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Friday, July 4, 2025

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Oxford School Committee explores student growth data

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

OXFORD — The School Committee wrapped up the 2024-25 school year with its regular presentation of school data. Tara Trainor talked at length about growth scores and testing results by grade level, plus the various actions steps the schools are looking at to improve them.

Some of the results sparked concern from committee members.

Trainor started with the youngest “kiddos,” as she termed them repeatedly. She said 69 percent of kindergarteners ended the year at grade level in reading, while 81 percent did so in math. For grade 1, those figures were 54 percent in reading and 86 percent math; for grade 2, 74 percent reading and 70 percent math.

She said Chaffee School’s “action steps” including continuing “small group” instruction (something Oxford’s using in all grades, where it can), giving 60 minutes a week for math in K and grade 1 and 90 minutes in grade 2, and continuing to focus on “phonemic awareness.”

To Chair Corey Burke, the 54 percent reading at grade level score “is not that exciting. ... Our reading progress was faster in the past.” Trainor explained it by saying the new curriculum program they use is “a faster trajectory” than the previous one, so teachers and students are still getting used to it.

At Barton School, 78 percent of grade 3 kids ended at grade level in English, and 73 percent in math. “We haven’t seen them that high in grade 3 in quite a while,” Trainor said. “That particular crew is high-performing academically.”

For grade 4, the figures were 61 percent English and 67 percent math; for grade 5, 64 percent English and 54 percent math, she said. The action steps were fairly similar to those at Chaffee – more small-group work. Trainor said the grade 5 schedule now matches grades 3 and 4, and they’re sifting “learning walks” to enable more teachers to see small groups in action; the school’s also adding academic help afterschool sessions.

Palmina Griffin, however, noted the graphs didn’t all have the same side axis scales, so “when I look at some of these, it doesn’t really look like growth to me,” but she admitted she’s not familiar with the assessments being used. (Trainor said it’s nationally normed, not state-based.)

Regarding grade 5, Burke noted the kids started September at 61 percent on grade level in English, so “there’s not been significant growth” to him.

For the middle and high school, the scoring method changed from percentile to hundreds, with 650-750 being grade 6 level, 750-850 being grade 7 level, and 850-950 being grade 8 level, Trainor said. To grow one grade level means adding 107 points in a given year, but she later noted average growth is 77 points.

Grade 6’s average score was 575 – reading 590 (but vocabulary 650) and math 560 (algebra 650).

“We’re only about one grade level behind,” Trainor said. “... These students are right on the cusp – so close.”

The goal is “shortening that gap between where we’re at and

Rogerson recognized during Military Appreciation Day



Courtesy

Dudley-Webster Veterans Director Stephen Rogerson was recognized by state lawmakers in May as part of the Commonwealth’s first Annual Military Appreciation Day. His recognition was acknowledged by the Dudley Board of Selectmen on June 23.

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY — Dudley-Webster Veterans Director Stephen Rogerson has been recognized by state lawmakers for his commitment to helping local veterans as part of the Commonwealth’s first Military Appreciation Day.

The inaugural event was held at the State House on May 22 where state lawmakers and Gov. Maura Healey acknowledged notable individuals from throughout the state for their service and

community contributions. Rogerson attended the ceremony after being nominated for recognition by State Sen. Ryan Fattman, Rep. John Marsi and Rep. Joe McKenna. He was also recognized for his commendations during the Dudley Board of Selectmen’s June 23 meeting.

Rogerson spoke humbly of his experience in the state capital, including getting to sit only a few chairs away from the Governor’s seat, and admitted that many of his fellow veterans have long sought to bring his services to

the state level. Rogerson said he plans to remain serving Webster and Dudley helping local veterans.

“There were a lot of veterans there, a lot of VFW members. I was actually a little bit off because a lot of the commanders were there saying ‘Steven where’ve you been, we need you more involved in the VFW’ - I said I’m too busy in my community trying to help veterans and I don’t have time to run these different positions and become State Commander ultimately, which is what they’ve been

talking to be about for the last three years,” said Rogerson.

Rogerson received recognition from Governor Maura Healey, the State Senate and State House of Representatives for his dedicated service not just as a member of the armed forces, but also for giving back and assisting his fellow veterans in their time of need. Rogerson has served as District Director of Veterans’ Services since 2015 with 2025 marking a decade in his current position.

Zion and Reconciliation enjoy fellowship at Samuel Slater Experience

WEBSTER — The Social Ministry Committee from Zion Lutheran Church of Oxford and the Church of the Reconciliation of Webster arranged a Christian fellowship outing at the Samuel Slater Experience on June 21. Jacklyn Bonneau from Zion and Cindy Osowski from Reconciliation hosted a coffee hour in the classroom gathering spot as the doors of the museum opened.

After coffee and conversations, Jacklyn and Richard Clark, both members of Zion and Slater Experience Guides, led tours through the twenty immersive exhibits of the American Industrial Revolution. Museum goers were first introduced to the textile mill owners Samuel Slater and Jedediah Strutt. One of the visitors’ favorite stops was the Shipboard Theater Experience. The lifesized hologram of Samuel Slater aboard a reproduction of the ship that carried him from London to New York was a clear favorite. Surprise registered

Turn To **FELLOWSHIP** page **A10**



Auburn U19 girls shine bright at MTOC 2025



AUBURN — The U19 United Soccer of Auburn Girls team capped off a remarkable season with a second-place finish at the Massachusetts Tournament of Champions (MTOC), falling just short in a hard-fought 1-0 final against Weymouth. But to their coach-

es, families, and community, these girls are nothing short of champions.

Led by the passionate and dedicated volunteer coaches Mike Courtney and Matt Ferguson, the Auburn girls defied the odds all season long.

Battling through injuries and scheduling conflicts, they often played with fewer players on the field—sometimes down by one, two, or even three. Yet, their resilience never wavered.

This weekend alone, the team played four grueling

matches, including the final under intense heat and without a single substitute. Their opponents, Weymouth, had the advantage of eight subs and a backup goalkeeper, but Auburn’s heart and teamwork

Turn To **MTOC** page **A10**

Turn To **OXFORD** page **A10**



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Exciting classes from Bay Path Community Education Program

CHARLTON — The Bay Path Community Education Program is thrilled to present a selection of classes taught by their talented instructors, many of which are brand new, as they kick off their Fall Term in September.

Registration details
Start Date: Registration opens on Monday, July 7
Ways to Register:
Online at <http://www.baypath.net/bpce>
By calling their office at 508-248-5971 ext. 1715
In-person at 57 Old Muggett Hill Rd., Charlton, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Monday to Friday (summer hours)
They eagerly await your return to enhance your education, acquire new skills, and make lasting friendships.

Classes beginning Monday, Sept. 8:
Electrical Journeyman Tiers - Ends Dec. 17. Class fee: \$629. Instructor: Various

New! Introduction to Songwriting - Ends Oct. 20. Class fee: \$129. Instructor: Tim Harrington.

New! Introductory Watercolors: - Monday, Sept. 8. Class fee: \$149. Instructor: Art Furtado.

MA State Plumbing License Exam Preparation Course Tiers - Ends Dec. 17. Class fee: \$999. Instructor: Various

Massachusetts Real Estate Salesperson's Course - Ends Oct. 30. Class fee: \$459. Instructor: Joann Szymczak.

Classes Beginning Tuesday, Sept. 9:
Come Dancing! - Ballroom for Beginners Dance Package (Combined) - Ends November 25th. Class fee: \$129/couple
Instructors: Ronda Bertrand &

Tony Miloski.

New! Electrical- Basic Motor Control Self Paced Learning Lab - Ends Oct. 14. Class fee: \$499. Instructor: Kevin Ancil.

New! En Plein Air (Outdoors) Watercolors- Location: Ferjulian's Farm, Hudson. Tuesday, Sept. 9. Class fee: \$69. Instructor: Victoria Chapman.

Interested in Becoming an Electrical Apprentice? Join our Hands-On Training Program Semester 1 - Ends Dec. 18. Class fee: \$2,250. Instructor: Kevin Ancil.

Introduction to 3D CAD; The SolidWorks Way - Ends Oct. 14. Class fee: \$299. Instructor: Glen LePage.

Classes beginning Wednesday, Sept. 10:
New! Acrylic Painting- Ends Oct. 15. Class fee: \$175. Instructor: Laura Cenedella

Introduction to Blacksmithing- An Ancient Trade. Ends Oct. 15. Class fee: \$299. Instructor: Brian O'Coin.

New! Yoga for All- Ends Nov. 12. Class fee: \$149. Instructor: Marie Hills.

Classes beginning Thursday, Sept. 11:

New! Adult/Child (8+) Kid Zone; Pizza Pasta. Thursday, Sept. 11. Class fee: \$85. Instructor: Camella Sherry.

Auto Body for Beginners - Ends Dec. 4. Class fee: \$329. Instructor: Scott DesRoches.

CPR: 2 Year AHA Certification- Thursday, Sept. 11. Class fee: \$109. Instructor: Elizabeth Peppel.

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\$222,222, 52 Harrison Ave, Vrmgt Asset T, and Us Bank TNa Tr, to Builtright Realty LLC.
\$150,000, 19 Garden St, Sentance Wayne R Est, and Sentance, Christopher, to Hank Orne LLC.
\$141,000, 13 Montclair Dr, Bianculli, Jeannette E, and Bianculli, Richard M, to Dsousa & Sons Rlty & Dev.

DUDLEY

\$142,000, 1 Wysocki Dr #9, Petrone, Colleen A, and Ma Hsng Fin Agency, to Modena Inc.

OXFORD

\$627,000, 32 Camile Rd, Lafountain, Mathew R, and Lafountain, Collette L, to Pandolfi, Angela M, and Foti, Chaz.

Supervisors Unrestricted License (CSL)- Ends Oct. 16. Class fee: \$899. Instructor: Michael Giampietro.

Explore a Career in Bookkeeping - Ends Nov. 20. Class fee: \$199. Instructor: John Hedly.

New! Sweet and Savory Bao Bun Making - Thursday, Sept. 11. Class fee: \$85. Instructor: Zonya Dawson.

The Miracle of the Voice: Technique & Performance - Ends Nov. 6. Class fee: \$159. Instructor: Alida Rohr.

Classes beginning Monday, Sept. 15:
New! Autumn Floral Sunflower Design - Monday, Sept. 15. Class fee: \$85. Instructor: Dawn Bagocius.

Business Owner Exit Planning: Start with the End in Mind - Monday, Sept. 15. Class fee: \$29. Instructor: Trevor Nielsen.

Classes beginning Sept. 16:
Discover How to Become a Successful First Time Homebuyer - Tuesday, Sept. 16. Class fee: \$39. Instructor: Michael Gorman.

Classes beginning Sept. 17:
Budgeting for Beginners: Get Confident with Your Money - Ends Sept. 24. Class fee: \$59. Instructor: Donna Kondracki.

New! Evening Delights: Feast of the Harvest Charcuterie Crafting Night- Thursday, Sept. 18. Class fee: \$29. Instructor: Donna Kondracki.

New! Sopresa! (Surprise) - Lina's Choice. Thursday, Sept. 18. Class fee: \$55. Instructor: Lina D'Annunzio.

WEBSTER

\$627,000, 32 Camile Rd, Lafountain, Mathew R, and Lafountain, Collette L, to Pandolfi, Angela M, and Foti, Chaz.
\$445,100, 76 Myrtle Ave, Colon, Eddie, and US Bank NA Tr, to Jr Capitale LLC.
\$399,000, 57 Hillside Ave, Msl Properties LLC, to Dunn, Meghan, and Smith, Michelle.
\$375,000, 24 Scenic Ave, Bolduc, Alan H, and Bolduc, Deborah A, to Williams, John T, and Covert, Alaina M.
\$321,000, 21 Park St, Williams, Carol A, to Cordero, Juan C.

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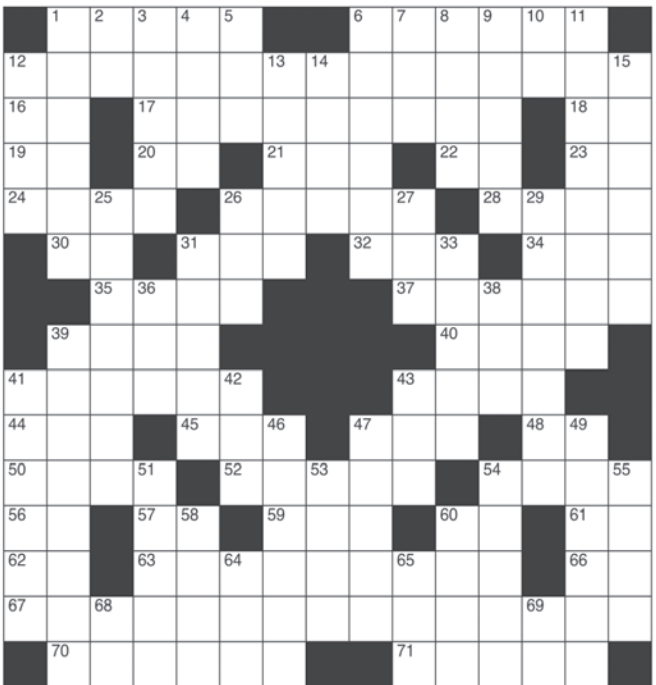
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Saturday 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Notes

6. Long-haired dog breed

12. ESPN's nickname

16. Spanish be

17. Disadvantage

18. Of I

19. Actor Pacino

20. On your way: ___ route

21. Fifth note of a major scale

22. Companies need it

23. News agency

24. Faces of an organization

26. Ponds

28. Samoa's capital

30. Partner to "Pa"

31. Adult male

32. Cool!

34. Used of a number or amount not specified

35. No No No

37. Hosts film festival

39. British place to house convicts
40. Made of fermented honey and water

41. Chief

43. College army

44. Thyroid-stimulating hormone

45. Consume

47. One point north of due east

48. For instance

50. Brews

52. Alaskan river

54. Not soft

56. Atomic #22

57. "The Golden State"

59. "The world's most famous arena"

60. Larry and Curly's pal

61. One billion gigabytes

62. Conducts inspections

63. Malaria mosquitoes

66. Unit to measure width

67. Features

70. Affairs

71. Letter of Semitic abjads

CLUES DOWN

1. Follower of Islam

2. Trauma center

3. French young women

4. Norse god

5. U.S. commercial flyer (abbr.)

6. Merchant

7. Peyton's younger brother

8. Jungle planet in "Star Wars" galaxy

9. Tree-dwelling animal of C. and S. America

10. "Pollack" actor Harris

11. Stuck around

12. Put on

13. Influential Norwegian playwright

14. Christian __, designer

15. Fulfills a debt

25. Style

26. More (Spanish)

27. A baglike structure in a plant or animal

29. Remedy
31. Disturbance

33. "The Martian" actor Matt

36. Express delight

38. Brooklyn hoopster

39. 1900 lamp

41. Motionless

42. One's mother (Brit.)

43. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)

46. Compels to act

47. Gardening tool

49. Ancient country

51. Frightening

53. Wimbledon champion Arthur

54. Popular plant

55. Database management system

58. Gasteyer and de Armas are two

60. Where soldiers eat

64. Tenth month (abbr.)

65. Illuminated

68. Atomic #18

69. Adults need one to travel





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Cornerstone Bank donation helps fund essential supplies for emergency incidents



W O R C E S T E R — Cornerstone Bank, a community bank with locations throughout Central Massachusetts, has donated \$15,000 to the Central Massachusetts Sparks Association. The organization aids Central Massachusetts firefighters and police officers through the Rehab-7 Incident Support. Cornerstone's donation will help pay for a trailer

stocked with water, blankets and protective essentials that will travel to every incident. “Our heroes on the front lines deserve our full support,” said Cornerstone CEO Todd Tallman. “We know firefighters and police will be there for us whenever we need them. We want to reciprocate and empower them to continue their important

work as safely as possible in our community.” The Central Massachusetts Sparks Association and Rehab-7 were recently created to support first responders. Organizers plan to outfit the trailer with shelving, storage containers and supplies such as disposable wipes to remove potential carcinogens from skin. They will

bring it to fire and police incidents in Southbridge, Charlton, Sturbridge, Oxford, Spencer, Leicester, Holden, Rutland and Monson. The trailer will also provide supplies incident victims might need until the American Red Cross or other help arrives.

“We think this is a great concept,” said Tallman. “It has the potential to help countless people, from those putting their lives on the line, to victims going through some of the worst moments of their lives. We hope our contribution goes a long way.”

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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 cornerstone-bank.com or call 800-939-9103.

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Matthew McGee, a dedicated and accomplished local student, graduated from the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM) on June 8th 2025, marking a major milestone in his journey to becoming a physician. He will begin his residency training in anesthesiology this summer starting in July at UMass Chan Medical School in Worcester.



A proud native of Oxford MA, McGee has demonstrated a passion for medicine and service throughout his academic career. At LECOM, he was known for his strong work ethic, leadership, and commitment to patient-centered care.

McGee's next chapter begins at UMass Chan Medical School, where he will train at some of the region's busiest hospitals and gain hands-on experience in all aspects of anesthesiology — from operating room care to pain management and critical care medicine.

Friends, family, and mentors have expressed their pride in McGee's achievements and look forward to his continued success in the field of medicine.

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Dudley to seek PILOT agreement with Nichols College

**BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT**

DUDLEY — After years of discussion with little to no progress, the Dudley Board of Selectmen is seeking to bring Nichols College to the table to potentially negotiate a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreement that would see the not-for-profit business college on Center Road provide an annual contribution to the town as part it tax base.

The proposal was brought forward and read into the record by Selectman Kerry Cyganiewicz on June 23, where he moved that the Board of Selectmen request the Dudley Assessor's Office to prepare a report outlining the estimated annual real estate tax liability of all Nichols College properties based on current assessed values and the effective current tax rate calculated as if the properties were fully taxable. This data will be used to propose a starting PILOT agreement amount of 25 percent of the taxable value of all Nichols College properties to be updated each year based on property values. The act doesn't implement the PILOT agreement but will create a starting point for discussions between the two parties which Cyganiewicz said is long overdue.

“We can't grab their hand and sign the check for them. They have to come to the table and be willing. We've been kicking this can down the road for a

while and the can just doesn't have any more kick left in it,” Cyganiewicz said.

The PILOT agreement would be similar to other municipalities and cities which utilize the 25 percent mark as the baseline. While selectmen say Nichols College has indicated a lack of funding to engage in a PILOT agreement in the past, they noted that the college has continued to purchase land which, in turn, is taken off the tax roll when it becomes college property. Cyganiewicz said the town has presented some solutions to Nichols College in the past, including what he called a “student fee” adding \$100 or \$200 to each student's tuition

that could potentially offset some of the expense of a PILOT agreement. The college has yet to embrace these recommendations. Selectmen are now getting restless and want Nichols to come to the table.

“I think we need to be a higher priority on their list,” said Cyganiewicz.

The Board of Selectman agreed voting unanimously, although new member Christopher Starczewski was absent for the meeting, to forward Cyganiewicz request to the Town Administrator and to make the numbers and any request to Nichols College public information.

Make your own balloon dinosaur with Ed the Wizard

WEBSTER — Learn how to twist and create your own dinosaur balloon animal with Ed the Wizard, appearing at the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library on Tuesday, July 14, starting at 10 a.m.

In this program, library patrons will learn the art of balloon twisting as they each twist and create their own balloon pterodactyl. This program is open to patrons ages seven and older. Although help will be given as needed, hands need to be big enough to hold and twist the balloons! Space is limited to 30 patrons; sign up is required

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Webster Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

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The Library will be closed on Friday, July 4, and on Saturdays through the summer

JOIN OUR MAILING LIST!
Want to receive updates about our upcoming events? Sign up for email alerts by visiting our website or contacting our Adult Services Librarian Jessica Fontaine at jfontaine@cwmars.org

Adult Programming
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 – Wednesday Mornings at 8:15am
Join Adult Services Librarian Jess for a relaxing yoga nidra practice to start your day on Wednesdays. 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). If you have your own yoga mat, please bring it and be sure to dress in comfortable clothing. This program takes place before the library officially opens. Registration is required and Jess will meet you at the program door.

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 for a one-hour 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.

“The Railroad in Song” with John Waterman – Thursday, July 3rd at 6:30pm
Musician and songwriter Jon Waterman has been performing his original songs along with blues, rock and country standards throughout his life. His music is influenced by intriguing characters and stories from history, the roots of the music he loves, and the diversity of the human experience. His song “Sultana” which tells the story of the Civil War steamboat disaster was selected to be featured at the Sultana museum in Marion, AR. Waterman has presented his programs in venues around the country.

The Catnip Junkies Concert – Thursday, July 10th at 6:30pm
The Catnip Junkies are the happiest, tappiest and brassiest band you’ll ever hear! New Orleans isn’t just a city; it’s a vibe! The Bourbon Street Jubilee will transport you to the heart of the Big Easy, and all of its captivating culture! As the birthplace of jazz, tap, the second line, and back alley side shows, New Orleans has it all, and so does this show! You don’t want to miss this one-of-a-kind tribute that will leave you smiling all the way home!

Programming for All Ages
Gardening with Children – Monday, July 7th at 5:30pm
This family-focused Gardening with Children program starts with an explanation to adults for how to engage children and tweens in the garden. Participants will start their own seeds or plant propagations and everyone goes home with a take-away pot of something in season.

Children’s and Young Adult Programming
Summer Eats – Mondays – Thursdays July 9th-August 14th from 12:00-1:00pm
A totally free-of-charge program that provides free meals to all kids

and teens, ages 18 and under, at locations all across Massachusetts during the summer months. Held on the Library Lawn. All kids and teens eat for free.

Scavenger Hunt – All Month Long
What’s more exciting than a scavenger hunt? Come upstairs to the Children’s room to pick up a list of things to find all around the library.

Take and Make Craft – All month long
New Take and Make kits will be available for pick up in the Children’s room on the 1st of every month, while supplies last.

Maker Mondays – Mondays from 3:30-4:30 PM
Feeling artistic? We will have a variety of craft materials available to put your creativity to the test!

Toddler Playtime – Tuesdays at 10:00 AM
Kids 0 to 6 are invited to get their wiggles out with weekly obstacle course and fun.

Mini Block Party – Tuesdays from 3:30-5:00PM
Play with magnets, wooden blocks, and Legos.

Kim the LEGO Lady – Tuesdays at 4pm
Do you love building, creating, and having fun with LEGO? Look no further! Kim the Lego Lady is here and we want YOU to be part of our LEGO CLUB adventure. Join us for interactive building challenges, new skills and create fabulous imaginative builds. For Ages 5-11.

Friendship Bracelets – Wednesdays at 11AM
Grab your bestie and come make beaded bracelets in the children’s program room. This is a self-guided program, all materials are provided. Ages 8 and up.

Nintendo Switch for Tweens and Teens – Thursdays, 2-4pm
Teens and tweens are invited to play games on our Nintendo Switch.

Outdoor Messy Play – Thursdays, 3:30-4:30pm
Outdoor Messy Play is back! We supply the messy materials for your children to play with, along with a hose for washing off outside afterwards! This program is extremely messy, please dress in something you don’t mind getting dirty or stained.

Play-doh Storytime – Fridays at 10AM
Join Youth Services Librarian Andrew for stories, play-doh, and fun! This storytime is geared toward ages 2

to 5, but siblings are welcome.
Beginner Origami-Fridays at 3:45PM
Are you interested in making origami, but you don’t know where to start? You can start here. And if you do know how to make some origami, feel free to come make some as well. For kids of all ages.

Food Explorers: Homemade Pasta – Monday, July 7th at 11:00am
Join Food Explorers to learn how to make homemade pasta! You’ll be making your own pasta dough, learning how to mix, knead, roll and slice into fettuccine noodles. Don’t worry, it’s easier than you think! Recipe is nut free but will contain eggs and gluten. Recommended for grades 3-6. Registration is required.

Food Explorers: Pizza Stuffed Naan Bread – Monday, July 7th at 1:30pm
Join Food Explorers for a deliciously cheesy cooking program! You’ll be making Pizza Stuffed Naan Breads by creating your own dough and then kneading, rolling out and stuffing with cheese. You’ll dip these tasty breads into marinara sauce after cooking! Recipe is nut free but will contain dairy and gluten. Recommended for grades 8-8

Records and Burpee Petting Zoo – Tuesday, July 8th 10:00am-12:00pm
This fun and educational program brings goats, sheep, alpacas, and silkies chickens to pet and feed, as well as a sulcata tortoise and macaws to admire. 14+ animals. Informational signs and animal handlers present to answer questions.

Henna and Balloon Animals – Wednesday, July 9th 10:30am-12:30pm
Henna Artist Mandy Roberge will offer henna while Zozo the Clown will make some balloon twisting creations to friends and families!

Rubber Duckie Soap Workshop – Friday, July 11th 3:00-4:00pm
Get ready for a fun and creative soap-making experience that’s perfect for ages 8 and up with adult supervision! Each participant will have the opportunity to make their very own soapy creation using our high-quality glycerin-based soap. This program required registration.


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 two 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 fruit or dessert. This week’s menu: Tuesday, 6/8: Egg frittata, stewed tomatoes, O’Brien potatoes, fruited ambrosia. Wednesday, 6/9: Chicken piccata, garlic mashed potatoes, roasted broccoli, lemon pudding. Thursday, 6/10: Meatballs with onion gravy, bowtie pasta, peas, pineapple. Friday, 6/1: Soup Du Jour, Turkey salad sandwiches, bean salad, graham.

Are you looking to show off your musical knowledge? Come and join us for Musical Bingo on Thursday, July 10th at 5:45 PM! Bingo cards will be available for purchase for \$3 each.
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 on 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.
We are now offering MOVIE MATINEES every Wednesday at 1:00 pm! Popcorn is provided, no registration is needed. July movies include: Elvis G.I Blues on July 2nd, Slap Shot on July 9th, A Streetcar Named Desire on July 16th, Please Don’t Eat the Daisies on July 23rd, and The Goodbye Girl on July 30th.

The Friends of the Webster Senior Center will be hosting their Forget-Me-Not Café on Monday, July 14th! Come for music from your favorite artists performed by Edward Barnett! Tri-Valley will be hosting another Baked Potato Bar for the event- please sign up before July 7th to be included!
Are you ready for Christmas in July? Come celebrate on Friday, July 25th with the Friends of the Webster Senior Center! There’ll be cookies, ice cream, and a sing-along event with Roger Tincknell!
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.
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!
Calling all bridge players! Are you looking to spend an afternoon playing Bridge? We’re looking to get a group together! If you’re interested, please leave your name and number with the front desk. Once we have enough sign-ups, we’ll see what day works best for everyone!
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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Friday's Child



**Amythist
Age 11
Registration # 8831**


Amythist is a smart, sweet, and creative young girl who enjoys a variety of fun activities. She loves gymnastics, dancing, music, riding her bike, and doing arts and crafts. She attends elementary school and enjoys being around her peers, especially during social or creative activities. Though she can be a bit shy at first, Amythist opens up as she becomes more comfortable and shows a fun, caring personality. She enjoys indulging in girly things and shares a special connection with her social worker over their shared love of Bath & Body Works products. Amythist thrives when she feels safe, supported, and encouraged to be herself.

<https://www.mareinc.org/child/21181269057>

Can I Adopt?

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

The process to adopt a child from foster care includes training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you. These steps will help match you with a child or sibling group that your family will fit well with. To learn more about adoption from foster care visit www.mareinc.org. Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) can give you guidance and information on the adoption process. Reach out today to find out all the ways you can help children and teens in foster care.



OXFORD SENIOR CENTER

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

Open Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Email: seniorcenter@oxfordma.us
Website: www.oxfordma.us
Facebook: Oxford, MA Senior Center

The Oxford Senior Center will be CLOSED on July 4th in observance of the holiday.

Lunches are served on Tuesdays and Fridays @ 11:45 am. Meals are prepared by our in-house cook! Please call at least 48 hours in advance to reserve a lunch or come in and sign up. DINE IN for \$5.00 and TAKE OUT for \$6.00. (suggested donation) All meals come with a beverage and dessert.

Weekly Activities:
Mondays and Fridays @ 10:00 am – Cribbage
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 project 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 – Dominoes
Fridays @ 9:00 am – Walking Club (weather permitting) Wear your comfy shoes and meet at the senior center.

Monthly Activities:
Let's Talk Oxford History – 2nd Tuesday of each month @ 1pm - Sponsored by the Oxford Historical Commission
Blood Pressure Clinic – 2nd Tuesday of each month @ 10:30 am
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 – 2:30pm. By appointment.
SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) – 3rd Wednesday of each month. 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 @12:45 – July movie “Moving On”
BEANO – 4th Friday of each month @ 12:45pm – arrive by 12:30pm to purchase your BEANO sheets.

BUS TRIP:
Red Apple Farm, Smith's Country Cheese, and lunch @ The Inn at East Hill Farm – September 11th \$129 pp. Spots are still available for this taste of New England day trip at a great price !
Call 508-987-6000 or stop at the senior center to get more information and to sign up.

Oxford selectmen cover wide array of topics

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

OXFORD — Selectmen made short work of their last meeting’s agenda, dealing with short-term borrowing, water, propane and booze.

The first of those involved \$7 million in bonds for ongoing school repair work approved at the Oct 2023 Town Meeting and a Jan 2024 special election. Town Treasurer/Collector Jillian Patch said she got three bids “all very close,” with the best offering a 4 percent interest rate with a premium of \$38,630. It’ll be valid for 252 days; at that time, the town will roll it into a long-term (probably 20 year) bond.

The work has several facets. Most critical are roof repairs for Chaffee, Barton and the High School – the entire roofs of the first two (estimated at \$2.8 and \$2.7 million respectively) and a section of the third (esti-

mated at \$1.25 million). The two elementary schools also need foundation repairs due to oxidation and rusting of rebar (\$859,000) and some siding replacement (\$600,000). The total included a contingency for inflation of \$1.76 million.

Based on what Finance Director Katie McKenna said in Oct 2023, it will initially mean a tax hike to average households (\$350,000 value) of \$123 a year. But that will be partly offset in a few years when the police station debt ends. Starting in fiscal 2029, the schools’ share will be just \$63.49 a year; with taxes paid in two parts every year, that’s “less than the cost of dinner,” she said then.

On June 17, Board Chair John Eul said he hopes the long-term rate will be better than 4 percent, noting “This is the first [borrowing] in years.”

After the board approved that, DPW Director Kevin

Duffy described a reimbursement agreement with Aquarion related to the McKinstry Dam project. While the road’s open for that, Aquarion’s installing a new, larger water line estimated at \$78,000. He noted it’ll be a unit-price contract, “not lump sum job” covering a stretch that’s “not more than a couple houses” beyond the dam itself. When done, Aqaurion will do “curb to curb” paving, he added.

The dam project as a whole is being funded largely by a \$1 million state grant that requires the work to be done by the end of fiscal 2026.

From water, the board transitioned to fire – as in approving an enlarged flammable storage license for R & L Carriers at 6 Pioneer Dr. The firm received the OK to have two 1,000-gallon above ground tanks, 50 30-pound tanks, three 1000-gallon underground tanks, and

400-gallon cylinders for propane that’ll be used on site to fuel its forklifts.

The owner noted he’d found the original license included “things that are not correct,” so he sought to correct them.

Finally, the selectmen donned their Liquor Board hats for a short public hearing on transferring the license at Days Inn Tavern on Main Street to a new name (Better Days Inc to Ray Way Inc). The people involved are the same; owner Mike Langway said he’s buying the business off his father and plans to “run [it] the same way.”

“I know the paperwork’s daunting. That’s the state,” Eul said. “...The town has done it’s due diligence and you’re good to go.”

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

Ryan Tremblay performs for All Saints students



WEBSTER — On June 10, the student body at All Saints Academy was treated to a concert by Ryan Tremblay. Entitled the National Eucharistic Revival, the program consisted of original works of Ryan’s Christian music and his ministry. Throughout the performance, Tremblay shared anecdotes of his faith journey, which were very powerful to students and staff alike.

Tremblay, who now resides in Tennessee with his family, invited his wife and triplets to join him in the performance. It was especially meaningful to some teachers and staff as he introduced Elizabeth to everyone because she attended St. Anne School before it merged with St. Louis to become All Saints Academy in 2016. Even more amazing was that Elizabeth’s mother was the music teacher at St. Anne’s at the time - and teachers and staff remembered her too! The students were also impressed by Ryan and Elizabeth’s three sons, who sang a few songs and spoke with

the students after the performance. A riveting part of the concert was when the All Saints Academy choir joined the Tremblay Family on stage to sing Ryan’s song “Glow in the Dark.” The choir practiced in advance and together this musical set was emotional and incredibly moving.

It was a wonderful experience for the students at the school to make connections with the Tremblay children, talk about what it is like to perform

in front of so many people, play music with their parents, and travel about the country sharing in the ministry work of their mom and dad. It was one of the first times that the students could directly relate to peers - people of nearly the same age, who share the same faith, attend Catholic school, and face the same challenges and successes as they do. It was a very uplifting and affirming experience for all in attendance.

Friends of Auburn Library hosting summer book sale

AUBURN — The Friends of the Auburn Public Library will hold a Summer Book Sale on Saturday, July 19 at The Auburn Public Library, 369 Southbridge St., 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Cash, check, or PayPal. Questions? email: friendsofauburnlibrary@gmail.com or to join our mailing list. Watch for upcoming Friends events on the Auburn Library website (<http://auburnlibrary.org>) or on our Facebook page ‘Friends of the Auburn Public Library’. New members are welcome! Please join us at our upcoming events. And consider becoming a member because you can never have too many Friends!



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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
STONEBRIDGE PRESS PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Make the most of your summer

This past weekend’s wet weather aside, summer has finally arrived with its warmth and vibrant energy. As we step into this long-awaited season, it is crucial that we seize the opportunity to embrace the outdoors, bask in the sun’s rays, and make the most of these few precious summer months.

The transitional period from spring to summer has been marked by an uncharacteristic gloom, with the dreary weather dampening spirits and limiting outdoor activities. But as the days grow longer and the sun regains its strength, let us reinvigorate our spirits with the bright prospects of summer.

There is an inherent enchantment that comes with this season, leading us to explore and indulge in the myriad of activities that the warmer months offer. It is the time to relish in the simple pleasures that nature provides, to feel the grass beneath our feet and to savor the coolness of a refreshing dip in the water.

Embracing summer not only renews our connection with the natural world but also nurtures our mental and physical well-being. Studies have consistently shown the positive impact of spending time outdoors, from reducing stress and anxiety to improving overall mood and cognitive function. It is during these sunny months that we have the opportunity to recharge our batteries, to foster a sense of balance, and to enhance our overall quality of life.

Summertime presents us with a golden chance to reconnect with our communities. Festivals, concerts, and outdoor events are resuming, offering opportunities for shared experiences and the celebration of the arts and culture that make our society thrive. By participating in these activities, we not only support local economies but also foster a sense of unity and togetherness that can heal the wounds inflicted by recent hardships.

Moreover, summer offers an array of recreational pursuits that cater to everyone. Whether it is hiking, picnicking in scenic spots, trying out water sports, or simply lounging in the sun with a captivating book, there is something for everyone. These leisurely activities allow us to create lasting memories, deepen relationships, and inspire a sense of adventure within us.

As we immerse ourselves in the joys of summer, remember to do so responsibly. Climate change is an ever-present threat, and our actions must reflect a commitment to the environment. As we embrace outdoor activities, let us also prioritize sustainable practices, such as reducing waste, conserving water, and protecting natural habitats. By doing so, we can ensure that future generations will have the privilege to enjoy the beauty of summer as we do today. Let us make this one summer to remember!

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

My strength is made perfect in weakness

Why do good people suffer? Why, when we try to follow Christ, do we still face illness, tragedy, and hardship? The Apostle Paul asked the same question, and the answer he got from our Lord Jesus is “My strength is made perfect in weakness.”

Saint Paul heard these words when he was trying to figure out why he suffered so much, even as he prayed for relief. Throughout the great Apostle’s life, he suffered to an extent that few of us could ever relate with. Five times he was whipped with 39 lashes; three times beaten with rods; once stoned almost to death; three times ship wrecked, even drifting out at sea for a night and day; numerous times imprisoned; threatened continuously by robbers, by his fellow Jews, by the Roman authorities; often traveling in hunger; sleeping in the wilderness; and possibly the greatest suffering of all was the emotional rejection he felt from the people he so greatly loved.

The Apostle Paul understood suffering and could relate with the worst of turmoil. And in addition to all his physical pain, he confessed that “a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, unless I think too highly of myself.” Some other inner Cross antagonized Saint Paul to such a degree that he begged God to remove his burden. He writes, “I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me, but God said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’”

Here we see the greatest missionary of history, and one of the greatest saints of our Church, pleading with God to take away his suffering, and yet the Lord doesn’t remove his cross. Instead, Christ teaches St. Paul an invaluable lesson – “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in your weakness.”

In the eyes of the world, weakness is failure. But in the Kingdom of God, weakness becomes the path to divine strength. The Cross, once a symbol of shame, becomes the tree of life.

Too often I see people confused with the crosses they bear in life. One dear lady I frequently visited used to say to me, “I don’t know what I did to deserve all this pain and suffering. I am a good person. I went to church regularly. I’ve tried to treat others well. Why is God making me suffer now in my old age? What have I done to deserve this?”

I listened to her confusion and gently tried to explain how the saints, who modeled lives of holiness, weren’t exempt from suffering, pain, and even horrible death.

I think of Saints Peter and Paul and the twelve Apostles. These men represented Christ’s closest followers, those who intimately walked with the Lord and dedicated their lives to proclaim His message to the world. And yet, when we examine the lives of these great apostles, all of them suffered terribly throughout their lives. I described the crosses of St. Paul, but St. Peter was crucified upside down. The other apostles endured torture. All but one of the twelve died as martyrs. And the one who didn’t was imprisoned and exiled.

Saint Paul describes the life of the Apostles: “To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. We labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now... We are unknown, yet well known; we die, yet behold we live; are chastened, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.”

To follow Christ, and to stay faithful to His teachings, is no guarantee that life will be easy. Too many Christians believe the heretical teachings of the “Prosperity Gospel” which promises believers health, wealth and prosperity if one believes in Jesus. That’s a utter distortion of the Gospel. Yes, Jesus Christ promised his followers an “abun-



BEYOND THE PEWS

By FR. LUKE A. VERONIS
SAINTS
CONSTANTINE
AND HELEN
GREEK
ORTHODOX
CHURCH,
WEBSTER

...dant life,” but not in a worldly, materialistic sense!

Jesus promises that He will be with us always. He promises to give us peace and strength in the face of any temptation and cross that life may bring. He promises to fill us with His divine joy, love and peace, which no exterior circumstance can take away. He allows us to begin tasting here and now the Kingdom of Heaven and enter into the fullness of His Kingdom after our death.

Our Lord promised many things, but He never promised that life would be easy, comfortable, prosperous and healthy. Some may have a comfortable, even prosperous life, but that is no sign of God’s blessing. St. Paul teaches to be content with whatever we have - whether we have much or whether we have little. Whatever life gives us isn’t important, but how we live our lives with what we have is of the utmost significance!

Look at the life of Christ Himself. Jesus was God incarnate and yet he experienced life as a refugee and immigrant, raised in a poor family, often misunderstood and rejected by others, serving people with love and doing only good, yet in return receiving ridicule, hatred and persecution. Ultimately, whenever we look upon Jesus on the Cross, we remember how He invited all His followers to “deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me.”

Crosses are a part of life. As Bishop Gerasimos of blessed memory used to say, “Life is not a problem to be solved, but a mystery to be lived.” The Crosses we bear in life are often mysteries we can’t understand. Yet we carry them with faith and in hope.

We learn to not only endure but to actually live with God’s grace sustaining us in the midst of every cross. “My grace is sufficient for you,” our Lord says. “For my strength is made perfect in your weakness.”

Jesus taught St. Paul what the first Beatitude means, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” To be truly poor in spirit implies how we understand that we have nothing, we are nothing, before God. We stand naked before Him trusting solely in His grace. Precisely when we become spiritual paupers can we turn to God in hope and rely completely upon Him.

God allows his precious saints, like the Apostles Paul and Peter, to experience suffering and abandonment so that they won’t think too highly of themselves. It is when we become too comfortable with ourselves, when we think too highly of our accomplishments, when we feel proud of who we are, precisely then we risk the danger of trusting in ourselves and not in God!

We all must become poor in spirit in order to learn to trust solely in God’s grace. When we face the unexpected challenges, the daunting crosses, and the seemingly unbearable sufferings of life, remember that “His strength is made perfect in our weakness.” Remember that “His grace is sufficient for us.” Remember to turn to our Heavenly Father and throw yourself into His loving embrace. No matter what life brings, He cares for us. He sustains us. He never abandons us.

Let me conclude with Saint Paul’s words to the Romans: “Who can separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness or peril or the sword?... Yet in all these things, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers nor things present or things to come, nor height nor depth nor any other created thing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

So, don’t run from your weakness. Don’t be confused by your suffering. Carry your Cross with faith and in hope. Trust in Him. Let His grace become the very gift where His power is revealed.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Etched in stone

To the Editor:
The Webster-Dudley Veteran’s Council will be dedicating a memorial on July 4 at 11 a.m. in front of its compound on Veteran’s Way in Webster. The Memorial will honor three of its members, George Bibeau, Joseph LaPlant and Donald Wayman. It would take hours to mention all that these three accomplished.

I consider it an honor to be asked to say a prayer at this ceremony since

I can quickly think of at least a half dozen Council members who are more deserving than me, such as Commander Victor Jankowski, Ron Prest, Al Beland, Andy Kozlowski, Randy Snow, and Jim Brinker to say a prayer. It is my opinion to say that these three Veteran Gentlemen deserve to have their names etched in stone.

JOSEPH E. SENDROWSKI
DUDLEY

Retro Backyard BBQ Recipes

Retro suburbanites elevated backyard barbecues to a new level that’s worth imitating today! Want to host the perfect patio party? Put up the badminton net, set the picnic table with retro linens, mix up some South Seas cocktails and fire up the charcoal grill. Don’t forget to serve authentic retro recipes. Here are some that baby boomers are sure to love (and remember)! **



TAKE THE HINT	Chile Con Queso Dip
KAREN TRAINOR	The ultimate retro cheese dip uses, what else? Velveeta cheese!

Ingredients: One pound Velveeta cheese; one medium can tomatoes with chiles; 1/4 cup milk.

Directions: Cut cheese in cubes. Add tomatoes and milk. Microwave on medium/high for two minutes. Stir and repeat until cheese melts and dip is well blended. Serve with Fritos corn chips and tortilla chips.

**

Barbecued Spareribs, Circa 1956

This recipe was the standard of backyard barbecues in 1950s suburbia.

Ingredients: Four pounds spareribs, cut into serving pieces; two tablespoons salt; ½ cup melted butter; ½ cup chili sauce; two tablespoons vinegar; one tablespoon Worcestershire sauce; ½ teaspoon garlic salt; ½ teaspoon chili powder; 1/4 teaspoon pepper.

Directions: Rub meat with salt. Place in shallow roasting pan. Bake one hour in moderate oven 350 degrees, baste three and four times with meat drippings. In sauce pan, combine melted butter, chili sauce, garlic salt, chili powder, pepper, blend well; cook ten minutes over low heat. Remove meat from oven; place on grill; broil, basting with sauce frequently. Turn only once. Allow 30 minutes for well done steak. Yield: four servings.

**

Ham and Pineapple Kabobs

Shish Kabobs were the fare of choice for “outdoor gourmets” in the early 1960s. This simple vintage recipe has a Hawaiian twist.

Ingredients: three tablespoons brown sugar; two tablespoons distilled white vinegar; one tablespoon vegetable oil; one teaspoon prepared mustard; 3/4 pound cooked ham, cut into one inch cubes; 1 (15 ounce) can pineapple chunks, drained; skewers, presoaked.

Directions: Preheat grill for high heat.

In a medium bowl, mix together brown sugar, vinegar, vegetable oil, and mustard. Thread ham and pineapple chunks alternately onto skewers. Lightly oil grill grate. Place skewers on the prepared grill, and brush liberally with the brown sugar mixture. Cook for 6 to 8 minutes, turning frequently and basting often. Serve when heated through and richly glazed.

**

Hawaiian Dessert Salad

The South Seas influence is merged with typical 1960s convenience in this favorite dessert, which has been making the cookout and Luau rounds for 60 years.

Ingredients: one small can Mandarin oranges, drained; one can crushed pineapple; 8 ounce package sour cream; small package orange Jell-O; two cups mini marshmallows; one container of Cool Whip

Directions: Stir dry orange Jell-O and orange sections into sour cream. Stir in pineapple. Add marshmallows and Cool Whip. Chill well before serving.

**

Hawaiian Mai Tai Cocktail

Every self respecting hostess in the 1960s knew how to serve up a decent cocktail. After all, it often took a few strong ones to keep dad on grill duty all afternoon.

Ingredients: two jiggers light rum (3 ounces); one jigger dark rum (1 ½ ounces) ; ½ jigger orange liqueur (3/4 ounce); ½ cup pineapple juice; 1/3 cup orange juice; one tablespoon lemon juice; three ice cubes; Maraschino cherries or fresh pineapple spears.

In a blender container combine rums, liqueur and fruit juices. cover; blend to mix. Add ice cubes, one at a time; blend after each till chopped. Pour into glasses; garnish with cherries or pineapple. Makes 2 (6 ounce) servings.

**

Win Dinner for Two at the Publick House

Your tips can win you a great dinner for two at the historic Publick

Time is moving faster!

Is time moving faster? That's what Terrence McKenna thought.

He asked the question, "What lasts longer: a million years with nothing happening or ten seconds packed with fifty thousand moments?"

He postulated that in the universe's early days, so little was going on that time itself felt slow. Back then, the cosmos was almost empty—few particles, few forces, few events—and now, there seem to be countless events and moments happening at an exponential rate. More and more events are piling up in our days. Which makes one feel as if time is speeding up.

McKenna saw this acceleration on a universal scale—but we feel it every day in our own lives. The average morning now contains more stimuli than a whole week used to. We're living in a digital downpour.

Everything we see is designed to pull at our attention. One sensational headline after another—storm warnings, market crashes, political scandals—but that's just the beginning. Every screen you look at flips to a new commercial, a pop-up ad, a push notification begging you to shop, a sponsored post in your feed, a "limited-time offer" email, or an autoplay trailer for the next hot show. Each one a mini-event in an avalanche of distractions.

With so many things happening at once—our days feel overloaded. Time seems to slip through our fingers.

Is there anything we can do about it? We could run away to a cabin in the woods and hide from all the screens. Short of doing that, there is no escape.

We are trapped in an ever-accelerating timeline—more events, and more noise happening faster and faster each day. If you let it. It can take you from your destiny.

We stand at a crossroads. One path leads us deeper into distraction, a life dictated by alerts, ads, and headlines we didn't choose. Another tempts you toward total escape—setting off for a remote cabin to become a hermit in the woods.

There is a third way, the most powerful of all: to become the navigator of your own timeline. You don't need to run from the storm. You just need to grab the wheel and live with intention.

POSITIVELY
SPEAKING

TOBY
MOORE

It's easy to become like a leaf blown around in the wind and tossed this way and that by every notification, every breaking story, every flash of someone else's success. When we make those outside events our priority, we're not living our own dream but chasing pieces of someone else's. It's not wrong to stay informed or enjoy a viral moment, but when our attention is always pulled toward the next big thing, our own purpose gets lost in the whirlwind.

Living intentionally means waking each morning with a clear sense of where you want to go. It starts by naming your biggest dream—writing that book, launching that project, getting that promotion, mastering that skill. Keep that vision at the front of your mind as you move through your day. When a notification tugs at you, ask yourself: "Is this helping me get closer to my goal?" If not, let it go and steer back to your course.

Chart your journey in small, steady steps. Block out time on your calendar for your highest priority—twenty minutes of writing, fifteen minutes of practice, half an hour of research. Whatever it is that you choose. Protect these pockets of purpose like sacred appointments.

As you return to them day after day, you'll see your timeline bend in your favor. The hours you invest become deep rivers of progress rather than shallow puddles of distraction.

Along the way, celebrate each mile marker. Did you apply for that job? Did you send that first email? Each success, no matter how small, proves you're charting the right course. Adjust as needed—if a path grows rocky, try a new route—but never lose sight of your horizon.

Even if the pace of life keeps accelerating, your path doesn't have to. Time, like clay, is shaped by the hands that hold it. Don't let it be molded by algorithms, ads, and someone else's agenda. Choose your moment. Chart your course. And let each small, steady step become the story of who you're becoming and advancing toward the life you've always imagined.

Toby Moore is a columnist, the star of Emmy - Nominated A Separate Peace, and the CEO of Cubestream Inc.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Giaquinto's reasoning cannot go unchallenged

To the Editor:
I don't mean to belabor the outlandishness of John Giaquinto's reasoning in his letter of June 20 in the Webster Times, but I suspect many others agree with him, and his views just can't go unchallenged.

He justifies obliterating the USAID budget because it included \$1.5 million for a Diversity Equity and Inclusion musical in Ireland; \$2.5 million for electric vehicles in Vietnam; \$2 million for sex changes and LGBT programs in Guatemala and \$6 million for tourism in Egypt. I don't know what the rationale was for these expenditures — they may be legitimate, for all we know. But even if they were as frivolous, as Mr. Giaquinto suspects, those puny disbursements don't amount to a dribble of spit in the \$40 billion USAID budget, which in itself is less than one percent of the total federal budget.

I can live with that dribble. What I can't live with is the billions cut from the agency's nutrition and health programs that save millions of lives. Here is just one example, recently reported by New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof. Packets of a peanut-based paste known as Plumpy Nut, manufactured by Edesia Nutrition in Rhode Island and Mana Nutrition in Georgia can supply protein, micro-nutrients and everything a child's body needs at a daily cost of about \$1 per child. Trump's closure of USAID led to, among other things, cancellation of all orders for this miracle paste. There are 685,535 boxes of this paste stockpiled in warehouses in Rhode Island and Georgia. It has no other use other than to save children from starving. American taxpayers have already paid for them. Yet Trump's budget cuts are preventing them from being distributed where they are desperately needed. That is just one example. It would take reams of newspaper to catalogue all the senseless cruelty inflicted upon the world by ending USAID.

If I understand him correctly, Mr. Giaquinto also thinks we can ignore constitutionally-guaranteed due process, because all those immigrants being rounded up should have thought about the consequences before they crossed the border. Anyway, it would just take too long, and we need to get rid of them pronto. I'd like Mr. Giaquinto and everyone who agrees with him to consider this hypothetical.

Suppose he goes shopping or to his job. As he parks at the local Market Basket or his place of employment, his vehicle is

suddenly surrounded by SUVs. Half a dozen masked, heavily-armed men surround him. They don't identify themselves. They wear no identification on their uniforms. They drag him from his car, force him to the ground and handcuff him. He protests that he is an American citizen and has committed no crime. The agents never identify themselves — for all anyone knows, they could be a bunch of local thugs. They don't answer any of his questions. In a matter of hours, he's on an airplane headed for a detention center in Louisiana.

When his family learns what happened, they hire a lawyer and submit his birth certificate to a federal district court. The government argues that they have information from sources they can't disclose, that he has a foreign-sounding name or a tattoo that convinces them that he is a dangerous illegal immigrant. Unfortunately, it turns out that the court has no jurisdiction anyway because he is already in Louisiana so his family will have to go file a complaint with a federal court there.

But wait. Even before any of that can happen Mr. Giaquinto has already been sent to an infamous prison in El Salvador or perhaps South Sudan where he can spend the rest of his life rotting away in jail or hoping he is not executed or tortured to death. Oh, ICS subsequently admits they made a mistake. Sorry, but there's nothing they can do about it now.

Yes, Mr. Giaquinto, banks, electric companies and cable companies make mistakes. But none of them have the power to disrupt lives the way that the federal government does. And certainly in the execrable way that the Trump government disrupts lives, violates the constitution and lies about it. Mr. Giaquinto's case of abduction, I hope, is only hypothetical. For many other immigrants, visiting foreigners with legitimate visas and yes, even American citizens, the sad truth is that it is not hypothetical at all. It has actually happened. And they never get the opportunity to challenge the charges against them in court. That opportunity — due process — is an essential element of American constitutional law. It should be available to everybody. Everybody!

Let me quote from Mr. Giaquinto's own letter: "Without laws we would have no rights."

If only the Trump Administration actually lived up to that principle.

FRANK MAGIERA
DUDLEY

Gardening in extreme heat

The recent heat wave that swept across much of the country is a good reminder to take extra care of our plants and ourselves as temperatures climb. Extreme temperatures can take their toll even on plants normally suited to the growing conditions.

Many plants suffer when short- or long-term temperatures exceed 86 degrees Fahrenheit. You will see withering, leaf and flower drop, stunting and more on heat stressed plants. The longer the heat wave persists the greater the risk of damage.

When daytime temperatures rise above 90, and night temperatures remain above 70, blossoms drop, and poor fruit development may occur on tomatoes.

Temperature extremes also impact pepper productivity. When temperatures climb to 95°F or higher the pollen is sterile, and flowers may drop. Small fruit may also fall from the plant during such hot spells.

We can't change the



GARDEN
MOMENTS
MELINDA
MYERS

weather, but we can help our plants cope when temperatures soar. Provide some midday and afternoon shade for plants struggling with the heat. Move containers to a shady location and use a patio umbrella or shade cloth suspended on hoops or stakes to provide your permanent plantings with a bit of relief.

Mulch the soil to conserve water, keep plant roots cooler, suppress weeds, and improve the soil as it decomposes. Spread a one-to-three-inch layer of leaves, evergreen needles, woodchips and other organic matter on the soil surface surrounding plants. The coarser the material, the thicker the layer of mulch needed. Pull mulch away from the trunk of trees and the stems of shrubs

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 email KDRR@aol.com. Hints are entered into a drawing for dinner for two at the historic Publick House Inn.

and other plants. You obtain multiple benefits from this one task while burning a few calories and strengthening your muscles.

Water plants thoroughly when the top few inches of soil are crumbly and moist. Plants will develop deeper roots able to access water from a larger area, making them more drought tolerant and pest resistant. Avoid frequent light watering that encourages shallow roots more susceptible to drought stress. Make sure new plantings, moisture lovers, and stressed plants are the first to receive a good, long drink.

Don't overlook established trees and shrubs that need a helping hand during extended periods of hot, dry weather. Soak the area under the tree's dripline when the top four to six inches of soil are crumbly and slightly moist. Provide ten gallons of water per inch diameter of tree trunk measured at 4.5 feet high.

Water early in the day, when possible, to reduce moisture loss to evaporation. Use soaker hoses and drip irrigation whenever possible. You'll use less water by applying it right to the soil where it is needed.



Photo Melinda Myers

Soaker hoses and drip irrigation save water by applying it directly to the soil where it is needed.

Check container gardens daily. Water thoroughly when the top inch or two of soil is dry.

Take care of yourself when gardening especially during hot weather. Try to work in the garden when temperatures are cooler and in the shady spots in your landscape. Take frequent breaks and drink plenty of water.

Cover up your skin with brightly colored, loose-fitting clothing made of densely woven fabrics. Wear a broad-brimmed hat to

protect your skin and UV-blocking sunglasses for the health of your eyes.

Apply a broad-spectrum UVA & UVB sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher every day. Apply it 30 minutes before going outdoors and every two hours. You'll prevent sunburn and skin damage while making it easier to return to the garden each day.

With proper care, you and your plants will be better able to withstand the summer heat.

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

HINT
continued from page A6

House Historic Inn in Sturbridge! Simply send in a hint to be entered into a random drawing. One winner per month (or whenever enough submissions are received) 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

Dudley Grange seeking vendors and artisans for annual Apple Festival

DUDLEY — This year's Dudley Grange Apple Festival is Saturday, Oct. 4, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The festival takes place on the lawn in front of the historic Dudley Grange Hall, located at 139 Center Rd. in Dudley.

The festival is held in conjunction with the Black Tavern Historical Society's annual Craft Fair, which is located across the street from the Dudley Grange. The Apple Festival features live music, hot apple crisp and other delicious food options. This is a rain or shine event.


For additional information and to register for a space, email karen.gillon@yahoo.com.




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- 

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- 

- Listing price: \$550,000
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 - Basement: partial | Unfinished






JAMES GLICKMAN

Principal

508-769-5007

jglickman@glickmankovago.com



JONAH D. GLICKMAN

Vice President

508-868-3765

jdglickman@glickmankovago.com



Courtesy

The Knights of Columbus 228 council had a busy week of events last week supporting the Dudley and Webster communities. Several members assisted in the setting up of the Strawberry Festival in Dudley and hosted a table of fun crafts for children. On Sunday, June 22, we hosted a French Toast breakfast at Saint Louis Church in Webster and helped grill food for an event at the Saint Anthony of Padua Church in Dudley, which was honoring their Priest, Father Dan, who is transferring to another Parrish. The breakfast proceeds are being donated to the Visitation House in Worcester.

Webster man raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Masons



Courtesy

From left to right, our 24th Masonic District Deputy Grand Master, Brother Gordon Forsberg, Bro. Damian Tavernier our newest member and Bro. Will Proper Master of Quinebaug Masonic lodge.

BY BRO. JIMMY FALZONE
QUINEBAUG MASONIC LODGE


SOUTHBIDGE — On Saturday, June 28, brethren gathered at the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge in Southbridge to witness and congratulate Brother Damian Tavernier of Webster, who was raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Masons.

This man, along with other men, have followed this path and joined this great fraternity because of “Who We Are.” We’re men, each trying to be the best version of our-

selves. We find it’s easier to do that when we’re with other men who share the same values. We’re there for our brothers no matter what life may bring, and our brothers are there for us. We help others, not just because it’s the right thing to do, but also because it helps us grow. We value honor and integrity. We believe there’s always more to learn. As Freemasons we thrive to make good men even better.

Quinebaug Masonic Lodge was chartered on Dec. 7, 1859. What we do

know is that after 166 years, the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge and Freemasonry have continued to grow and make good men better. This is because we value our old traditions, and we think this is what attracts this younger generation of men. This man wants to see and learn how it used to be and what it is like to value honor and integrity. If you would like more information about Freemasonry and to find a lodge nearest you, visit our Web site at www.mass-freemasonry.org.



Courtesy

Among the 2025 graduates of the HVARC program at Technology Learning Center in Oxford were Dominic Giustino, Matthew Fraser, and Matthew Conway of Oxford, Henry Among of Webster, and Christopher King of Auburn.



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OBITUARIES

Jeannette A. Stefanov

Jeannette A. Stefanov passed through Heaven's gates June 16, 2025. She was predeceased by her husband of 68 years, Edward Sr., and her daughter Susan. She is survived by their children, Marianne of CT, Edward Jr. and his wife Carmel of FL, and William of TX, their grandchildren Nico, Christian, Kalen, Ariana, and several grandchildren.

Jeannette was born and raised in Webster, MA, the daughter of John and Arzelia (Provost) Scheffler. She was the fourth of their five children and their only daughter. She happily tagged along after her brothers although her presence was not always appreciated. Her older brothers, in particular, enjoyed playing pranks on their sister.

Being the only daughter, it fell to Jeannette to care for her sickly mother and sacrifice her continuing education. Jeannette's first job was with Bell Telephone working as a switchboard operator. It was in this role that she met her future husband, a lineman for the same company, who fell in love with her voice. Together, they spent many happy years dancing, building a home and raising a family, taking in stray dogs and cats who found their way to their yard, hosting card parties

with family and friends where bets were made in pennies, vacationing in Aruba, and attending Sacred Heart Church. Jeannette eventually moved to other jobs and companies, retiring from Kenyon Oil.

As time went on, Edward and Jeanette moved to CT to be close to their daughter and granddaughter. Ariana was the joy of their golden years. They happily took her to a multitude of classes, attended all her school functions, and encouraged her in her endeavors, helping her to develop into a young woman of whom they were very proud. Strokes and dementia eventually took Jeannette's ability to live independently and her memory. The one person whose name she always remembered was her granddaughter's, a testament to the bond they shared.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated privately. At the request of the family, burial in the Agawam Veterans Cemetery will be private. There are no calling hours. The family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations in her name be made to PetSmart Charities or the American Stroke Foundation. To leave a condolence, please visit www.carmonfuneralhome.com

OXFORD continued from page A1

the grade-level space," she added.

There were similar figures for grades 7 (reading average 639, math 577) and grade 8 (reading average 735, math 611).

"With the world past-Covid, it's pretty exciting to be just one grade level back," Trainor said, later adding that being "three academic years behind" is now common through grade 8. She attributed a part of that to Oxford's high low-income and high-needs student numbers; those kids often enter high school about five years behind grade level.

For action steps, she said the school shifted its small-group time from last period to earlier in the day, has increased co-teaching, offers more chances for kids to stay afterschool to make up lost class time, and is working more with parents to improve absenteeism.

Those figures bothered Griffin, who is a math teacher. She said she's worried kids will get caught in a "perpetual snowball" of being

behind grade level. Those who are at or above grade level are "losing instruction at an appropriate level for them," and she wants to see higher-level classes for them, too, not just aid for lower-level students. (Trainor said the school does have them in math.)

Griffin noted there's "a large exodus" of kids between middle and high school. Some go to Bay Path, and she said she's concerned the local schools "are not giving them enough options."

One of the principals in attendance said families have told her the kids go there for "opportunities to grow and explore a new experience, to meet new people." But Oxford High "offers far more advanced opportunities than most vocational-technical schools can offer" during the school day because of voke's tech shop requirements and needs to be better at marketing that, she said.

In grade 9, the English average was 817, by grade 10, it was just 719, Trainor said. "This is a grade-level group that has struggled across the board," she added.

The high school's action plan includes rotating the

AM class schedule, small-group work, increased teacher support in class, more afterschool time, and more math professional development. This is also the first year of new English and geometry curricula geared to the state standards, and teachers look at data monthly to see what's working and what needs to be retaught.

Trainor noted the scoring system for high school changed again, because of how the I-Excel testing system works. That sparked some questions about how students are prepared before and how the test is administered.

Griffin said she generally thinks the district is making "a lot of progress," but she sometimes wishes it could be faster and would like to see data that "drills down" into specific areas. She also noted the importance of telling kids the test will place them in advanced or basic level classes, and wanted a clearer breakdown of scores on specific standards being tested, not just averages.

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

Stephen P. Miller, 73



WEBSTER - Stephen P. Miller, 73, died Monday, June 23, 2025 in UMass/Memorial University Campus after an ongoing battle with cancer.

He leaves his beloved wife and best friend of 37 years, Rebecca M. (Wright) Miller; two sons, Jesse Miller of Hanover, MD and Peter Miller and his wife Danielle of Baltimore, MD; nephews, nieces and cousins. He was preceded in death by his sister Christine Thomas and by her husband Lynn Thomas.

He was born in Webster on July 20, 1951, the son of Peter P. and Stella B. (Bogdanowicz) Miller and graduated from Bartlett High School in 1969 where he played on the varsity football team. In 1973, he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Geology from Boston College where he played rugby and hockey. He lived in Maryland for many years before returning to Webster a few years ago.

He proudly served in the United States

Army for 21 years as a linguist in Russian and Czechoslovakian. He then worked as a government contractor for several years and for 5 years at the National Security Agency, retiring at age 70.

Steve was a history buff and an avid sportsman. In the Army he played rugby and was a referee. His passion was ice skating and playing hockey with local senior clubs including the "Rusty Blades" in Worcester as well as leagues in Maryland.

A funeral service was held on Monday, June 30, at 11:00 AM in the Sitkowski, Malboeuf & Hickey Funeral Home, 340 School Street, Burial with military honors provided by the Webster-Dudley Veterans Council will be in Saint Joseph Garden of Peace. A time of visitation was held from 10:00 to 11:00 AM Monday in the funeral home, prior to the service.

www.websterfunerals.com



FELLOWSHIP continued from page A1

on the "passenger's" faces as the boat rocked in a sudden storm. Winds, sea spray and lightening

added to the realism. The tour ended at the 1915 town of Webster Streetscape where guests climbed aboard the 4D trolley featuring video projections of the town rolling by. As the Webster

Worcester trolley rumbled on, guests agreed this visit was both a fascinating introduction to the "Father of the American Industrial Revolution" and great fellowship!

MTOC continued from page A1

kept the match razor-close.

"Let's take a bunch of pics, you are all champions to me!!" Courtney said after the final whistle—a sentiment echoed by everyone who witnessed their journey.

The girls' passing, ball

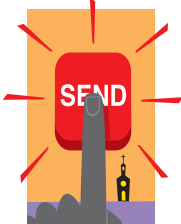
movement, and sheer determination were nothing short of inspiring. They played not just with skill, but with joy and unity, embodying the true spirit of the game. This season wasn't just about wins and losses—it was about perseverance, camaraderie, and love for the sport. The Auburn U19 girls showed what it means to rise above challenges and play with heart.

To the players, the coaches say congratulations on your incredible run and second-place finish at MTOC 2025! You've made your town proud. To the coaches: Thank you for your time, leadership, and for making the game fun. Your impact goes far beyond the field.

Here's to the Auburn girls—true champions in every sense of the word.

SEND US YOUR NEWS!!!

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news@stonebridgepress.news

LEGALS

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. WO25P2142EA
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE
Estate Of:
Rachael Kara Johnson
Date of Death: 12/01/2023

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner

Karen J Johnson of Aubrun MA
Karen J Johnson of Aubrun MA
Robert L Johnson of Aubrun MA

has been informally appointed as Personal Representative of said estate to serve **without** Surety on the bond. The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.

July 4, 2025

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. WO25P2217EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate Of:
John P Reidy
Date of Death: 03/25/2025

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Michael A Reidy of Westborough 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:

Michael A Reidy of Westborough 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 07/22/2025.**

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 es-

tate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.

Date: June 23, 2025
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
July 4, 2025

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 Wednesday, July 16, 2025 to consider a **Notice of Intent** of Stevens Mill Owner, LLC for the property located at 8 and 10 Mill Street and 0 West Main Street for the proposed redevelopment of the Stevens Mill, an Historic Mill Complex.

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 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 AM-3:00 PM. For more information, call 508-949-8011.

July 4, 2025

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. WO24C0189A
CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME

In the matter of:

Gianna Rae Pruencia
A Petition to Change Name of Minor

has been filed by

Gianna Rae Pruencia of Webster MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:

Gianna Rae Mayotte-Pruencia

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Worcester Probate and Family Court before 10 a.m. on the return day of 07/15/2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A Keamy, First Justice of this Court.

Date: June 12, 2025
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
July 4, 2025

Town of Dudley
Notice of Public Hearing
Order for Joint or Identical Pole Locations
National Grid and Verizon New England

In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L Chapter 166, § 22, a Public Hearing will be held on **Monday, July 14, 2025 beginning at 6:35pm** at the Dudley Municipal Complex, 71 West Main Street, Dudley, MA in Room 321A. The Purpose of this Hearing: To Act on a National Grid Pole Petition No. 31072054

Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England requests permission to located poles, wires, and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along with across the following public way: West Dudley Road – National Grid to relocated 1 JO pole on West Dudley Road beginning at a point approximately 365 feet East of the centerline of the intersection of Southbridge Road and continuing approximately 15 feet in a Easterly direction. National Drive to relocated P3 approximately 15' West in order to provide services to 4 West Dudley Road., Dudley, MA

Anyone wishing to be heard should appear at the date and times specified or forward concerns in writing.

Dudley Board of Selectmen
July 4, 2025

Webster Five unveils new Auburn branch featuring artwork by artists with disabilities



Courtesy Webster Five marked the opening of its new Auburn branch at 400 Southbridge St. with a celebratory ribbon-cutting ceremony. From left to right: Brian McEvoy, Chief Retail Banking Officer, Webster Five; Brian Westerlind, CEO-Elect, Webster Five; Ryan O’Hearn, Market Manager, Webster Five; Don Doyle, President & CEO, Webster Five; Stephen Charniak, Board of Directors, Webster Five; Paul Frost, State Representative, Commonwealth of Massachusetts; Dori Vecchio, Interim Town Manager, Auburn; and Chief Stephen Coleman, Auburn Fire Department.

AUBURN — Webster Five marked the official opening of its newly constructed Auburn branch today with a celebratory ribbon-cutting ceremony. Located at 400 Southbridge St., the full-service branch was designed with accessibility, convenience, and community in mind. Replacing the temporary location that had operated during construction, the new building sits prominently along one of Auburn’s main roads, offering improved visibility and customer access. From its layout to its interior design, the space reflects Webster Five’s broader goal of creating banking environments that are personal and connected to the communities they serve.

“This new branch marks an exciting next chapter for Webster Five in Auburn,” said Brian Westerlind, CEO-Elect, Webster Five. “It was built to offer the modern conveniences our customers expect while staying true to the values that define us. We’re excited for it to serve as a lasting resource for our customers and a visible symbol of our commitment to inclusivity and community connection.”

One of the branch’s most distinctive features is a curated art installation made possible through a partnership with ArtLifting, an organization that connects artists living with disabilities with professional opportunities and paying clients. The collection includes a permanent wallcovering, a digital display, and framed prints – all created by ArtLifting artists, including two based in Massachusetts.

“We saw this as an opportunity to make the space feel like it truly belongs to the Auburn community,” said Brian McEvoy, Chief Retail Banking Officer, Webster Five. “Partnering with ArtLifting allowed us to bring energy and meaning to the space while aligning with our community-oriented values.”

This partnership will generate approximately \$12,000 in social impact through direct artist payments and contributions to ArtLifting’s Community Impact fund.

“Having my artwork displayed at Webster Five is an incredible honor,” said Selah Rose, the Massachusetts-based ArtLifting artist who created the wallcovering. “It means the world to know that my creative voice is being seen and valued by the community. This opportunity not only affirms my work as an artist but also makes a meaningful difference in my life and helps support my family. I’m deeply grateful.”

The branch opening marks a milestone for Webster Five as it continues to invest in spaces that go beyond banking – spaces built for connection, inclusion, and long-term community impact.

About Webster Five Established in 1868, Webster Five offers consumers, businesses and nonprofits not only a wide range of products and services but also stability and community support that can’t be matched by their larger counterparts. To learn more about Webster Five, visit web5.com.



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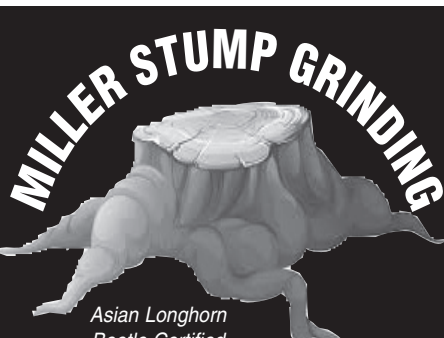
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DUDLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL ANNOUNCES HONOR ROLL

DUDLEY — Dudley Middle School has released its honor roll for the fourth quarter of the 2024-2025 school year:

Grade 5
High Honors: Hunter Baldwin, Nicholas Bandeleian, Audrey Barcelo, Riley Bell, Maya Caron, Austin Cazeault, Abigail Craver, Seth Cregg, Luca DiDonato, Tristan Ducharme, Connor Henderson Haines, Lucas Mendoza, Elaria Ibrahim, Elianna Ibrahim, Gabriel Kaiser, Carter Lebeau, Bryce MacCormack, Amora Mello, Jameson Metzler, Liam Nelson, Kalisia Roldan, Alayah Ruskin, Aniela Slanda, Alexander Vivenzio, Theodore Weimbs-Tsvi
Honors: Jayden Agosto, Natalia Androlewicz, Charlie Audet, Gavin Audet, Raegan Barrile, Janie Belsito, Abigail Brangiforte, Nina Browning, Gabriela Cabrera, Mason Cahill, Mary Carmignani, Juliet Carter, Nestor Castaneda Garland, Anthony Coccia, Kaiden Coulson, Rebecca Czernicki Ramsey, Vincent D'Ambra, Eleanor Daniel, Ella DaSilva, Robin Donais, Logan Duarte, Madison Fortin, Autumn Griffin, London Hogan, Aislyn Knorr, Owen Laro, Sid Lindsay, Riley Mackowski, Samuel Majka, Zachary Marrier, Liam Mason, Maxwell Mathews, Alexis McGinty, Maddox Millette, Cody Mitchell, Iyla Navin, Irvin Nyatuka, Taylor Pace, Gabriela Prusinski, Jameson Quaiel, Alexa Racine, Broderick Reggione, Bryce Rousseau, Jayden-Paul Sabara, Xander Sanchez, Hailey Shaw, Grace-Ann Smith, Camellia Sobinska-Colon, Hannah Staruk, Bentley Toto, Zayden White, Charlotte Young

Grade 6
High Honors: Ivory Agin, Miah Amorelli, Connor Ares, Avery Battista, Grayson Belley, Dylan Bort, Jason Broadmeadow, Silas Ciuchta, Daxoton Colella, Ronan Coulson, James D'Andrea, Lana Denson, Arianna Dos Santos, Logan Dunn, Kylie Ebbeling, Ayla Flores, Penelope Habib, Elliott Harnois, Henri Hokanson, Ava Hortance, Timothy King, Whitney Kungu, Charlotte Langlois, Anthony LeBlanc, Alexandria Lundy, Olivia Macek, Lauren Mitchell, Benjamin Moisan, Rhys Myler, Ella Padgett, Adriana Panu, Peter Penesis, Skyllie Rivera, Amarie Rosario, Ava Rosario, Maya Rousey, Sabella Rust, Leilani Sobinska-Colon, Ivy St. Laurent, Zachary Stranding, Claire Synal, Braden Traverso
Honors: Ava Andrews, Jasmine Arboleda, Ava Baxter, Rihnaya Bembridge, Lily Blessington, Alexander Campbell, Jacob Casey, Brynlee Chickering, Abigail Chojnacki, Fiona Cole, Dante Defranc, Vianeliz Diaz Rodriguez, Logan Evanski, Caleb Gaumond, Afram Geres, Malcolm Goetz, Julia Gorski, Leo Guardiani, Jack Joyce, Michael Kaloyanides, Cynthia Kerry, Lukasz Krawczyk, Mia Kreft, Aaron Lamusta, Abigail Larrabee, Angleina LeBlanc, Eliana Lempicki, Giada Manzi, Marcus Meschke, Sebastian Milewski, Rylee Mongeon, Andreas Niforos-Ortiz, Delaney O'Grady, Evangelina Ouellette, Jacob Paradis, D'Andre Parra-Olivera, Gavin Patenaude, Pierce Patriarca, Logan Podles, Sara Rabski, Hunter Reid, Logan Rodrigues, Jenna Rousseau, Aaliyah Sabara, Colin Shorten, Isabella Soto, Harmony Stevens, Natalie Stinehart, Charlotte Tripple, Joselys Torres, Lorenzo Trifone, Matteo Umansky, Jacob Wilson, Ishak Youssef

Grade 7
High Honors: Abigail Avakian, Yosneiry Baez Pena, Oltina Bektashi, Jackson Bell, Gwyneth Boudreau, Kolby Campbell, Richard Carmignani, Celeina Collins, Isabella Congdon, Tiffany DePaula, Olivia Dubreuil, Addison Duval, Phoebe Houatchanthara, Eliora Ibrahim, Camden Karle, Taylor Laskowski, Claista Lawless, Alexander Lewandowski, Chidimma Madu, Julia Mahadeo, Jolene Ndegwa, Arianna Norton, Carter Paquin, Ariana Rodriguez, Valentina Sedyk-Gil, Nathan Shay, Justen Shenouda, Evan Steriti, Ayla Tombeno, Anastasia Towadros, Lucas White
Honors: Erik Anderson, Jordan Ashton, Sophie Barcelo, Jason Bianchi, Sofia Cabrera, Kellen Caines, Josephine Conrad, Matilda Cronauer, Breanna Curran, David Curran, Olivia DeLisle, Jason Donais, John Doyle, Benjamin Dzivasen, Kristina England, Marcus Falcon, Jaxon Flagg, Kamden Frates, Milani Hammiel, Jasmine Hansen, Austin Hardy-Fletcher, Shawn Hastings, Karolina Janusz, David Kruszewski, Madison Labbe, Olivia Laskowski, Liliana Latour, Adam Legere, Coletan Lempicki, Noah LePage, Cooper LeVierge-Mallet, Leona Lorenczykova, Macy MacDonald, Maria Mankarios, William Martel, Rylie Mason, Eleanor McCool, Camden Melendez, Victor Mensah, Antonious Morcos, Autumn Palmer, Andrew Parmenter, Jayce Peters-Green, Mia Piotti, Alayna Pontbriand, Alivia Rada, Jolena Renaud, Kailyn Rodriguez, Gabriel Sabara, Gabriella Smith, Richie Soto, Connor Spahl, Jacob Strafer, Aiden Sulsona, Malik Thomas, Ryder Trajanowski, Ivanka Twumasi-Ankrah, Avianna Vega, Jeferson Velasquez Valle, Sage Webster, Devante Whitcomb, John Whitcraft, Henry Yawson, Rofail Youssef

Grade 8
High Honors: Charity Acquaah-Mensah, Avery Desautels, Caroline Fuentes, Elizabeth Haynes, Marina Morgan, Georgia Niforos-Ortiz, Victoria Norton, Oliver Okolita, Aslynn St. Laurent, Colin Starczewski, Margaret Straw, Brayden Trybulski
Honors: Kimberly Agim, Joseph Aubin, Madelyn Audet, Angelina Ayad, Arianna Breault, Eric Carlson, Ava Cincotta, Rachael Ciuchta, Lilly Connor, Nicholas Cryan, Amelia Donahue, Mckenna Doyle, Emerson Fedish, Kayla Flibbert, Connor Gasco-Albro, Abigail Hanna, Gavin Hanson, Zachary Kaiser, Nikolas Mason, Finley O'Shea, Haley Paquette, Wyatt Pelletier, Nia Phommachanh, Amilia Piarulli, Antoni Powaza, Gabriel Soto, Connor Stackpole, Noah Torres, Kourtney Tucker, Olivia Vivenzio, Kaiya Zaczek

Quo Vadis Club presents scholarships, educator grant

WEBSTER — Since 1960, the Quo Vadis Club of Webster and Dudley has been proud to support education in our local communities in the form of scholarships, educator grants and sponsorship of scholar recognition programs.
Awards for the 2024-2025 school year were presented to Shepherd Hill graduates Lily Durda, Timothy Krynsinski and Ava Simon and to Dudley-Charlton educators Michelle Hooper and Susan Pucci.
Webster award recipients were Bartlett graduates Lexani Lewis, Dakota Vaudreuilt and Sydney Fuller. The educator grant was awarded to Gina Wojnarowicz.

Bartlett High School announces honor roll

WEBSTER — Bartlett High School has released its honor roll for the fourth quarter of the 2024-2025 school year:

Grade 12
High Honor: Lexani Lewis
Honor: Gracien Boucher, Jayden Casey, Hope Cooper, Sydney Fuller, Ayden Heenan, Evangeline Mayotte, Samaya Mulbah, Janelle Noel, Adam Urato, Dakota Vaudreuil, Maya Wetherbee
Grade 11
High Honor: Nathan Cole, Eryk Piwowarczyk
Honor: Savaeah Butler, Elijah Castro, Isabela Cavalcanti Jose Junior, Chloe Drisco, Niel Duszlak, Georgia LaPierre, Omar Medina Perez, Travis Russell, Luis Villa Jeres, Luigi Villegas

Grade 10
High Honor: Caden Case, Megan Milligan, Irelyn Pottle, Michael Stawieck
Honor: Zainab Abshir, Xavier Butler, Nathan Casper, Cameren Forsythe, Amira Gaber, Cheyanne Grundel, Dhyey Patel

Grade 9
High Honor: Zauylianice Benito Torres, Natalia DosSantos
Honor: Matthew Czernicki, Calee Gardner, Brayden Greene, August Henning, Gioana Louis Jean, Elijah Mckenna, Gisselle Mendoza Pineda, Jordan Miller, Kristie Remillard, Angela Sarfo, Don Ta, Julia Urato

Area residents named to President's List at Dean College

FRANKLIN — Amanda Shields of Oxford and Kyrie Sullivan and Natalie Zona of Auburn have earned a place on the President's List for the Spring 2025 semester. Students named to the President's List have demonstrated a serious commitment to their studies while at Dean College.
Founded in 1865, Dean College is a private, residential college located in Franklin 45 minutes from Boston, and Providence, R.I. Dean College offers baccalaureate degrees, associate degree programs, as well as a robust schedule of part-time continuing and professional education credit and certificate programs throughout the calendar year.

Deirdre Legasey named to Dean's List at University of Maryland Global Campus

ADELPHI, Md. — Deirdre Legasey of Auburn was named to the Dean's List for the spring 2025 term at University of Maryland Global Campus. To be eligible for the honor, a student must complete at least six credits during the term, earned a grade point average of at least 3.5 for the term, and maintained a cumulative GPA of 3.5 at UMGC.
University of Maryland Global Campus was founded more than 75 years ago specifically to serve the higher education needs of working adults and military servicemembers. Today, UMGC is the largest provider of postsecondary education in Maryland and continues its global tradition with online and hybrid courses, more than 175 classroom and service locations worldwide, and more than 135 degrees and certificates backed by the reputation of a state university and the University System of Maryland. For more information, visit umgc.edu.

Local residents earn President's List honors from MassBay Community College

WELLESLEY HILLS — The follow local residents have been named to the MassBay Community College President's List, earning this academic honor for the Spring 2025 semester:

Lisa Sage of Auburn, who studies General Studies:Math
Samantha Keeler of Auburn, who studies Liberal Arts: Political Science

To be eligible for the MassBay President's List, students must be enrolled in 12 or more college-level credits, achieve a 3.7 grade-point average or higher, and be in good standing with the College.

Dudley resident earns Associate of Science from MassBay Community College

WELLESLEY HILLS — Carmen Ortiz Argueta of Dudley has earned an Associate of Science in Radiologic Technology from MassBay Community College. Carmen's academic dedication and hard work were celebrated alongside fellow graduates at the College's 63rd Commencement ceremony on May 29.

MassBay Community College takes great pride in the achievements of its students, reflecting the institution's commitment to fostering academic excellence and career readiness. The College extends its heartfelt congratulations to Carmen and the entire graduating class of 2025.

Dean College announces Spring 2025 Dean's List

FRANKLIN — Dean College is pleased to announce the students who have earned a place on the Dean's List for the Spring 2025 semester. These students have demonstrated a serious commitment to their studies while at Dean College.
Makaylah Gagnon-Deneault of Auburn
Hayden Dube of Oxford
Paige Evora of Webster
Anna Lesperance of Oxford
Hannah Nordstrom of Oxford
Founded in 1865, Dean College is a private, residential college located in Franklin 45 minutes from Boston, and Providence, R.I. Dean College offers baccalaureate degrees, associate degree programs, as well as a robust schedule of part-time continuing and professional education credit and certificate programs throughout the calendar year.

Local students named to Fitchburg Dean's, President's Lists

FITCHBURG — Fitchburg State President Donna Hodge has announced the students who qualified for inclusion on the Dean's List and President's List for the Spring 2025 semester.
A student is placed on the Dean's List for the semester if an average grade of 3.20 or better is attained, and the student is attending the university full time.
The President's List honors students for consistently high academic achievement. A student is named to the list after achieving a 3.75 average in each of three successive semesters.

President's List	
Oxford: Allison N. Hamel	
Dean's List	
Auburn Kaitlyn M. Byington Brian M. Dillon Emily R. Gillespie Katherine L. Jajliardo Mackenzie J. Mackin Serina E. Velazquez	
Dudley Lorena B. Amaral	
Webster Grace Muiruri Kaleigh S. Papierski Zachary C. Sargent	

Local resident earns Dean's List honors from MassBay Community College

WELLESLEY HILLS — The following students have been named to the MassBay Community College Dean's List, earning this academic honor for the Spring 2025 semester:

Benjamin Osterman of Auburn, who studies Nursing	
Carmen Ortiz Argueta of Dudley, who studies Radiologic Technology	
Terrence Walsh of Oxford, who studies Computer Aided Design	
Matthew Frappier of Oxford, who studies Computer Information Systems	
Kamryn Fogg of Oxford, who studies Liberal Arts	
Jasper Magorombo of Webster, who studies Accounting	
Alan Caceres of Webster, who studies Cybersecurity	

To be eligible for the MassBay Dean's List, students must complete at least six credits of college-level courses, earn a grade-point average of 3.5 or higher, and be in good standing with the College.

Salve Regina University announces Dean's List

NEWPORT, R.I. — The following students were named to the Dean's List during the spring 2025 academic semester at Salve Regina University. To qualify for the Dean's List, students must earn a semester grade point average of 3.6 for full-time students completing at least 12 graded credits, or a semester grade point average of 3.8 for part-time students completing at least six credits.
Rebecca Dawson of Auburn
Emma McGrillen of Auburn
Cadence Stawiecki of Dudley
Panayiota Veronis of Dudley
Salve Regina University is a Catholic, coeducational institution of higher education founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1947. For more than 75 years, Salve has offered rigorous, innovative academic programming in the liberal arts tradition that prepares students to be global citizens and lifelong learners. More than 2,700 undergraduate and graduate students from around the world are enrolled at Salve in 48 undergraduate majors, 13 master's degree programs, combined bachelor's/master's programs, and doctoral programs.
Every undergraduate student engages in Salve Compass, a four-year transformational framework through which they develop the experience, skills, and wisdom required for a fulfilling career and to make a positive difference in the world. The University is also home to the Pell Center for International Relations and Public Policy, a multi-disciplinary research center focused on the intersection of politics, policy, and ideas. For more information, visit salve.edu.

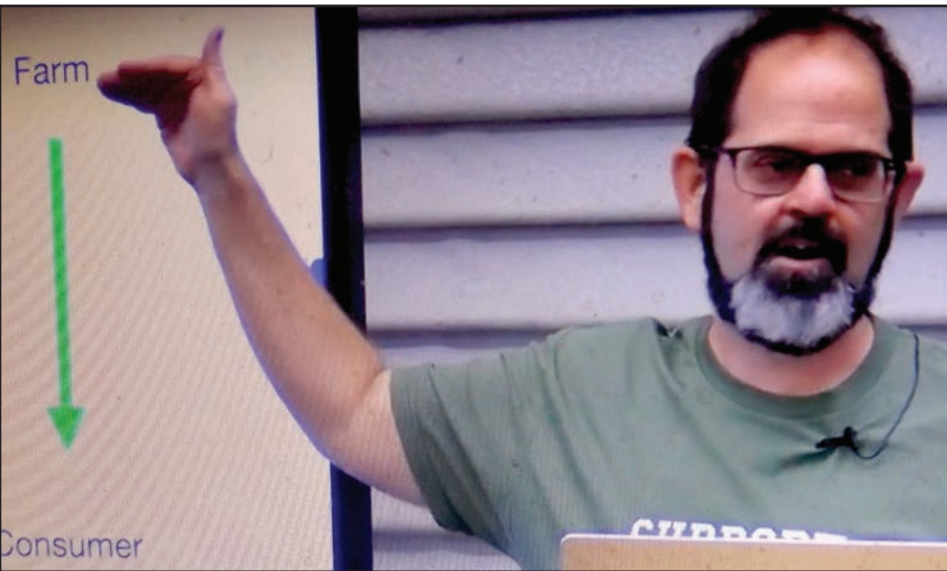
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Local farms are “food security,” say experts



Courtesy Central Mass Grown Director David Reed describes how much simpler local agriculture's farm to consumer system is than that from giant corporate farms.

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — Not long ago, local farmers' markets kicked off their seasons around the area. A little before then, David Reed of Central Mass Grown highlighted why it's important to support local farms and grown your own food, if you can. Speaking at Jacob Edwards Library, Reed noted some of the food we find in supermarkets “has seen more of the world than I have.” That's because, while “[almost] everything starts on a farm” somewhere, commercial food goes through a complex growing, processing, packaging and distribution system “that can take days, weeks, months, who knows how long ... and that food can travel thousands of miles,” he said. Look at any commercial food label. It's not at all unusual to see a package containing ingredients from multiple nations or traveling through several to get to you. “There's a simpler and easier way to do this,” Reed said. “You get stuff from a [local] farm and it ends up on your table. There's very, very little that should be between those. ... Once you get into the strange travels of commercially, indus-

trially-produced food, you have no idea where that food comes from anymore.” By contrast, the much shorter farm-to-table chain from local farms makes it possible for you to get fresher food with “higher nutrient density.” That's for a couple reasons. First, most local farms are not corporate monocultures that grow the same thing repeatedly for years over thousands of acres, pumping them full of artificial fertilizers and pesticides. Such chemicals do not replace the many micronutrients the soil also contains, and large-farm practices “start to wear out the soil” and create “huge dead zones” in the ocean downstream. The average Central Mass farm is 66 acres, but they range from less than one to a few hundred. Many practice some form of regenerative agriculture, integrated pest management, and/or crop rotation. Since all crops draw nutrients from the soil, the small-farm practices (which are actually very ancient) treat “the soil as a living organism,” Reed noted. “The difference is, if I get a tomato from the store, there's absolutely no one I can ask ... who's going to know anything about it,” he observed. At a local farmers'

market or directly from a farm, though, a buyer can ask how it was grown, and the farmers are often very willing to talk, he added. Beyond such relationship building, supporting local agriculture keeps money in the local economy, which helps keep the farmers on the land, rather than selling it for development. While big ag tends to funnel money to Wall Street, local farmers are “going to try, as much as possible, to patronize other small businesses” for their needs, with the money circulating locally, Reed noted. For many people, though, the economics pale to taste – “fresher food just tastes better.” Local farmers pick it when it's ripe, usually in season. That means their customers and CSA share members typically get wider variety and higher quality for shorter periods of time, while big ag grows year-round, typically picking well before ripeness so the food will survive transport. Such transport often also involves lots of packaging, something that's largely unnecessary at a farmers' market or farmstand. Large scale ag is also more likely to experience contamination and disease small farms don't see – “the industrial food system breaks down on a



Charlton Farmers' Market director Eric Willard talks to a marketer one recent Wednesday.

kind of regular basis ... but the local food system is still there. It's stronger, more resilient; it's there to help us have food when we need it.” For example, Reed noted last year's bird flu “hit the flocks of the industrial farms. It didn't hit the flocks of local farms.” For a while, supermarket egg costs exceeded local egg costs. Similarly, there are periodic recalls for various kinds of contamination (salmonella, E. coli, listeria, etc) from large suppliers than didn't affect small farms. “That's food security,” Reed said. “That's what local farms can do for us.” In part, that's because local ag avoids what Reed termed “everything they're doing to cut corners on the industrial scale.” Among them are heavy chemical use, low worker salaries and abuses, and extensive mechanization; he didn't mention the fact corporate farms also tend to get large tax subsidies. Reed gave a few brief examples of CMG's 100 member farms, noting they “all have their own story to tell.” Many, like Free Living Farm in Petersham grow organically, but can't use that

label officially because they don't want to go through the federal “organic” certification process. One, Rattle Root Farm in Princeton, was started by three friends and practices regenerative no-till agriculture; instead of plowing, put compost on last-year's crop rows and plant right atop them. Others, including Sutton's Whittier Farm and Dudley's Walnut Lane Farm, are multi-generational farms. Reed noted “a farm that's been here for generations and is in a position to be here for generations to come – that's what we want to see.” To make that happen, he added, there need to be young farmers who can learn from and replace the retiring ones. There also need to be legislative advocacy, something CMG does. Reed noted he's gone to Beacon Hill to support continued SNAP and HIP funding, bills that promote more farming, a bill giving up to \$25,000 as a tax break to farmers who donate to food banks and pantries, and efforts to create more agricultural education programs. Among his top 10 ways to support local ag, Reed mentioned “Grow your

own food, even on a very, very small scale.” That will help you realize “how much better fresh food is, and you'll start to realize how much work goes into it.” He also advocated for joining a farm's CSA program. In those, farmers provide customers shares of whatever's ripe at the time. “Farmers love them because they're getting that money right away; they know they have that revenue” and their clients “get a great mix of things.” Naturally, his list including shopping at farmers' markets. Southbridge has two – Big Bunny on Saturdays from 10-2 and the REC Mobile Market in the Central Street Lot Tuesdays from 10:30 a.m.-noon. Almost all area towns also have at least one – Sturbridge, on the common every Sunday; Charlton, on the Common every Wednesday; Webster, at the Housing Authority every Tuesday. See www.centralmassgrown.org for times; also go there for a long list of member farms and related organizations.

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

Urban parks “really have super powers”

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

REGION — A Boston school-park project could be a model for providing access to nature in Webster, Southbridge and other small urban areas. At least, that's what the Trust for Public Land hopes from its recent Mass Association of Conservation Commissioners' online “lunch and learn.” “There's an incredible wealth of research ... that proves just how important parks are” in reducing urban heat islands, protecting against flooding, connecting people and cleaning the air, said TPL's Associate Climate Director Taj Schottland. “... Parks and open space really have super powers.” But some of those stud-

ies have also found that around 100 million US residents, including 28 million kids, don't have a park within a 10-minute walk of their homes, TPL State Director Jodi Valenta added. Often, the parks that do exist aren't well maintained, unsafe and “generally unwelcoming or uninviting.” To help address both sides of that coin, TPL has 199 projects statewide covering 14509 acres, with several focused on urban, lower-income communities. TPL has projects in 15 US cities and partnerships with over 100 smaller communities in the Climate Smart Cities Program, which began in Boston. In general, the agency's goal is to “address climate equity” for areas “disproportionately affected by climate threats,”

Schottland said. They aim to do such things as reduce the “massive amount of impervious surface” in such areas. Schottland said pavement sends 55 percent of rain as runoff and just 15 percent into the soil, while green spaces basically reverse that – 10 percent runoff and half into soil. Likewise, greenery's “cooling benefits extend up to a half mile.” A Baltimore study found parks make the air 17 degrees cooler, which can be important given that “heat waves in the US have tripled compared to the long-term average,” he said. A big part of the process is getting the community involved in creating the park. While that often starts with local officials like Boston city recreation planner Kate

Oetheimer, it expands to include forums of residents who actually explore what they want in the park. In the case they highlighted, Chittick School in Hyde Park, the city had its eyes on that parcel for some time. Boston's Open Space plan saw a potential park there based on the fact its neighborhood was identified as a gap in the 10-minute-walk from greenspace criteria. Oetheimer said the site “scored really highly in terms of climate resilience and access.” Valenta said TPL used a “participatory design process” including the school's students, community groups, and other residents as well as city and state agencies. They particularly sought student input because “they're invested in the long-term success of the

schoolyard ... and feel they're contributing to the solution.” “This promotes a keen sense of pride and achievement,” she said, later noting the same process “can be applied to any community,” although it'll look a little different everywhere. Valenta said Chittick is one of several representatives of the “Parks for People Program,” which aims to develop parks “across the gateway cities” statewide. Another example is a “food forest with fruit trees” in Radcliffe Park, also in Boston. Chittick's redevelopment funding, \$1.5 million, came mostly from Boston's acceptance of the Community Preservation Act, which has provided \$4.5 million to an Open Space Acquisition Fund over

four years. Valenta noted towns without CPA may also be able to tap various state grants, but only rarely will one fund the entire project from concept to construction. She noted TPL is also seeking “private sources that will cover capital expenses” like this. Additionally, the Legislature is considering a bill (H.901/S.597) to set aside \$100 million a year for land acquisition, trail development and related conservation efforts. That bill calls for funding to be from existing sporting goods sales taxes. Gus Steeves can be reached at gus.steeves2@gmail.com.

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Summertime fun at the Auburn Historical Museum

AUBURN — Starting Tuesday, July 8 through Aug. 12, the Auburn Historical Society & Museum will be offering a children's craft program every Tuesday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon. Each week will have a different theme based around books and writing. Children visiting the museum will also get a free book to take home and share.

July 8 & 12 Make a bookmark- weaving or printed.

July 15 & 19 Learn about a horn-book and how to make one.

July 22 & 26 Learn to write with brass tip pen and ink

July 29 & Aug 2 Learn to make a leather-bound journal

Aug. 5 & Aug. 9 Make your own book/story

Aug. 12 Choose your project from previous weeks.

Also happening during the summer, the museum will be open in the evening on July 17 and August 15 from 6-8:30 p.m. for tours, genealogy help, and research all free of charge.

Lastly, the Parking Lot Craft Fair will be happening on Saturday, Aug. 16 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., rain or Shine. Vendors are welcome to contact the Auburn Historical Society & Museum at auburnmuseum@verizon.net for more information or to reserve a space for \$15.

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 or 508-832-6856, www.auburnhistoricalmuseum.org or follow us on Facebook at Auburn Historical.

Oxford fifth grade class makes field trip to Samuel Slater Experience

WEBSTER — Fifth graders from Oxford's Clara Barton Elementary School, more than 100 of them, visited the Samuel Slater Experience last month for an immersive, interactive history lesson about the American Industrial Revolution. Lead fifth-grade teacher Kara Murphy organized the field trip, which was underwritten by a grant from the Cecilia J. Smolenski-Millette Charitable Trust.

This was the first time that an Oxford school group toured the museum.

Nichols College to host the Intergenerational Workforce Summit

DUDLEY — The Graduate School at Nichols College will host the Intergenerational Workforce Summit, bringing together regional business leaders, HR professionals and early-career employees for a unique, action-oriented event focused on the future of work across generations. The event addresses one of today's most pressing business challenges: managing and motivating a multigenerational workforce. The summit will take place from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 6 on the Nichols College campus in Dudley. Registration opens June 17, and space

is limited. With five generations now active in the workforce - Traditionalists, Boomers, Gen X, Millennials and Gen Z - many employers are facing increased friction, communication gaps and challenges in employee engagement and retention. This summit transcends awareness and stereotypes to foster shared understanding, inclusive leadership and collaborative action. "At Nichols, we are committed to helping both organizations and individuals thrive. This summit is not about telling young professionals how to behave or asking

leaders to lower expectations - it's about creating space for mutual listening and collaboration," said Robin Frkal, dean of the Graduate School at Nichols. "Our goal is to equip participants with real tools and ideas they can take back to their workplaces to build stronger, more inclusive teams." The summit is part of Nichols' executive education series and will feature: An intergenerational panel discussion Facilitated breakout sessions focused on practical solutions and inclusive leadership practices Networking to strength-

en community and employer connections A Nichols-branded digital badge recognizing participation in this groundbreaking summit The event is co-hosted by Visions Internships, which is led by intergenerational workforce expert and CEO & Founder Amy Mosher Berry, who will moderate the panel and facilitate breakout sessions alongside Kim Krumsiek, associate professor of human resource management. "Today's young professionals are particularly purpose-driven. Most people crave meaningful (as opposed to menial) work and want to know that

their efforts are making the world a better place," said Berry. "I can't wait to help unpack some of the common intergenerational challenges and offer insights and tools to empower professionals of all ages at this unique event." For media inquiries or more information on the event, contact rfrkal@nichols.edu or 508-213-2254. About Nichols Nichols College has earned business accreditation from the prestigious Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International),

the longest serving global accrediting body for business schools and the largest business education network connecting learners, educators, and businesses worldwide. Founded in 1815, Nichols College transforms today's students into tomorrow's leaders through a dynamic, career-focused business and professional education. Nichols offers real-world learning focused on professional depth - combined with vibrant living, competitive athletics, and an unmatched alumni advantage - equipping students to exceed their own expectations. www.nichols.edu



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St. Joseph School graduates Class of 2025

WEBSTER — On Saturday, June 7, the St. Joseph School Class of 2025 held their graduation ceremony following a special 1 p.m. Mass in St. Joseph Basilica. Nineteen eighth grade students were recognized by their Home Room Teacher, Mary Ann Weaver. Each eighth grade student received a St. Joseph School Graduation Certificate as well as recognition for their academic excellence and participation in clubs and organizations.

Gabriel Rudnicki: End of Year Honor Roll – Credit, Altar Server; Jacob Parafinowicz: End of Year Honor Roll – High Honors; Jake Martin: End of Year Honor Roll – Honors; Adam Wozniak: End of Year Honor Roll – Honors, Altar Server; Ayla Reed: End of Year Honor Roll – High Honors, Student Council Vice President, Choir, Drama Club, AAA Safety Patrol; Tobi Akindele: End of Year Honor Roll – High Honors, Student Council President, LEGO Robotics; Gianna Pigeon: End of Year Honor Roll – Honors; Alan Rubin: End of Year Honor Roll – High Honors, Altar Server, AAA Safety Patrol; Ethan Ryan: Altar Server; Simon Kowalczyk: End of Year Honor Roll – High Honors, Altar Server; Lisa Kippax: End of Year Honor Roll –



Credit; Rosemary Basha: End of Year Honor Roll – High Honors, Drama Club, AAA Safety Patrol; Faith Muga: End of Year Honor Roll – High Honors, Student Council Grade 8 Representative, AAA Safety Patrol; Luke Surowaniec: End of Year Honor Roll – High Honors, AAA Safety Patrol, Drama Club; Arianna

Rivers: End of Year Honor Roll – Honors; Kyle Muchiru: End of Year Honor Roll – High Honors; Jada Jackson: End of Year Honor Roll – High Honors, Drama Club, LEGO Robotics; Lianna Worth: End of Year Honor Roll – High Honors; Ryan Amaral: End of Year Honor Roll – Honors

In addition, Headmaster, Rev. Grzegorz Chodkowski and Principal, Beth Boudreau distributed medals to the top two students who achieved academic excellence in the individual subjects. The student with the highest grade-point average received a gold medal on a red ribbon inscribed with the words, “Outstanding Academic Achievement” and their name. The student with the second highest grade point average received a silver medal on a white ribbon inscribed with the words, “Recognition for Academic Achievement” and their name. English/Language Arts: Gold – Rosemary Basha, Silver – Alan Rubin; Literature: Gold – Alan Rubin, Silver – Rosemary Basha; Science: Gold – Alan Rubin, Silver – Rosemary Basha; Mathematics: Gold – Rosemary Basha, Silver – Alan Rubin; Social Studies: Gold – Alan Rubin, Silver – Rosemary Basha; Religion: Gold – Alan Rubin, Silver – Rosemary

Basha; Spanish: Gold – Alan Rubin, Silver – Rosemary Basha. The student with the highest overall grade-point average received a medal with the words inscribed “First Overall Academic Achievement” and his/her name on it. Alan Rubin was the recipient of this medal.

Finally, Headmaster, Rev. Grzegorz Chodkowski and Principal, Beth Boudreau distributed the following awards: Bishop Daniel P. Reilly Book Award - presented to the student who best exemplifies the bishop’s motto, “In Kindness and in Truth” and who demonstrates qualities of duty, honor, sacrifice, and accomplishment within the school community. The criteria for selection include displaying kindness and truth in everyday life, an enthusiasm for learning, and active involvement in service to the school, community, and church: Adam Wozniak; Josephine P. Nalewajk Christian Witness Award – a distinguished award presented to the student who exemplifies outstanding Christian qualities as well as notable service to the St. Joseph Community. The student’s name is also engraved on a plaque displayed in the school: Alan Rubin.

Congratulations and Best Wishes, St. Joseph School Class of 2025!

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St. Joseph School celebrates Kindergarten graduates



WEBSTER — On Tuesday, June 10, St. Joseph School Pre-K four-year-old students and their families gathered in the Richard A. Nowak Gymnasium to celebrate their accomplishments and receive their diplomas.

The ceremony began with a procession followed by the “Pledge of Allegiance.” The morning’s program also included the “The Lord’s Prayer” and “The Hail Mary,” as well as the songs “If I Were a Butterfly,” “Thank you,” “Kindergarten Here We Come,” and “Tooty Ta.” Following their presentation, the extremely excited students received their diplomas from St. Joseph School Principal Beth Boudreau and then settled into the audience with their parents to review an incredible slide show highlighting events and their achievements throughout the 2024-2025 school year.

Twenty students advanced to Kindergarten: Joel Anobah, Gloria Basha, Anna Berry, Zuzanna Bialik, Emy Corbin, Leonie Cyr, Lucette Cyr, Milena Deptula, Marcus DiTullio-Cedeno, Liam Doktor, Sophia Dowd, Charles Dziedzic, Emilia Dziobak, Maeva Haynes, Faustyna Kicilinski, Giovanni Laramée, Lillith Marchand, Elliette Nowicki, Aceson Wright, and Lucas Zabicki. St. Joseph School Pre-K students are instructed by Ms. Robyn Dodge and Mrs. Pier Cutler.

On Wednesday, June 11, St. Joseph School Kindergarten students and their families also gathered in the Richard A. Nowak Gymnasium for their graduation ceremony. The kindergarten students processed into the gymnasium wearing traditional St. Joseph School red and white caps and gowns. Once on stage, they began their program by reciting “The Our Father” and “The Hail Mary,” followed by the “Pledge of Allegiance.” Then, each student took a turn coming forward to the microphone and telling the audience what they want to be when they grow up. Career choices included being a gymnastics teacher, nurse, astronaut, police officer, ice skater, fire fighter, fisherman, soccer player, librarian, singer, baseball player, marine biologist, veterinarian, and basketball player.

The morning culminated with the students singing and dancing to “When I Look Up,” “I’m Thankful,” and “We are Going to First Grade” (a parody of Queen’s, “We Will Rock You.”). Diplomas were also distributed to the students by St. Joseph School Principal Beth Boudreau.

Twenty-two students advanced to First Grade: Vianna Addo, Pheobe Anobah, Jaxson Blain, Jayden Chery, Clark Collins, Mila Denert, Dominic Dziminski, Reylen Garcia, Dominik Kicilinski, Adam Kielinen, Magdalena Kosiorek, Matthew Kubiak, Ruby Lee, Benjamin Maurer, Julia Mazzone, Jazlyn Montesinos, Juliette Prendergast, Sienna Rucinski, Elena Salem, Kaya Sudol, Isabella Valenti, and Zayden Vega. St. Joseph School Kindergarten students are instructed by Mrs. Alicia Maurer and Mrs. Sandi Gibson. Best wishes, students!

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