starts without fanfare, that is not a failure. A quiet beginning can still lead to meaningful progress. In fact, it often does.

## Letter submission policy

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

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

# Viewpoint

THE DEADLINE to submit letters to the editor and commentaries for next week's newspaper is Friday at noon. SEND ALL ITEMS to Editor Brendan Berube at THE WEBSTER TIMES — [news@stonebridgepress.news](mailto:news@stonebridgepress.news)

## Esther C. Kish: The woman behind Dr. Robert Goddard

BY HELEN POIRIER  
AUBURN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The start of this new year will bring many celebrations to look forward to. One of these will be the 100th anniversary of Dr. Robert Goddard's launching of a liquid-propellant rocket and the start of the space age. There will be many articles written about the "Father of Modern Rocketry", but what about the women behind this man who helped him?

The Auburn Historical Society will be looking at the history of aviation in Auburn as well as the people who advanced that history. The first person will be Esther Christine Kish, who became the wife of Goddard. She spent a great deal of her life making sure the world did not forget what Robert Goddard had done to advance technology to the stars.

Esther was born March 31, 1901, in Worcester to August Wilhem Kish and Augusta Johnson both born in Sweden. Esther also had a brother, Albert Walter, who married Beatrice D. Labossiere. The 1910 census had Kish family living on Fountain St. in Worcester with Grandmother Johanna Anderson and 5 other boarders. By the 1920 census, the family had moved to Gates Street. And Esther was 18 and working as a clerk. She studied at Bates University before she met Robert at Clark University where she was the secretary to the college president, Joseph N. Dinand. Robert was a physics professor and had asked Esther to help transcribe his notes. Esther was 20 years younger than Goddard, but that didn't matter to either of them. They were married on June 21, 1924, at St. John's Episcopal Church in Worcester. They took up residency at Maple Hill Farm, which was Robert's ancestral home on Talawanda Drive in Worcester. Esther was a photographer and used that skill to document her husband's early launches as well as stamping out brush fires and collecting pieces of the rocket after it landed. She was able to decipher his notes, kept his account books, did the sewing of parachutes used in launches and gave unlimited support to her husband's dreams for the rest of her life.

It was in 1929 that funds from the Guggenheim Foundation and the backing of Charles Lindbergh encouraged the move to Roswell New Mexico. There also were the reoccurring fires after the launches at Aunt Effie Ward's farm that didn't endear him to the neighborhood on Pakachoag Hill that could have influenced the move. While they lived in Roswell, Esther was part of the Roswell Music Association, The Women's Club, the Shakespeare Club, and founded a book club. She also got her husband to join some of the activities in the area and take time away from his work and relax.

Unfortunately, in 1932, the funding from the Guggenheim Foundation was stopped due to the Depression. This forced the Goddard family to return to Maple Hill and Robert went back to the Physics Department at Clark University. In this time his health began to be an issue and the doctors suggested they return to Roswell. The Guggenheim Foundation was able to support Goddard again thus allowing for the move back to Roswell. They were visited by Charles and Anne Lindbergh who were on their way to

the west coast shortly afterward they moved into their new home. During the 1930s the Goddard's entertained the likes of the Guggenheims, and officials from the Navy and Army, as well as those interested in seeing his rockets.

Esther wanted her husband to fit into Roswell and encouraged him in group activities like singing and playing bridge, anything that would pause his devoted attention to rocketry. She did get him to take a vacation to France and Switzerland in 1938, and this helped improve his health. The 1940 census listed Esther as a housewife, and Goddard's mother was living with them after his father died.

The Navy Department was interested in the military potential that rocketry had and in 1942 persuaded Goddard to move to Annapolis, Maryland to set up his machine shop and testing stands. Esther was able to enroll at John Hopkins University in Baltimore and finished her studies that she was doing before her marriage. Esther brought her mother to live with them to help take care of Robert and the house while she was away. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with honors. The throat cancer that had started in 1941 finally took Robert on August 10, 1945. He was buried in Hope Cemetery in Worcester on the 14th which was the same day the Japanese signed the surrender ending WWII.

Esther moved back to Talawanda Drive and, with the help and support of her family, started to work on getting her husband the honor and credit he so rightly deserved.

She organized his papers to get patent rights and stop others from pirating his inventions. She worked with Charles Hawley who was a Worcester patents attorney and got 214 patents, of which 131 were posthumously granted because of Esther's efforts.

According to "This High Man" Milton Lehman 1965, Esther donated the oldest space-oriented artifact (1916) the Magnesium Powder Experiment Box to the National Air and Space Museum. Esther traveled worldwide to lecture & receive many awards and honors bestowed on Robert as well as other public

appearances including cutting the ribbon at the opening of the Auburn Mall in 1971, a large picture of which can be seen at the Auburn Historical Society's Museum. Esther is also credited with being the first woman to receive an honorary degree from WPI, was active on several college boards, received her own awards and edited a three-volume work of Goddard's papers that were published in 1970. She received a Doctor of Physics degree from the University of Maine in 1945 and a doctor of humane letters from Clark University in 1972. Esther died June 5, 1982, and was buried in Hope Cemetery with her husband.

This article is made possible by the Auburn Historical Society & Museum, 41 South St. The museum is open Tuesday and Saturday mornings 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., and may be reached at [auburnmuseum@verizon.net](mailto:auburnmuseum@verizon.net) or 508-832-6856, [www.auburnhistoricalmuseum.org](http://www.auburnhistoricalmuseum.org) or follow us on Facebook at Auburn Historical.

Helen Poirier

long closed, and I have found myself slowing down without realizing it. There is something grounding about seeing the same lights you saw yesterday, and the day before that, and the year before that. The hardware store sign still glowing. The corner house still lighting the same window. The library's exterior lamps still shining over the steps, even when the doors are locked.

It is not nostalgia exactly. It is steadiness.

So much of life now feels temporary. Apps update overnight. Buildings change names.

Businesses come and go so fast that by the time you remember what used to be there, it has already been replaced by something else. In the middle of all that motion, there is comfort in the things that quietly stay put.

Light does that. It doesn't ask for attention.

It doesn't demand praise. It simply does its job.

I think that is why I have grown more appreciative of routines as I have gotten older. Not exciting routines. Plain ones. The same walk. The same drive. The same chair by the window. These habits act like small lanterns of their own, marking time and place when everything else feels like it is rushing past.

There was a time when I thought routine meant giving up something. Youth, possibility, adventure. Now I see it differently.

Routine is what gives those things a place to

turn to LANTERN page A6

## Lanterns Along Main Street

LANTERNS  
ALONG  
MAIN  
STREET

By CHARLES

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turn to LANTERN page A6

## New Year's financial resolutions: Making them stick

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As the calendar flips to a new year, millions of Americans pledge to improve their financial lives. But without a concrete plan, those well-intended resolutions often fade quickly.

Financial goals consistently top the list of New Year's resolutions. A 2025 CFP Board study shows that financial resolutions are prominent, with saving more money (45 percent) and reducing debt (32 percent) ranking among the top three goals.

Unfortunately, most resolutions don't last. A 2023 Forbes Health poll found that over half of people give up on resolutions by the four-month mark and only 1% make it the full year.

The challenge isn't a lack of desire for change. People may set the same resolution year after year, revealing a disconnect between intentions and action. Or it may be that they try to tackle too many goals at once, or aim higher than is realistic, setting themselves up for disappointment.

Set smart financial goals. Before crafting your action plan, consider which financial priorities matter most to you. If you need ideas, here are some areas where you may want focus in 2026:

Regularly review your financial goals and track progress toward meeting them

Increase your 401(k) contributions or max out your IRA and/or HSA contributions

Pay down debt strategically and negotiate lower interest payments

Build an emergency savings fund of six to 12 months

Save more consistently

Be specific. Vague resolutions like "save more money" rarely succeed. Instead, it can help to make goals specific and measurable. For example, rather than making a resolution to "start an emergency fund," commit to a specific goal, such as, "I will put \$100 a month into an emergency fund."

This shift from general to specific transforms wishful thinking into actionable steps. When goals are attainable, it's easier to track progress and stay motivated.

Find an accountability partner. Don't go it alone. Having someone to check in with can help you stay on track. This could be a spouse, friend or family member who shares similar goals.

Consider working with a financial advisor who can help you create a realistic plan, monitor your progress and adjust strategies as needed. A professional can provide expertise and accountability, making it easier to stay on track throughout the year.

Start small and build momentum. Rather than overhauling your entire financial life all at once, focus on one or two priority areas. Identify where the largest gap exists between your current situation and where you want to be, then concentrate your energy there.

Breaking larger goals into smaller, manageable actions makes them less overwhelming and more achievable. Each small win builds confidence and momentum for tackling the next challenge.

The new year offers a fresh start and renewed motivation to improve your financial health. With specific goals, a solid action plan and the right support system, this could be the year your financial resolutions finally stick.

## GLADYS E. KELLY PUBLIC LIBRARY

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Adult Programming  
Literacy Volunteers: ESL Classes – Tuesdays at 6:00pm

The Literacy Cafe is a free weekly English conversation class offered by Literacy Volunteers of South Central Massachusetts (LVSCM). This class is free to attend and is open to all adults. No pre-registration is required. For more information, email us at [info@lvscm.org](mailto:info@lvscm.org).

Library for All – First Two Mondays; Last Two Fridays 10AM (Chair Yoga or Craft)

This program includes one chair yoga class and one craft project that will be held on first two Mondays and the last two Fridays of the month. Either join Jess and Ompractice for a 45 minute relaxing Chair Yoga class or join us for our craft program. Check the online calendar to see which event is scheduled. No experience necessary. This program is for teens and adults of all abilities and their caregivers. Please call ahead if special accommodations or requirements are needed.

Grief Support Group – 2nd Tuesday and 4th Saturday of the Month (6:30pm on Tuesdays; 10:00am on Saturdays) in the Local History Room

Losing a loved one is never easy. Please know that you are not alone. If you need support in trying to navigate the changes in your life, join us in a place of safety and comfort with others who have also experienced loss. This grief support group is a place to find understanding as we explore our grief, share coping strategies, and begin to heal.

### Yoga – Saturdays at 9:30am

Join Julie or Lauren at the Gladys E. Kelly Library for a vinyasa yoga class for all levels. A typical class involves centering the mind with the breath, aromatherapy, movement of the body to release energetic blockages, and, finally, rest and relaxation. Classes are free. Funded by the Friends of the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library.

Yoga Nidra with Jess – Fridays in January, at 8:15am

Join Adult Services Librarian Jess for a relaxing yoga nidra practice to start your day. Jess will guide participants through a few simple yoga asanas to release physical tension. Participants will then settle into a reclined position for a guided relaxation (yoga nidra). This program takes place before the library officially opens. Registration is required and Jess will meet you at the program door. If you have your own yoga mat, please bring it and be sure to dress in comfortable clothing.

Ayurveda 101: Building a Nourishing Daily Rhythm (Winter Edition) – Thursday, January 8th at 6:30pm

As winter invites us to slow down and turn inward, Ayurveda offers simple, time-tested practices to help us feel grounded, nourished, and resilient. This introductory session explores how daily rhythms—what we eat, when we eat, how we care for our bodies, and how we manage stress—can support well-being during the colder months. Designed for those new to Ayurveda, this one-hour program focuses on practical, accessible guidance around winter-friendly food choices, meal timing and spacing, and gentle daily self-care practices. Participants will also experience a few short practices to help support calm, warmth, and balance. No prior experience is needed. Attendees are encouraged to come as they are and leave with a few simple, supportive practices they can easily incorporate into daily life throughout the winter season.

Trivia Palooza 5 – Monday, January 12th at 6:00pm

Join Evan and Jess for General Knowledge Trivia. Assemble your team (up to 5 people) and put your thinking caps on! Registration is required. Please only register 1 person per team; you cannot complete the registration process online if you say there are more attendees. We do not need to know how many people are on your team, but the maximum is 5. The winning team gets a prize!

Cookbook Club – Wednesday, January 14th at 6:00pm

Join us for our Cookbook Club! We meet on the second Wednesday of the month all year long. January's book is The Ultimate Meal-Prep Cookbook by American Test Kitchen. Extra copies are always available at the circula-

tion desk. To be added to the list, please email [jfontaine@cwmars.org](mailto:jfontaine@cwmars.org)

Children's and Young Adult Programming

Play-Doh Storytime – Mondays at 10:30am

Join us for an engaging storytime filled with interactive stories and Play-Doh fun! Kids are invited to explore, squish and make new creations each week. This sensory-friendly program is perfect for young learners and their grown-ups.

Creators Club – Mondays from 4:00-5:30 PM

We will have a variety of craft materials available to put your creativity to the test! Come explore our newly rebranded Monday night program: Creators Club! January's theme is Clay Art.

Tiny Groovers – Tuesdays at 10:30am

Join Miss Paige for a new storytime! Toddlers ages 2-5 and their caregivers will dance to popular kids' tunes using while instruments and playful props,

and enjoy an interactive story each week.

Busy Baby Storytime – Fridays at 10:30am

Join Miss Paige for Busy Baby Storytime! Babies and caregivers will enjoy rhymes, movement, and simple stories that build early literacy skills in a fun and playful way.

1000 Books before Kindergarten Kick-Off Week!!

Monday, January 5th-Saturday, January 10th

Kick off Your 1000 Books Before Kindergarten Adventure!

1000 Books Before Kindergarten is a fun and impactful program that encourages children to read, builds early literacy skills, fosters a love of reading, and strengthens the bond between children and their caregivers. During the first week of our 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program, every child who signs up will receive a free book and a small gift to start their reading journey.

The Library Boogie: A Musical Puppet Show with Tom Knight, Saturday, January 10th at 11:15am

The Library Boogie is a lively musical puppet show by Tom Knight that celebrates books, stories, and the joy of reading. With catchy songs, colorful puppets, and plenty of audience participation, this family-friendly program brings the magic of the library to life for children and adults alike.

Teen Advisory Board – Wednesday, January 14th at 2:45pm

Do you want to make the teen room and teen programs work for you? We want to do that, too. Join Jess and Paige for an informal conversation about what works and what doesn't in the teen room. Ideas? Bring them! Concerns? Bring those, too!

Pancakes with Penelope – Saturday, January 17th at 11:00am

You're invited to a pancake breakfast with a very special guest – Penelope Rex! This lovable dinosaur from Ryan T. Higgins' books is visiting the library for pancakes, stories, and fun. Each child will have the chance to take a photo with Penelope and enter our book raf-

### Executive Director

### Webster Housing Authority

Webster, MA

The Webster Housing Authority (WHA) seeks an experienced and innovative executive director to lead and manage its programs, properties, and contracts. The WHA owns and operates 229 state and federal housing units. This includes 30 Ch. 200 family units, 72 Ch. 667 elderly units, 16 Ch. 689 units, and 7 MRVP Vouchers, as well as 61 federally funded units and 44 Housing Choice Vouchers.

**Required Minimum Qualifications:** A minimum of four (4) years' experience in public or private housing, community development, public administration, non-profit administration or a closely related field that demonstrates strong management and organization skills. Knowledge of the principles and practices of housing management, finances and maintenance systems in public or private housing is desired. One (1) year's experience overseeing at least three staff persons or as a significant project team leader or program administration is required. Excellent written and verbal communication skills required. Knowledge of laws regulating State and Federal housing programs is desired. Experience working with people of various socio-economic backgrounds. While not required for hiring, certification as a property manager or similar classification by a nationally recognized housing or real estate organization or by certification as an MPHA of an EOHLA-approved Massachusetts Public Housing Administrator Certification Program is desirable or must be obtained within the first year of employment. Diverse applicants are encouraged to apply.

The annual starting salary ranges from \$90,160 to \$106,071 depending upon experience, certifications, and in accordance with the EOHLA Executive Director Salary Schedule/Calculation worksheet. The work week is 37.5 hrs. per week and includes a generous benefit portfolio.

Candidates should apply in confidence by submitting a cover letter and resume to MassNAHRO, 990 Washington Street, Suite 209, Dedham, MA 02026, ATTN: Webster E.D. Search or email [info@massnahro.org](mailto:info@massnahro.org). For a complete job description go to:

<https://files.constantcontact.com/a08b9b0e001/0e4f91a3-8f36-4538-8b23-e8582e7eb1ce.pdf>

Deadline to apply is close of business on January 23, 2026. Late submissions will not be accepted.

The **WHA** is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Minorities, women, veterans, and people with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply.



# Community Connection

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# OBITUARIES

## Joan Zumpfe, 83



DUDLEY - Joa n Zumpfe, 83, passed away on Thursday, January 1st surrounded by her loving family. She is survived by her husband of 60 years, Paul, her son Christopher and her two granddaughters, Cassie and Alex. Her daughter Kristin and her partner Steve, her grandson, Nic, and her niece Michelle. Her Brother in law and his wife Carl "Zeke" and Nancy. As well as many great nieces and nephews, cousins and friends. She was pre-deceased by her parents, Jack and Lucy, her sister Nancy and her niece Barbara.

Joan graduated from Worcester State College in 1964 with a teaching degree and taught in the Whitinsville and Dudley-Charlton school districts. She later became a mainframe computer programmer work-

ing in the insurance and banking industries in Worcester and Boston and was a vital part of the Y2K conversion.

Joan was an avid bird watcher and went on safaris in Kenya and South Africa as well as on trips to the Amazon River in Peru and to the Grand Canyon. She is a past president of the Forbush Bird Club.

Joan volunteered with the Dudley Council on Aging and loved music and was a member of Opera Worcester and performed in choirs, including singing the National Anthem at a Patriots game.

She was also a devoted Red Sox fan and loved to shop from catalogs to find unique and special gifts for those she loved.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Broad Meadow Brook Wildlife Sanctuary.

or your local Wildlife Sanctuary. The family is planning a celebration of life in the spring. www.bartelfuneralhome.com for her online guestbook.

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



## Kathleen J. Kenahan, 89



WEBSTER - Kathleen J. (McCarthy) Kenahan, 89, passed peacefully Sunday, December 28, 2025 at home with her family by her side. Her husband of 32 years, Paul D. Kenahan, passed away in 2014.

Kathleen is lovingly remembered by her three children, Sandra David of Dudley, Paul Johansen and his wife Anne of Crystal River, Florida, and Sherie Bombardier and her husband Paul of Webster. She also leaves behind a cherished daughter-in-law, Maryann Johansen of Dudley. She was a proud and loving nana to seven grandchildren, Christine David and her fiancé Caleb Nolan, Alex, Jordan, Thomas, and Justin Johansen, Janelle Bombardier and Shannon Bombardier and her fiancé Kaiden Kunkel. She was also blessed with four great-grandchildren, Paxton, Jasper, Xander and Clayton. Kathleen is survived by her brother, Gerald "Gerry" McCarthy, and his wife Anne, and sister-in-law Agnes McCarthy. She also leaves several nieces and nephews, each of whom she loved dearly. She was predeceased by her beloved son Eric Johansen,

her son-in-law Jeff David, her sister Jackie, and her brothers Billy and Dennis. Born on August 2, 1936, in Medford, Kathleen was the youngest of five children of John and Mary (Merlin) McCarthy. She graduated from St. Columbkille High School in Brighton in 1954 and spent more than 50 years making her home in Webster and Dudley. Kathleen "KK" worked for many years as a waitress at the former Wind Tiki Restaurant in Webster. She was a member of Saint Louis Church and found joy in flowers, gardening, hot sunny days, traveling, and vacationing on Cape Cod with her family. Above all else, her greatest happiness came from spending time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, whom she adored deeply. Her funeral will be held at 10:30 AM on Saturday, January 17, in Scanlon Funeral Service, 38 East Main Street, Webster. Burial will be in Holy Trinity Cemetery, Dudley. Visitation will be from 9:30 AM that morning in the funeral home, prior to the service. Donations in Kathleen's memory may be made to the Center of Hope, PO Box 66, Southbridge, MA 01550, a program especially meaningful to her and attended by her granddaughter, Janelle. [www.websterfunerals.com](http://www.websterfunerals.com)

## LANTERNS

continued from page A6

land. Without it, everything floats.

Even the people we rely on most often show up this way. The neighbor who always waves. The clerk who remembers your name. The librarian who knows

where to find what you're looking for without checking the computer. None of them make speeches. They just show up, day after day, like a porch light at dusk.

I suspect that is how communities really hold together. Not through grand gestures or big announcements, but through small, dependable acts repeated

over time. Lights turned on when they are supposed to be. Doors opened when promised. People doing what they said they would do.

There is something reassuring about driving home after dark and recognizing where you are by the pattern of lights alone. The curve in the road marked by three

houses close together. The long stretch of trees broken by a single lamp. The center of town announced not by noise, but by glow.

You know where you are. You know you belong there.

I don't know when I started noticing these things. Maybe it happens slowly, without permission.

Or maybe it happens the first time you realize how unsettling it feels when a familiar light doesn't come on. When a house goes dark for good. When a storefront stays empty longer than expected.

That is when you understand how much those quiet, ordinary lights mattered all along.

So if tonight feels unremarkable, that might be because it is doing exactly what it should. The lights are on. The street looks the way it always has. The town is steady, at least for the moment. And sometimes, that is more than enough.

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Courtesy

Congratulations to the following students who were selected as November Students of the Month at St. Joseph School — Pre-K 3-year-old: Natalia Santos; Pre-K 4-year-old: Cameron LaFlash; Kindergarten: Robert Thrun; Grade 1: Kaya Sudol; Grade 2: Rayna Parslow; Grade 3: Kamila Biela; Grade 4: Callum Bergman; Grade 5: Luke Zeglen; Grade 6: Cameron Tremblay; Grade 7: Evelyn Macko; Grade 8: Neli Kuznecki. Students are awarded Student of the Month for their outstanding exemplification of Religion, Respect, and Responsibility. Keep up the great work!

## The Fools to perform at Samuel Slater's Restaurant Jan. 24

WEBSTER — Venerable Massachusetts based rock band The Fools are coming to Samuel Slater's Restaurant in Webster on Saturday, Jan. 24 at 8 p.m. Tickets are on sale now at [www.samuelslaters.com](http://www.samuelslaters.com).

Sometime around 1975, deep in the Home of the Fried Clam — Ipswich, Massachusetts — a fun-loving bunch of guys known as The Rhythm A's morphed into a new band: The Fools. And that's when the madness truly began. From the start, The Fools' mission was simple: turn an ordinary night out into the most fun anyone had ever had anywhere. Their shows became legendary for over-the-top antics, wild themes, audience pranks, and sheer joyful chaos — all wrapped around seriously great rock and roll.

In 1979, The Fools hit the airwaves with "Psycho Chicken," an X-rated parody of Talking Heads' "Psycho Killer." The single exploded on Boston radio, and the band quickly followed it up with another hit, "It's a Night for Beautiful Girls." EMI Records came calling, signing The Fools and sending them out on a national tour with The Knack. The debut album Sold Out soon followed, recorded in Miami and packed with their signature mix of humor and hooks.

The 1980s brought a storybook rise — massive Boston shows, national tours with Van Halen, TV appearances, European tours, and MTV videos. Their follow-up album Heavy Mental cemented their place in rock history. After parting ways with EMI, The Fools regrouped on Cape Cod to record what became their most successful release, World Dance Party. Fueled by radio hits like "World Dance Party," "Doo Wah Diddy," "Life Sucks...Then You Die," and "She Makes Me Feel Big," the album became an independent blockbuster, selling hundreds of thousands (or maybe millions — depending which Fool you ask).

Since then, The Fools have kept the party going with relentless touring, MTV airplay, and an unshakable fanbase that spans generations. Today, they're still at



it — bringing their trademark spectacle, humor, and heart to every stage they hit.

The Fools have shared the stage with so many bands including The Doobie Brothers, Rush, Jefferson Starship, Blondie, The Knack, Van Halen, Toto, The Plasmatics, The Bangles, Joan Jett, Steppenwolf, The Ramones, Los Lobos, Cheap Trick, Motorhead, Peter Gabriel, The Pointer Sisters, Kate Bush, Billy Squier, Southside Johnny, and countless others.

They've also rocked alongside many of Boston's best, including The J. Geils Band, The Cars, Til Tuesday, The Stompers, The Neighborhoods, Farrenheit, The Del Fuegos, Human Sexual Response, Robin Lane, James Montgomery, The Joe Perry Project, and Private Lightning.

Fifty years later, The Fools remain one of New England's most beloved — and unpredictable — rock 'n' roll institutions.

Tickets for The Fools on Saturday, Jan. 24 are on sale now at [samuelslaters.com](http://www.samuelslaters.com). Doors open at 7 p.m.; the show starts at 8 p.m. Samuel Slater's Restaurant is located at 200 Gore Rd. in Webster, outside of Worcester and less than an hour's drive from Boston, Providence, Hartford, and Springfield.



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## LEGALS

they would intersect Worcester-Providence Turnpike (State Route 146) before passing through Elmwood Street, Shaw Schools Recreational Fields, and Witter Lane. From there, the Rebuilt Lines would pass Greenwood Street and intersect Dwinell Road before entering Auburn.

Auburn: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Auburn and cross Washington Street to connect with the Pondville Substation before proceeding west, where they would intersect Ramshorn Brook, the Penn Central Railroad/Norwich, and Worcester Railroad. The Rebuilt Lines would continue west, passing through Hillside Cemetery and intersecting Central Street and Saratoga Road before crossing Interstate 90. The Rebuilt Lines would then cross Interstate 290 and pass through Auburn Recreation Complex (also known as Oxford Street Recreation Area), which is adjacent to Bayman Street. From there, the Rebuilt Lines would intersect Oxford Street, continue past Bryn Mawr Avenue, cross Dark Brook and run west, intersecting Leicester Street, Chapin Brook, Rochdale Street, Penn Central Railroad, and Drake Court. The Rebuilt Lines would cross Chapin Brook and Leicester Street before entering Leicester.

Leicester: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Leicester, transect Stafford Street and Henshaw Street, cross Grindstone Brook and Bunker Hill Road, and continue to Peter Salem Road, connecting with the Leicester Substation. The Rebuilt Lines would continue west and then transect Peter Salem Road, Pleasant Street and Memorial Drive. The Rebuilt Lines would continue southwest and cross Town Meadow Brook and Burncoat Brook, continue west, and then cross Pine Street and Charles Street before continuing northwest to pass through Burncoat Brook again as they enter Spencer.

Spencer: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Spencer and continue northwest, crossing Greenville Street, R Jones Road, Spencer State Forest and Mid-state Trail (an unpaved road). The Rebuilt Lines would continue northwest and intersect Ash Street, continue to Ashview Drive connecting to Maple Street, cross Charlton Road and continue past Pleasant View Road and Bixby Road Circle and continue northwest towards the intersection of West Main Street and Bixby Road.

The Rebuilt Lines would cross the intersection of Olde Main Street and Meadow Road before connecting to the Meadow Street Substation. From there, they would continue west over

the Seven Mile River, crossing Smithville Road before they enter East Brookfield.

East Brookfield: The Rebuilt Lines would enter East Brookfield, continue northwest to connect to the Harrington Switchyard, and then cross over Lake Lashway before entering North Brookfield.

North Brookfield: Crossing over Lake Lashway, the Rebuilt Lines would enter North Brookfield, cross Shore Road and the Five Mile River. From there, they would transect Old East Brookfield Road, continue through a wooded area and cross over the Penn Central Railroad before crossing Dunn Brook. The Rebuilt Lines would pass through the intersection of East Brookfield Road and Donovan Road, then over the Forget-Me-Not-Brook before connecting with the Lashaway Substation. From the substation, the Rebuilt Lines would continue northwest through the Donovan Road Conservation Area where they transect Fullman Road near Fullam Hill Road Conservation Area, Brookfield Road, and West Brookfield Road. The Rebuilt Lines would enter the North Brookfield Town Forest, intersecting McCarthy Road before crossing Coys Brook and continue northwest, crossing Old West Brookfield Road, Coys Brook, and Tucker Cross Road. The Rebuilt Lines then would cross Smith and Hanson Road before entering West Brookfield.

West Brookfield: The Rebuilt Lines would enter West Brookfield, cross Wigwam Road, New Braintree Road, and Birch Hill Road, enter the West Brookfield State Forest, cross Sucker Brook and Shea Road. The Rebuilt Lines would continue west and cross Madden Road, Mill Brook, Wickaboag Valley Road, Ragged Hill Road, John Gilbert Road, Lamberton Brook, Cedar Drive, and Peirce Road before passing through Rock House Reservation and Corydon W Kibbe Agricultural Preservation Restriction Area as they enter Ware.

Ware: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Ware and cross Gilbertville Road (Route 32) before connecting to the Ware Substation. From there, they would continue past the CSX Transportation Railroad, cross the Ware River, Church Street, Old Gilbertville Road, Sheehy Road, the Muddy Brook, Greenwich Road, Sorel Road, Osborne Road, and finally the Flat Brook. The Rebuilt Lines then would cross Old Poor Farm Road, King George Drive, Greenwich Plains Road, and Fisherdick Road, the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed, Beaver Brook, Peppers

Mill Pond, Old-Ware Enfield Road, Belchertown Road, Webster Road, and Belchertown Road again. The Rebuilt Lines would continue through the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed and cross the Swift River into Belchertown.

Belchertown: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Belchertown and continue through the Quabbin Watershed Reservoir, cross Winsor Dam Road, and then run between Blue Meadow Road and the Quabbin Reservoir, where they would connect to the Quabbin Switch Substation. The Rebuilt Lines would continue northwest, transect Cold Spring Road, then continue through the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed, crossing Warner Street, Earley Street, and Old Enfield Road before continuing north along the Quabbin Reservoir to enter Pelham.

Pelham: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Pelham and continue northwest into the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed to cross Packardville Road, Cadwell Creek, and the Daniel Shays Highway. The Rebuilt Lines would continue into the Cadwell Memorial Forest and cross Dunlop Brook and Amherst Road. They would continue northwest and cross over the Amethyst Brook and North Valley Road before continuing through the Buffam Brook Road Conservation Area and then crossing Buffam Road to enter Shutesbury.

Shutesbury: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Shutesbury, pass through the Amherst Watershed, and then cross Dean Brook, Sand Hill Road, Nurse Brook, and Pratt Corner Road before connecting to the Shutesbury Substation. The Rebuilt Lines are then proposed to cross over Nurse Brook again before entering Leverett.

Leverett: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Leverett and continue northwest, crossing Roaring Brook and Cushman Road. They would then cross Doolittle Brook in the Beaver Pond Conservation Area, Depot Road, Amherst Road, Long Plain Road, and the New England Central Railroad before entering Sunderland.

Sunderland: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Sunderland through the Mount Toby State Forest and Mount Toby Wildlife Management Area before crossing Montague Road, Chard Pond, and Falls Road. The Rebuilt Lines would then run along Gunn Brook and cross over the Connecticut River into Deerfield.

Deerfield: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Deerfield, cross River Road, and then continue to the west, crossing Clapp Brook, Steam Mill Road, the Boston and Maine Railroad, and Mas-

sachusetts Route 10. The Rebuilt Lines would then cross the Fuller Swamp Brook and Mill Village Road adjacent to farmland to continue through woods and farmland and ultimately cross Interstate 91. The Rebuilt Lines would then run parallel to Sand Gully Road, cross Stillwater Road, Hoosac Road, and the Deerfield River to enter Conway.

Conway: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Conway adjacent to the Deerfield River and Mohawk Trail, cross over the South River, Bardwells Ferry Road, and the Boston and Maine Railroad before entering Shelburne.

Shelburne: The Rebuilt Lines would enter Shelburne and cross the Deerfield River near Dragon Brook and Orchard Road. They would continue northwest before crossing Barnard Road. The Rebuilt Lines would then run parallel to the Deerfield River before connecting to the Deerfield #2 Substation. They would then run parallel to the Boston and Maine Railroad, cross over the Deerfield River again and then the Mohawk Trail. From there, the Rebuilt Lines would proceed north where a tap line connects to the Deerfield #3 Substation across the Deerfield River. The remainder of the Rebuilt Lines would continue northwest before terminating at Deerfield #4 Station near Main Street.

### Descriptions of Tap Line Replacements

Quabbin Switching Tap: The Project includes replacing the two tap lines in Belchertown that would connect with the Rebuilt Lines at the Quabbin Switching Tap and Tower near Blue Meadow Road. Quabbin Switching Tap extends approximately 0.1 miles to Quabbin Switching Tower in Belchertown.

Deerfield #3 Taps: The Company also proposes replacing the two tap lines that would connect to the Rebuilt Lines at the Deerfield Generating Station north of the Deerfield River in Shelburne. The Deerfield #3 Taps extend approximately 0.5 miles to the Deerfield #3 Generating Station in Buckland.

Shutesbury #704 Tap: The Company proposes replacing the two tap lines that would connect to the Rebuilt Lines at the Shutesbury #704 Substation near the Pratt Corner Road. The Shutesbury #704 Taps extend approximately 0.02 miles to the Shutesbury #704 Substation in Shutesbury.

January 2, 2026

January 9, 2026

### Commonwealth of Massachusetts

#### The Trial Court

#### Probate and Family Court

#### Essex Probate and Family Court

36 Federal Street

Salem MA, 01970

Docket No. ES25P3751GD

#### CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF

#### PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF

#### GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED

#### PERSON PURSUANT TO

G. L. c. 1908, § 5-304

In the matter of:

Michael L. Agosta

Of: Webster, MA

RESPONDENT

Alleged Incapacitated Person

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by **Lanessa Extended Care of Webster, MA**

in the above captioned matter alleging that **Michael L. Agosta** is in need of a Guardian and requesting that

**Cheryl Van Gerven of Oxford, MA** (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve **Without Surety** on the bond.

The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court.

**You have the right to object to this proceeding.** If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **01/26/2026**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the re-

turn date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE

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

**WITNESS:** Hon. Frances M. Giordano, First Justice of this Court.

Date: December 22, 2025

Pamela Casey O'Brien

Register of Probate

January 9, 2026

**TOWN OF BROOKFIELD**  
**BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**  
**Wednesday, January 28th, 2026,**  
**at 7:00pm**  
**Banquet Room, Brookfield Town**  
**Hall, 6 Central Street,**  
**Brookfield, MA**

In accordance with provisions of G.L. c.111, §31, the Board of Health will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday, January 28th, 2026, at 7:00pm in the Banquet Room of the Brookfield Town Hall located at 6 Central Street, Brookfield, MA 01506, to review and hear comments relative to a proposed amendment to the Board of Health Regulation

entitled **Restricting the Sale of Tobacco Products**. Proposed amendment in the draft regulation include, but are not limited to, amending restrictions on the sale of and the nicotine content of oral nicotine pouches.

The proposed regulation can be reviewed by contacting the Brookfield Board of Health at (508) 867-2930 extension 22 and may be found at [www.mytowngovernment.org/01506](http://www.mytowngovernment.org/01506) under Board of Health

Any person interested or wishing to be heard on this proposed regulation should appear at the time and place designated.

January 9, 2026

January 16, 2026

### Commonwealth of Massachusetts

#### The Trial Court

#### Probate and Family Court

#### Worcester Probate

#### and Family Court

#### 225 Main Street

#### Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 831-2200

Docket No. WO25P4401 EA

#### CITATION ON PETITION FOR

#### FORMAL ADJUDICATION

Estate Of:

George Rizner, Jr.

Also known as:

George R. Rizner, Jr.

Date of Death: 10/08/2025

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Christi Rizner of Southbridge MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that:

**Christi Rizner of Southbridge MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 01/27/2026**.

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

#### UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

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

**WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy,**

**First Justice of this Court.**

Date: December 24, 2025

Stephanie Fattman,

Register of Probate

January 9, 2026

For Legal Advertising Information  
Call 508-909-4127  
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## WEBSTER SENIOR CENTER

5 Church St.

(508) 949-3845

Email: SeniorCenter@

Webster-MA.gov

Senior Center hours are Monday- Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., with one Thursday a month 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Like the Webster Senior Center Facebook page to view our photographs, news and announcements. Please stop by to pick up our monthly newsletter for a complete list of activities, upcoming events, and our monthly lunch menu. You may also join our email list to view our newsletter online. You do not have to be a resident of Webster to participate in our activities and programs. ALL Seniors

are welcome!

Tri-Valley Lunches are served Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 11:30 am. Please call (508) 949-3845 at least three business days in advance to reserve or cancel your meal. A \$3.00 donation for 65 and up, and \$5 for 55- 64 is appreciated. All meals include milk, bread, and dessert. This week's menu: Tuesday, 1/13: Beef with onions and peppers, herbed potatoes, peas and carrots. Wednesday, 1/14: Roast pork with gravy, cranberry stuffing, roasted brussels sprouts. Thursday, 1/15: Bean and cheese enchilada, brown rice, chuckwag-

on corn. Friday, 1/16: Soup du jour, cranberry chicken salad, pasta salad, tomato and onion salad.

Need Transportation? Contact SCM Elderbus at 1-800-321-0243 at least two business days in advance to schedule transportation. Elderbus is available Mondays- Fridays 8:30 am- 3:00 pm.

Come down to the Bomba Beauty Salon at the Webster Senior Center! Call 508-341-8724 for an appointment. Bomba Beauty Salon is open for walk in appointments on Wednesdays from 10:00 am- 1:00 pm, and Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays by appointment only from 10:00 am- 3:00

pm. Please call (508) 341-8724 to schedule an appointment.

Come celebrate the winter season with the Friends of the Webster Senior Center! Our winter party will be on Friday, January 16th from 1:00 to 2:30 pm!

Chair Dancing Exercise classes with Forty Arroyo are the perfect workout for any fitness ability! The cost is a recommended \$3.00 donation per class. A new video class will be offered Thursday and Friday mornings, free of charge.

Now introducing Line Dancing with Forty Arroyo! Classes will start on January 26th, and will be held from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm on every 4th Monday of the month.

Knitting/Crochet group meets on Mondays from 10:00 am- 12:00 pm.

Bingo is every Tuesday and starts promptly at 1:00 pm. Please plan to arrive by 12:30 pm to allow time to buy your bingo sheets. Bingo sheets are not sold after 12:45 pm.

Do you like to play Cribbage? Our weekly Cribbage group meets every Thursday at 1:00 pm. Feel free to join us!

Calling card players or interested persons to the Webster Senior Center! Come join us for six-card or thirteen-card pitch! Six-card pitch meets on Wednesdays at 1:00 pm. Thirteen-card pitch meets on Thursdays at 1:00 pm.

Mahjongg group meets every Friday at 1:00 pm. Beginners welcome!

We now have an official Bridge group! We will be meeting every Friday from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm in

the upstairs activity room. All that are interested are welcome to join!

The Worcester County Sheriff's Office House Numbering Program will create a custom wooden sign with your house number free of charge. One sign per senior household. Please contact the Webster Senior Center at (508) 949-3845.

If you are interested in having a house number sign made for you.

Senior SAFE is a program that supports fire and life safety education for seniors. The Webster Fire Dept. will do a home visit to ensure that you have the correct smoke and CO2 alarms, and that they are working properly. This is at no cost to you! All you have to do is give them a call at (508) 949-3875.

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**Hiring?**  
**Reach More**  
**Local Applicants**



**Nathan**  
**Age 15**  
**Registration #6472**

Nathan is a happy boy who loves to smile and give high fives! He enjoys Dora the Explorer, Mickey Mouse, and Jake and the Neverland Pirates. Nathan likes watching these shows, looking at books featuring his favorite characters, and having those books read to him. He is a talented young artist who loves to draw and color—especially when an adult joins in and draws with him. Nathan also enjoys sensory play with Play-Doh or putty, and he gets especially excited when adults engage with him

during these activities. He has a great time building with blocks and Magnaformers, using his creativity to make all kinds of fun structures.

<https://www.mareinc.org/child/22554628740>

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.



## OXFORD SENIOR CENTER

323 Main St.  
(508)987-6000  
Laura Wilson, Director

Open Monday – Friday

8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Email: seniorcenter@

oxfordma.us

Website: www.oxfordma.

us

Facebook: Oxford, MA

Senior Center

Tuesdays @ 9:15am  
– Strength & Balance w/  
Donna Freeland – Cost  
\$3.00 per class

Wednesdays @ 9:15am

– Chair Yoga w/ Heidi  
Gambaccini – Cost \$3.00  
per class

Tuesdays and

Wednesday @ 10:15 am –

Needleworkers (Knitting,  
Crocheting, Needlepoint)

Bring your favorite proj-  
ect and come join the group  
for conversation and laughs.

Wednesdays @ 1:00 pm

– Chair Volleyball – Lots of  
laughs and only two rules  
(1) stay seated (2) have fun!

Thursdays @ 10:00 am –  
12:00 pm Dominoes

Monthly Activities:

Let's Talk Oxford History  
– 2nd Tuesday of each  
month @ 1pm - Sponsored  
by the Oxford Historical  
Commission

Men's Coffee Group –  
2nd Wednesday of each  
month @ 10:30am – coffee  
and pastry are served.

Tri-Valley Inc. Options  
Counseling - 3rd Tuesday of  
each month from 12:30pm  
– 2:00pm. By appointment.

Book Club – 1st Friday of  
each month @ 12:45pm –  
reserve your book from the  
Oxford Public Library

Movie Matinee –  
2nd Friday of each month  
@12:45pm– January movie  
"Game Night"

BEANO – 4th Friday of  
each month @ 12:45pm –  
arrive by 12:30pm to pur-  
chase your BEANO sheets.

Other:  
Senior Tax Work -Off  
Program: Paper applica-  
tions can be picked up at  
the Town Manager's Office

2026 Census forms will  
be arriving soon. Please  
don't forget to sign and  
return to the Town Clerk's  
Office.

Don't forget Your 2026  
Dog License(s). Oxford  
Residents aged 70 or older  
are FREE!

## Dudley Senior Center

welcomes new year with a

month filled with

programs and events

Jan. 8: the Dudley Senior Center will be celebrating December birthdays with cake and ice cream follow-  
ing the Tri-Valley lunch.

Jan. 8: Blood Pressure Clinic starting at 11 a.m. Please stop by and have Cheryl check your blood pressure.

Jan. 15: Memory Café from noon to 2 p.m. We will be serving chicken, rice pilaf, vegetables and dessert. Entertainment to be decided. The cost for this event is \$5 per person. Please RSVP for this event

by calling 508-949-8015  
or sign up in the Dudley Senior Center.

Jan. 28: Potluck Lunch from noon to 2 p.m. We will be serving American Chop-suey, salad, bread and dessert. The cost for this event is \$5 per person.

Please RSVP for this event by calling 508-949-8015 or sign up in the Dudley Senior Center.

Due to increased food costs, you must sign up for Memory Café and Potluck and give 24-hour notice if unable to make it. No shows will be charged \$5.

Activities at Dudley Senior Center:

1 p.m. Tuesdays Pitch League

11:30 a.m. Wednesdays

Dudley Senior Center

Knitters/Crafters

Tri-Valley lunches served

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Ask about Book Club!

The Senior Center will be closed on January 19 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

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## Oxford Community Center hosting Fun, Frost & Family Festival Jan. 31

OXFORD — The Oxford Community Center will be having its Fifth Annual Fun, Frost & Family Festival on Saturday, Jan. 31.

The event will kick-off with the Polar Plunge at 10:30 a.m. at Carbuncle Pond. This will be followed by a Pancake Breakfast at the First Congregational Church, 355 Main St., from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. The main events will be held on the Oxford Common from noon to 3 p.m., and will feature something for everyone including food trucks, fire pits, s'mores, music, games and more! Also starting at noon, the Oxford Library will be hosting Kids' Crafts and Storytime.

Finally, the Oxford Community Center will be having a Vendor Fair, Cookie Decorating, Magic Shows, Face Painting and a Photo Booth. Come out to this year's Winter Festival and join in the fun!

## Webster Dudley Oxford Chamber to hold Annual Meeting

AUBURN — The Webster Dudley Oxford Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting will be at J. Anthony's Italian Grill, 917 Southbridge St., Auburn, on Jan. 26 at 5:30 p.m. The Guest Speaker is Brian S. Westerlind of Webster Five.

You can register for the meeting at [www.wdochamberma.com](http://www.wdochamberma.com).

*One more chance for  
Oxford residents to drop  
off Christmas trees*

OXFORD — Christmas Trees may be dropped off at the Public Works Garage, 34 Charlton St., on Saturday, Jan. 10 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Be sure to remove all decorations prior to drop-off!

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