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
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Thursday-Friday, March 14-15, 2024

Collapse of Hamilton Mill’s south wing claims part of Southbridge history



Gus Steeves
This collapsed section, on the building’s back side, turned a situation the town had been watching warily for some time into an emergency last Thursday. Some bricks had previously fallen there and elsewhere, prompting the town to fence off the site, but officials couldn’t take action earlier because the property was in bankruptcy court.



As the wing comes down, the Episcopal Church emerges from the background.

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — When the south wing of Hamilton Mill came down last weekend, Southbridge lost a piece of history. Unfortunately, it may not be the only part; an engineer’s survey will determine the fate of the rest of that building.

That section of the sprawling complex had been vacant for nearly a decade, its space mostly storage for hundreds of the old tubes around which fabric was once wrapped and various other objects. But some people recall when it had life.

Most recently, that was as the Artist Development Complex, a venue with two stages and bar. The main club, which occupied much of the demolished wing’s first floor, drew such names as Dicky Betts and Great Southern and a long list of other acts until going out of business around 2013. The smaller upstairs club

Turn To **MILL** page **A16**

Charlton selectmen discuss making Town Clerk position appointed

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

CHARLTON — Over the past two years, Charlton’s Government Study Committee has been charged with examining any improvements and potential changes to town government with the goal of making Charlton more efficient and effective in serving its residents.

The committee, which serves in an advisory role to the Board of Selectmen, had previously completed and issued a White Paper Report in 2016 and in 2022 began reviewing the document again. Now the committee has begun bringing their findings to town officials with one significant proposal becoming a highlight of their recent meeting with the Board of Selectmen in February.

The discussion was led by committee member Joseph Haebler, who presented several positive changes already made since 2016, but when it came to how the town can continue to improve one of the first recommendations was to change the Town Clerk position from an elected post to one appointed by the selectmen. While there were twelve other recommendations brought forward by the Government Study Committee, the Town Clerk was considered the biggest priority.

“Looking at the position, you look at what they do and it’s not a part time position. It’s a full-time job. There are so many things involved with it including state and federal laws they need to adhere to. Running elections is just one major part of it and all types of other things,” said Haebler. “It needs professional management and accountability, particularly in this day and age where politics is going wacko. There’s a lot involved with it.”

The Government Study Committee felt it was important to prioritize this proposal because the town has an opportunity to make any necessary changes prior to the next Town Clerk election. Current Clerk Karen LaCroix is up for re-election in two years

Turn To **TOWN CLERK** page **A19**

Sturbridge businesses to conduct PFAS testing

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

STURBRIDGE — A handful of local businesses will be getting notices that the state is requiring the town to test their wastewater for PFAS.

According to Water/Sewer Superintendent Shane Moody, the change will affect about nine companies, mostly industrial, based on the type of business they engage in. Those types are the ones most likely to have PFAS chemicals in their processes or by-products.

One public site is affected – the landfill. Nobody identified the companies themselves.

The Environmental Protection Agency recently significantly reduced the PFAS levels allowed in water to just four parts per trillion. The rules cover four to eight specific chemicals (the federal list differs a bit from the state list), but there are thousands of PFAS chemicals. The abbreviation means “poly- and per-fluoro alkyl substances,” a class of thousands of man-made chemicals that didn’t even exist before the 1940s but is now found in the blood of almost all Americans. The tested varieties have been linked to various cancers and other disorders; several are believed to be endocrine disruptors.

Moody said the town has to do such tests because the impact is actually on Sturbridge’s wastewater permit levels, not the companies

Turn To **TESTING** page **A19**

Sturbridge police officers honored for saving colleague’s life

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

STURBRIDGE — Several local first responders were recently recognized by Worcester County District Attorney Joseph Early, Jr., for reviving one of their fellow officers from a heart attack last year.

The District Attorney’s Team Excellence and Merit Award (TEAM Award) was presented to Sturbridge Police Officers Daniel Hemingway, Garrett Danna, and Nicole Patterson, as well as East Brookfield Police Officer Matthew Schlegel.

Also receiving the award were Sturbridge Firefighter/Paramedic Lt. Sean Moynagh, Sturbridge Firefighter/EMT Joseph Doldoorian, and Sturbridge Emergency Communications Unit Dispatchers Benjamin Grasso and Aaron Berry.

All award recipients were honored for their actions on the evening of Dec. 17, 2023. The team of first responders combined their efforts to save the life of Officer Jeffrey Lavallee.

Additionally, Officer Lavallee’s wife, Sandra Murphy, and his stepson, Brayden Fillios, were also recognized with citations.

Turn To **OFFICERS** page **A19**



Courtesy
Local first responders are honored for their lifesaving actions during a recent response.

Huge water bill sparks policy debate

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

STURBRIDGE — A “leak list” that at least two selectmen did not know existed until recently dominated the March 4 meeting, particularly as residents Sylvie and Miki Baca tried to get them to abate \$2,962 in water bills.

The issue actually came up first at a previous meeting, when the board asked Water/Sewer Superintendent Shane Moody to look into how to inform people they’re on that list. It collates reports from the department’s drive-by quarterly meter readings in which leaks have been happening for the previous 24 hours.

In the Bacas’ case, though, they ended up on that list last September. Moody said his review found their water consumption actually “jumped 52 percent” last July, rose a bit the following quarter (their bill was \$316), then “blew up” for the winter quarter.

Viki Baca said they didn’t really notice the rising July or September bills because they have a tenant, but found the one in January to be “astronomical.” She noted the total marked a “900 percent increase” and equaled about “seven and a half years” of normal use in one quarter.

During their research into it, they found they’d been put on the leak list in October, but never notified. They didn’t know what was causing it until early February, when they were able to get the department to come investigate and found a leaking toilet. She said it was fixed before Feb. 14.

“I had no idea toilets could use so much water,” she said. “I calculated we wasted about 177,000 gallons of water.”

But when they complained, at first they were told “it went through your meter. You have to pay it.”

Moody noted town policy does not require him to tell anyone they’re on the leak list, and that it exists “in case somebody calls and complains.” He noted the meter system has existed for the 18 years he’s been here, but the leak list only began a couple years ago. Actually, there are two lists: one, which he dubbed a “high/low report” flags quarterly readings that are above or below normal by a “predetermined

percentage.” But homes only go on the “leak list” if they read high during the 24 hours before actually being read. Those that happen mid-cycle wouldn’t be caught until the next reading, and could easily be leaking for weeks.

Today, 132 homes are on that list. After speaking to the town attorney, Town Administrator Robin Grimm determined it is public record, and they’ll post it online.

The board agreed that this isn’t really Moody’s fault, but is a problem with the policy, which isn’t Moody’s to decide.

The issue sparked a discussion of Moody’s research into technology that could make identifying and informing people about leaks faster. He said he’d tested new cellular meters in 2021 and provided the results and cost estimates (\$442,000 to convert all residences in the system) to a previous town administrator, but didn’t know what happened to them. Nor did the selectmen.

Grimm said there’s also commercially-available technology costing \$150-400 per house. The underlying issue is “how you bill the ratepayer” for leaks, and a system similar to what Moody researched in a larger town had only about 20 homeowners take advantage of such an option.

Many people don’t want to upgrade their meters because that tends to make their bills rise; older meters usually read lower as they age, she said.

Both Mary Dowling and Chase Kaitbenski said they’d never heard of the leak list until recently. Even if the town doesn’t do something technological, Dowling said there’s no reason they can’t include a note with a customer’s bill alerting them that they “read much higher than you have in the past.”

She said she’s “inclined to abate something” for the Bacas because the town could have done more with the leak list information. But she noted dealing with policy and deciding on an abatement are really two distinct issues, something the others agreed with.

Mary Blanchard said the board has not historically granted abatements except when the issue was clearly the town’s fault (for example, the meter was broken).

“We will explore this more fully so we can make an informed decision that balances all of our interests,” chair Jamie Goodwin said before the board voted to postpone deciding on the abatement until Mar 18. Previously, he’d noted, “There was a period of time when the town had notice of a failure and it did not act to mitigate that failure,” resulting in the “unfair” bill.

Moody noted the Bacas will also get a very high bill for the most recent quarter.

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

Webster First Federal Credit Union named to Newsweek’s America’s Best Regional Banks

WORCESTER — Webster First Federal Credit Union, one of the most well-capitalized credit unions operating in the state of Massachusetts, announced today that it is recognized as one of America’s Best Regional Banks and Credit Unions 2024 by Newsweek and Plant-A Insights Group. This survey of over 35,000 individuals included over 140,000 reviews of regional banks and credit unions. Only 250 regional banks and 250 regional credit unions from the entire country made the list.

“Our team at Webster First values honesty and committing to doing our best each day. We believe living up to these values is the cornerstone of our award-winning service and how we’ve become one of the most well capitalized credit unions in Massachusetts. We’re honored to be recognized as one of Amer-

ica’s Best Regional Banks and Credit Unions by Newsweek and for our memberships continued support of our credit union,”


Said Chief Executive Officer Michael Lussier: “Regional banks and credit unions play a pivotal role in meeting the needs of communities across the nation. Newsweek and market-data research firm Plant-A Insights are proud to introduce America’s Best Regional Banks and Credit Unions 2024, highlighting local lenders that are committed to the needs of their communities,” added Nancy Cooper, Global Editor in Chief of Newsweek.

About Webster First

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





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A group of four young women are posing for a photo in a church sanctuary. They are standing in a row, smiling at the camera. The woman on the far left is wearing a light-colored, textured cardigan over a pink top and a striped skirt. The woman next to her is wearing a dark green dress with a black belt. The woman in the center is wearing a white cardigan over a pink and white patterned top. The woman on the far right is wearing a brown leather jacket over a black top. In the background, there is a wooden altar with a microphone, a blue and white striped curtain, and a wooden sign that reads "ATTN: CHURCH".





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Southbridge Council votes to demolish Hamilton Mill wing

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

SOUTHBRIDGE — After a section of Hamilton Mill’s wall collapsed last Thursday, an emergency meeting of the Town Council voted unanimously to demolish the front wing as a danger to public health and safety.

Town Manager Jack Jovan noted the town has been aware of issues with the property since August, but couldn’t act earlier because the building has been in bankruptcy court.

At that time, representatives of

the building and health departments, Board of Health, Conservation Commission and Town Council toured the property after some bricks fell into the courtyard of Green Meadows. The tour observed numerous problems with the structure, and the Building Department has a very thick document detailing many issues inside and out.

That incident prompted the town to post the property as dangerous and fence that section, which was later expanded to include the entire building south of Green Meadows. More recently, another larger brick fall in front of Abacus Distributing drew more attention to the building’s river end. Observers there noted it looked like the brick facade was separating from the main structure, probably due to water and freeze-thaw cycles.

That in fact happened last week, when a wall section about 10 feet wide and three stories tall tumbled to the pavement behind the fence. It left a gaping hole in the building in which hundreds of cardboard rolls around which fabric was once wrapped became visible. Nobody was hurt.

At that point, the various town officials dealing with building safety got together to “make at least a portion of this property safe for the public,” Jovan said.

To do it under emergency rules, Southbridge had to go through the state’s Division of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) to bypass the normal bidding process. That enabled them to hire Costello Dismantling, which was already in town by contract to demolish two houses on Snow Street for the fire station project.

Building Commissioner Ted Tetreault estimated the Mill St work would cost about \$50,000 on a “time and materials” basis (much less than the contracted cost for Snow Street).

He told the Council his visit to that wing saw cracks “all the way up the side.” If it were to fall into the driveway leading to the businesses behind it (the only way there), “if anybody’s going through there, they’re going to get crushed.” Inside, his tour with several other safety officials found numerous problems, including collapsed major beams that had only been cracked last time he visited.

The plan was to knock that wing into its own basement and leave it there temporarily, giving the legal owner 30 days to remove the debris. But Jovan said efforts to find the owner and serve him emergency papers before the meeting were unsuccessful. Even the Sheriff’s Office could find no valid address for him, and the landlord of his listed residence in town records said he “had not lived there for seven to 10 years.”

At the time, Tetreault said he was concerned the vibrations from demolition might compromise the tower and six-story section along Mill Street, and arranged for part of the wing to be left intact as a buffer on that end. The demolition did not seem to have any notable effect on the rest of the structure.

Now that the wing is down, Jovan said the town’s next step is to have a structural engineer tour the remainder of the building, see if it’s salvageable, and what it needs. If it is, he said he’d like to put out a request for proposals to see if someone wants to buy it.

Chair Scott Lazo was a little skeptical, noting the engineer “might tell us the building’s done. Take it down.” Tetreault said that’s what he expects, too, noting he was willing to have Costello

go around the corner and demolish everything south of Green Meadows while they were on scene.

He noted the cost to remove the debris will be significantly more than it cost to demolish it to this point, largely because of hazardous waste disposal laws. The owner is “already on the hook” for those costs by law; if necessary, the town will put a lien on the property taxes to recover them.

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

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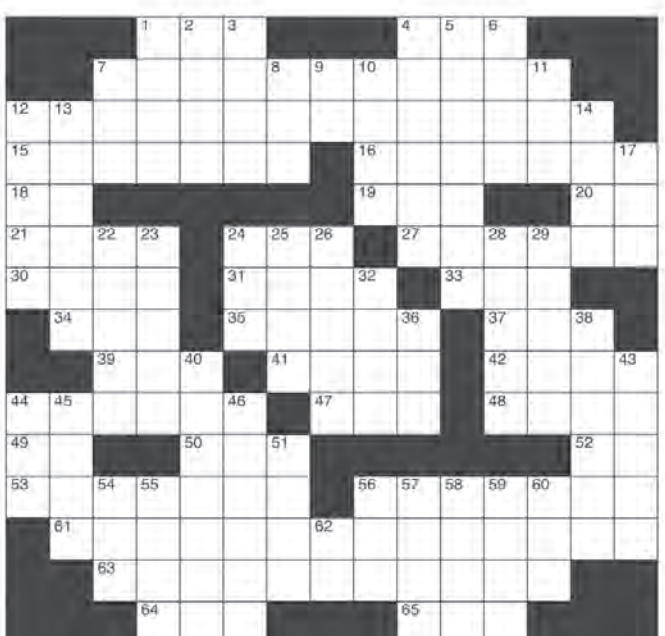
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• **St. Joseph’s Church**, 10 H. Putnam Ext, 248-7862, www.stjosephscharlton.com, Saturday Vigil Mass 4:30 p.m., Sunday Mass 8 a.m., Sunday Family Mass 10 a.m., Sunday LifeTEEN Mass 5 p.m., Weekday Mass Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 a.m.
• **Hope Christian Fellowship**, 6 Haggerty Road, 248-5144
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• **Living Word Church of Charlton**, 10 Main Street - Grange building 1st Floor, Charlton, Ma 01507, Pastor Craig Bellisario, (508) 233-8349 Sunday Service 10:00am. www.livingwordcharlton.com
info@livingwordcharlton.com
• **New Life Fellowship A/G, SNED Chapel**, 307 Sturbridge Road, Rt. 20, Charlton, MA, Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.
• **Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale**- 8 Maple St. Sturbridge, 774-304-1021 www.sturfed.org
Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.
• **Bethlehem Lutheran Church**- 345 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Helps little firms

4. Political action committee

7. Allowed

12. Olivia Colman played one

15. Open

16. He had a notable lamp

18. Promotional material

19. Domesticated animal

20. Larry and Curly’s buddy

21. The best ever

24. TV network

27. Checked for

30. Dry or withered

31. Expression of annoyance

33. Dash

34. Fifth note of a major scale

35. A secret clique

37. Partner to cheese

39. ___ school: where to learn healing

41. City in ancient Syria

42. Gasteyer and de Armas are two

44. Established practice

47. Thanksgiving side dish

48. District in Peru

49. It’s becoming more prevalent

50. State in India

52. Measure of illumination

53. Raised platform

56. Japanese warrior

61. R.L. Stevenson novel

63. Transitory

64. Advanced degree

65. Fiddler crabs

CLUES DOWN

1. Prevent from seeing

2. Czech city

3. ___ and Andy, TV show

4. A young pig

5. Removed surgically

6. Covered with

7. Chest muscle (slang)

8. Nigerian City

9. Midway between south and east

10. A way to shut

11. Stop playing

12. Marshy places

13. Takes apart

14. Ten cents

17. A gesture of assent

22. Scent

23. Teletypewriter

24. General’s assistant (abbr.)

25. Hillside

26. Taxi driver

28. Semitic Sun god

29. Town in India

32. Traditional rhythmic pattern

36. Fugitives are on the ___

38. Type of dance

40. Two letters, one sound

43. Having a strong, pleasant taste

44. Golf score

45. Mayhem

46. Drenched

51. River in northeastern Asia

54. Drug to treat anxiety (abbr.)

55. Part-time employee

56. A very large body of water

57. Aboriginal people of Japan

58. Millisecond

59. Forearm bone

60. Subway dweller

62. Royal Mail

PUZZLE SOLUTION



Ecumenical Easter Sunrise Service at OSV

STURBRIDGE — The Annual Easter Sunrise Service will be held at the Meetinghouse in Old Sturbridge Village on Sunday, March 31 at 6 a.m. Come pray as one body, led by area clergy and lay people, in this beautiful setting. What a joyous way to celebrate the Risen Christ!

Please enter through the main gate and proceed to the rear of the parking lot near the security office. No other areas or buildings will be available at that time. A free will offering will be taken for St. Luke’s Guesthouse, Southbridge. All are welcome and encouraged to attend!

For more information, call the Federated Church of Sturbridge at 508-347-3915.

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kerri@stonebridgepress.news

TO PRINT AN OBITUARY:

E-MAIL
obits@stonebridgepress.news
CALL: 508-909-4149

OR send to Stonebridge Ppress
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E-MAIL: news@stonebridgepress.news
OR send to Stonebridge Press,
P.O. Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550'

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STONEBRIDGE PRESS
PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER
FRANK G. CHILINSKI
860-928-1818 EXT. 103
frank@stonebridgepress.news

BUSINESS MANAGER
RYAN CORNEAU
860-928-1818 EXT. 102
ryan@salmonpress.news

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR
JIM DiNICOLA
508-764-6102
jim@stonebridgepress.news

EDITOR
BRENDAN BERUBE
508-909-4106
news@stonebridgepress.news

PRODUCTION MANAGER
JULIE CLARKE
860-928-1818, EXT. 305
julie@villagernewspapers.com

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Courtesy

CHARLTON CITY TO HOST SCRUMPTIOUS CORNED BEEF DINNER

The Men's Group is hosting their delicious Corned Beef and Cabbage Supper at Charlton City United Methodist Church (74 Stafford St.) on Saturday, March 16 from 5 to 7 p.m. Come and enjoy food and fellowship with friends and neighbors. Corned beef, potatoes, cabbage, carrots, and turnips, plus a delectable homemade cake will be served. As always there will be continuous serving and take-out. \$15 for adults, \$7 for Children six to 12, and children five and under eat free. Maximum \$50 per family. Call in early for seating reservations or to order take-out. Call the church office at (508) 248-7379. Ample parking is available, and the building is handicapped accessible.



Courtesy

JACK AND JILL PRESCHOOL SUPPORTS LOCAL FOOD BANK

During the month of February, Jack and Jill Preschool in North Oxford collected breakfast foods to donate to the Charlton Chip IN Food Bank. This was a part of our Community Service focus. Each quarter or so, the school chooses an organization to donate to. The next collection will be toiletry items for Clark Street Community School in Worcester. The children learn a great deal about kindness and generosity, and it opens the dialogue for meaningful exchange about how fortunate some people are and how to best care for our fellow humans in their time of need. We wish to thank each family who generously contributed to this collection.

Quinsigamond Community College receives grant for emergency response device

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College recently received a grant from the Healey-Driscoll Administration to purchase an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) for one of the college's security patrol vehicles. QCC was one of 80 Massachusetts municipalities, public colleges and universities, and nonprofits chosen to receive part of \$165,000 in grant funding for AEDs to be placed in emergency response vehicles.

"We are close to completing the outfitting of all campus police and security vehicles with an AED. Seconds count in a cardiac situation, which is why we bring these vital life-saving devices on all critical calls," said QCC's Police Chief, Stephen DiGiovanni.

The funding will cover the cost of an AED assigned to one of the college's security vehicles. Currently 12 of the 13 police/security vehicles have AEDs, and the grant will ensure that all vehicles are now equipped with this life-sustaining device. Additionally, two AEDs are assigned to QCC's Police Academy, 21 in fixed locations that include at least one in each building on the West Boylston Street campus, three at the downtown campus and one at QCC's Southbridge location. The college's Athletic Center has four additional AEDs.

OCC's Campus Police Medical Advisor Stephen Rice noted that sudden cardiac arrest causes approximately 350,000 deaths each year in the United States.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) with the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED) can double or triple a sudden cardiac arrest patient's chance of survival. A person's chance of survival can decrease by 7%-10% for each minute that passes without restoring a normal heartbeat. If the AED determines that it is necessary, it delivers an electric shock through the chest to restore a normal heartbeat. The combination of AEDs around QCC in both fixed locations and patrol vehicles decreases the delay between sudden cardiac arrest and restoring a normal heartbeat.

The \$1,703.20 grant covers the cost of one AED package that includes one set of adult and pediatric pads, one

battery pack, a carrying case and an initial warranty.

QCC Campus Police officers and security officers are all certified in Basic Life Support and First Responder. CPR

and use of an AED are covered under Basic Life Support certification.

The college's Center for Workforce Development and Continuing Education offers CPR/AED certification classes to

the public for a fee. QCC Campus Police also occasionally offers non-certification training in recognizing sudden cardiac arrest, calling 911, Adult hands-only CPR and use of an AED.

REAL ESTATE

BRIMFIELD

\$375,000, 62 1st St, Mcmanaman RET, and Mcmanaman, Thomas G, to Mcmanaman, Kevin, and Mcmanaman, Cynthia.

\$250,000, 1538 Dunhamtown Brimfield Rd, Josephine R Sears RET, and Sears, Brian P, to Ramsland, Erik.

CHARLTON

\$699,900, 26 Wamsutta Ridge Rd, Penny Lynn Carlin RET, and Carlin, Penny L, to Nutting, Andrew, and Nutting, Courtney.

\$380,000, 42 N Sturbridge Rd, Leblanc, Ronald, to Berry, Nicole.

\$146,135, 185 Nugget Dr, Lavallee, Phillip L, and Santander Bank NA, to Santander Bank NA.

\$65,000, Ramshorn Rd #1, Julian, Sheri L, to Lepage, William, and Lepage, Nancy.

HOLLAND

\$180,000, 8 Heritage Dr, Federal Hm Loan Mtg Corp, to Holdcraft, John D.

SOUTHBRIDGE

\$250,000, 4 Marjorie Ln, Hippert, Azure, to Grady, Rose.

\$220,000, 51 Randolph St, Edmonds, Eric, to Robillard, Michael.

\$198,000, 111 Hartwell St, Cavanaugh, James A, to Hutchins Esperti Re LLC.

\$195,000, 28 Maria Ave #C, Alicea, Andrew M, and Edmonds, Alyssa, to Legros, Joranne.

STURBRIDGE

\$793,000, 237 Po-dunk Rd, Ah & Db Custom Homes Inc, to Patel, Jigisha, and Patel, Rajeshkumar.

\$490,000, 133 Brookfield Rd, Bourassa Ft, and Bourassa, Edward G, to Magliaro, Alex, and Nurek, Angela.

\$370,000, 5 Snell St, Boudreau, Courtney A, to Tsantinis LLC.

\$255,000, 38 Clark Rd, Martel, Carla, and Wilmington TNa Tr, to Holdcraft, John D.

\$55,000, 338 The Trail, Laughlin, William T, to Brochu, Matthew, and Brochu, Lindsay.

Highway Superintendent:

The Town of Brookfield is seeking an experienced full-time Highway Superintendent. Full job description at brookfieldma.us.

Please submit resume and cover letter to selectmen@brookfieldma.us. Application review will begin after March 28th. Resumes accepted until position is filled. Brookfield is an equal opportunity employer

Joshua Hyde Library hosting advanced sock puppet class

STURBRIDGE — Thursday, March 21 from 2 to 4 p.m., tweens, teens & adults are invited to a more advanced version of a run-of-the-mill Sock Puppet class at Joshua Hyde Public Library.

This class teaches the basics of creating a puppet character; all the elements essential for this, and how to turn all the parts into a puppet. Students will learn how to build a mouth plate and a "skull," giving their puppets a much greater range of motion and movement than your average sock puppet. Registration is required. Go to sturbridgeliibrary.org.



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EDITOR

A total eclipse of... the sun

In just a few weeks, on April 8, those who travel to Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine will have the extraordinary opportunity to witness a total solar eclipse. This celestial phenomenon, where the moon completely obscures the sun, casting a shadow on the Earth, is a moment of wonder.

For New Englanders, this upcoming eclipse holds particular importance, as the region has not experienced such a spectacle in over a century. The anticipation is palpable, with communities buzzing with excitement and preparations underway to ensure a memorable viewing experience for all.

The corona is a region of superheated gas extending millions of kilometers into space, but it's normally obscured by the sun's intense brightness. During a total solar eclipse, however, when the moon perfectly aligns with the sun, the corona's ethereal glow emerges, creating a spectacle unlike anything else in nature. For those fortunate enough to be in the path of totality, the sky darkens, stars emerge, and the sun's corona—the outermost layer of its atmosphere—becomes visible.

Beyond the scientific implications, a total solar eclipse holds profound cultural and spiritual significance for many. Throughout history, these celestial events have been interpreted as omens, symbols of renewal, or moments of cosmic alignment.

It is essential to prioritize safety when viewing the eclipse. Directly observing the sun, even during an eclipse, can cause permanent damage to the eyes. Therefore, it is crucial to use certified eclipse glasses or other safe viewing methods to protect our vision.

The influx of traffic and people into small towns have caused local safety departments, and even state departments of transportation, to collaborate alongside local hospitals and businesses on how best to prepare.

Correction

CHARLTON — In last week's Beyond the Pews religious column, Rev. John H.D. Lucy of Charlton City UMC mistakenly gave the start time of this year's Good Friday Crosswalk on March 29 as noon.

The Crosswalk will, in fact, begin at 9 a.m. at Charlton Federated Church and end at the Overlook at noon.

Letter submission policy

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

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

OPINION

The trout trucks are rolling Can you save too much for a rainy day?



This week's two pictures show Amelia Sinopoli with an 18 inch rainbow trout caught in Lake Quinsigamond a week ago & Jake Boudreau fishing for the first time, during a birthday party for Logan Henchey!

Spring trout fishing has already begun in the valley, and it is just the start, as Mass. Fish & Wildlife trout stocking trucks are already rolling!

This week's two pictures show Amelia Sinopoli with an impressive rainbow trout, and her first time fishing partner Jake Boudreau two weeks ago, while attending a birthday party for Logan Henchey. The pair were fishing from a small boat dock using worms as bait when suddenly Amelia yelled out to her mom that she had a big fish on! Mom quickly rushed over to assist her as the large rainbow was causing a lot of excitement for all in attendance. The fish was finally lifted onto the dock where pictures were taken of the happy angler and her prize fish! The trout was quickly released.

Their parents know exactly what to buy their new fishing anglers for the summer outings this year. All the parents need to do is take the kids fishing in any body of water to get their kids hooked on fishing!



THE GREAT
OUTDOORS
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RALPH
TRUE

Black bear are coming out of hibernation and are having their young cubs tagging along! They are nice to see, but the public needs to keep their distance from the bear to stay safe. A recent attack on a woman and her dog seemed to be a danger to the female bear and her cubs. Fortunately, both the woman and dog survived the ordeal, but it could have been a lot worse!

Wild turkey hunting is fast approaching, and sportsmen are already scouting their favorite turkey hunting spots. The youth Turkey hunt is scheduled for April 27 this year, and is open to young hunters aged 12-14! They also need to be accompanied by a licensed adult hunter. The abstracts have all of the regulations. Be sure to read

them before hunting wild turkeys. The regular wild turkey season opens on April 29.

A while back, this writer received a number of fishing lures from Donald Neilsen of Warren! They were made by Donald, and the material that he used to make the lures were quite unusual. I got to use some of the spinning lures last year, and caught numerous trout with them. I apologize for not getting back to him sooner to thank him for the lures. They were quite neat. Some were made out of beer caps! I have decided to donate the remaining lures to young anglers at the next kids fishing derby at Uxbridge Rod & Gun and Whitinsville Fish & Game Club. Thanks again, Don!

The dandelion will be blooming soon, which will signal the start of tautog fishing. Tautog is one of the best tasting fish in the ocean and most fishermen will agree!

Take a Kid Fishing & Keep Them Rods Bending!

Telepathy is reading others' intentions

Telepathy is the ability to communicate thoughts directly from one mind to another without the use of words, gestures, or any conventional forms of interaction. The idea of telepathy has intrigued humanity for centuries. Its origins are steeped in ancient lore and psychic traditions, often portrayed as a mystical bridge connecting human consciousness.

An example of telepathy in modern fiction can be seen in the character of Professor Charles Xavier, also known as Professor X, from the "X-Men" series. With his telepathic powers, Professor X can not only read minds but also project his thoughts onto others.

But does such a profound ability exist outside the realms of fiction? The question leads us to people like Uri Geller, a performer who claimed

to possess psychic abilities, including mind reading. Geller's demonstrations of spoon bending and telepathy captivated audiences worldwide, suggesting a glimmer of reality to the powers depicted in tales and comics.

Much skepticism surrounds Geller's claims, with critics pointing to sleight of hand and psychological tricks rather than genuine psychic phenomena.

While the allure of telepathy remains potent in our collective imagination, the jury is still out on whether a human being has truly harnessed this extraordinary ability.

Recent advances in artificial intelligence and neuroscience have led to the development of AI systems capable of decoding human brain waves into speech. This groundbreaking tech-

nology bridges the gap between thought and communication, allowing for telepathy mediated by machines. While I'm sure there are benefits to this technology, it's also terrifying.

Terrence McKenna was an ethnobotanist and author known for his controversial theories on psychedelics, consciousness, and culture.

If you've ever listened to one of his lectures, you'd find that he had a different definition of telepathy than the one portrayed in popular media.

In one lecture, he states, "If you're like me, you think telepathy is hearing other people's thoughts. It isn't that; it's seeing what other people mean."

Consider when a friend texted you, "We need to talk." The immediate sense of dread, the assumption of an



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"Save for a rainy day" is an old piece of advice — and a good one. But is it possible to save too much?

To begin with, what defines a "rainy day" in terms of financial needs? It could be any number of things: a temporary loss of employment, a major home or car repair, a large medical bill, and so on.

If you did not have the money readily available to pay for these types of expenses, you might be forced to dip into your IRA, 401(k) or other retirement accounts, incurring taxes and possible penalties, as well as lowering the amount of money you'd have available for retirement. And that's why it's a good idea to build an emergency fund containing up to six months' worth of total expenses, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account that's separate from the accounts you use for your daily spending needs.

An emergency fund is valuable, but many people may be overfunding it. And while this isn't the biggest financial mistake one can make, it could result in some missed opportunities.

For one thing, when you keep money in a low-risk account, you can generally count on your principal being protected, which means the money will be there for you when you need it—but the flip side is that this money likely won't grow very much, if at all. And if you're going to achieve your long-term goals, such as a comfortable retirement, you need your investment portfolio to provide you with significant growth potential within the context of your individual risk tolerance. So, any excess dollars kept in your rainy-day fund might be used to help fuel some growth-oriented investments.

You could also use these dollars to help diversify your investment portfolio. If you only owned one type of investment, your portfolio could take a big hit if a market downturn affected just that asset class. But by owning a mix of stocks, bonds, government securities and other investments, you can help reduce the impact of market volatility. (Keep in mind, though, that diversification, by itself, can't protect against all losses.)

Still, before deciding on what to do with extra money you might have in your emergency fund, how will you know if you indeed have too much? Up to six months' worth of total expenses may be adequate for most people — but everyone's life is different. For example, if you have reason to believe your employment — or that of your spouse — may be in jeopardy in the near future, or if you anticipate the need for some renovations to your home, but not for a year or so, you might want more than six months of expenses tucked away in your emergency fund. Also, once you're retired, you may well want to keep a year's worth of expenses in the fund. If you need cash, you don't want to be forced to sell investments when their price may be down, especially since you have less time for them to recover.

Ultimately, when thinking about how much to keep in your emergency fund, review your situation carefully and weigh as many variables as you can. And if you do decide your rainy-day fund is abundant, use any "overflow" in a way that can help you keep moving toward your financial goals.

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

Planning Ahead for a Flower Garden

Nothing jump starts “garden fever” like planning a bed of blooms! Now that we’ve turned the clocks ahead, thoughts turn to planning a garden. Whether you have visions of an elaborate formal flower garden or favor the simplicity of a side door flower bed, plotting a flowering garden is a labor of love. Prepping for plants allows for an infusion of personality, encourages visual creativity, and paves the way for a spectacular season of blooms! Read on for some easy tips and tricks to help you along.

Blooming Bulbs Nothing adds color and beauty to a garden for less effort than bulbs. Even if you didn’t have the foresight to plant spring bulbs last fall, you can still enjoy summer blooms. Ideally, you should wait until the danger of spring frosts has passed before planting bulbs. If you think the threat of frost is over, think again. Garden experts give May 30 as the first safe planting date of the season.

Some summer flowering bulbs that have a history of success include Dahlias, Gladiolus, Cannas, Caladiums, and Daylilies. Just keep in mind in our zone

you may have to dig up the bulbs and store for the winter for spring time planting next year.

To test whether soil is ready to work, squeeze some in your hand, then poke at the clump. If the clump breaks up easily into small crumbs, the soil is dry enough to till.

Getting a head start on bulb planting by starting them indoors increases your odds of success. Use deep pots and replant them outside once the ground has thawed.

Planning where you want to create “splashes” of color in the garden also includes how dramatic a statement you want your plot to make. Large clumps of flowers demand attention and this method of planting has



TAKE
THE
HINT
**KAREN
TRAINOR**

long been a favorite of gardeners.

Another popular planting pattern is to “drift” flower varieties, which has been compared to painting the garden with a brush of color. Drifts can encompass waves of complementing bulb varieties bordering each other, or each flower drift can stand on its own, perhaps creeping across an incline or making its way along a stone wall.

To ensure successful drifts, use a generous sprinkling of densely planted bulbs. Or, simply toss or scatter bulbs and plant them where they land for a natural meadow effect.

Perhaps the best rule of thumb for planting bulbs is the most obvious. Plant bulbs where you want to see color. Attractive uses include planting bulbs to border a perennial garden, to fill in a rock garden and as a decorative accent circling a mailbox post or light pole.

Garden experts recommend planting bulbs in crumbly soil with proper drainage, although hardy bulbs often thrive in less than satisfactory soil. Soil that has not been turned over in a while will benefit from loosening it up with a shovel. Your hole should be dug a few inches below where the bulb should sit to allow for fertilizer.

Bulbs should be planted pointed side up. Flat tubers should be planted sideways for best results. Avoid any air pockets in hole which can inhibit growth.

pH. Azaleas need a soil on the acid side. Alkalinity locks up iron needed for green color.

*Adding Epsom Salt to plants has been reported to enhance the color of blossoms and leaves, promote new flowers and fruit, improve the root system and improve the strength of stems. For roses: Sprinkle one teaspoon of Epsom Salts per foot of plant height and spread evenly around the base for better blossoms and deeper greening. Add 1/2 cup sprinkled around the base and then scratched in, for strong production of new flowering canes and healthy new basal cane growth.

*Did you know most fragrant flowers are lightly colored or white? If you want to add a scent to your garden, be generous with white or pastel blooms.

Win Dinner for Two at the Publick House

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

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

Spring garden cleanup with pollinators in mind



Melinda Myers

Adjusting your spring cleanup schedule will help pollinators like this bee on an allium flower.

Spring cleaning, indoors and out, is a long-standing tradition for many households. But as we learn more about the important pollinators, insect-eating toads, songbirds, and beneficial insects, the more we realize we need to adjust some of our timing and methods.

It is safe to remove winter protection, such as mulch, when the temperatures begin hovering around freezing or your plants are beginning to sprout. Keep some frost protection handy just in case you need to protect any tender plants from a hard freeze.

Always check for frost heaving. When cold winters are interrupted by warm spells, bare soil may thaw and then refreeze. This temperature fluctuation can cause the soil to shift and push spring flowering bulbs, coral bells, daylilies, and other perennials out of the soil. Just gently push them back in place or reset in the soil making sure the roots are covered.

Wait for temperatures to be consistently above 50 degrees to start cutting back perennials that were left standing. This allows any beneficial insects overwintering in the hollow stems time to emerge and find a summer home.

Cut some of the stems to the ground and some back to 18 to 24 inches on each plant. These old stems provide summer homes for some of our native bees. As new growth emerges in spring, it will mask the older stems so your garden will look as beautiful as ever.

If you can’t wait, stack the stems out of sight until temperatures warm and pollinators have a chance to emerge. Then chop and compost the debris in mid-summer.

Tie or bungy cord tall ornamental grass plants before cutting them back to make cleanup easier. Then use a hand pruner for small jobs or a string trimmer or hedge clipper for larger plantings. Wait for new growth to fill in shorter grasses and simply comb your fingers through the plant removing the old brown leaves.

Leave fall leaves on the soil surrounding the plants to serve as mulch, suppressing weeds and conserving moisture. As the leaves break down, they add organic matter and nutrients to the soil. They also provide homes for beneficial insects and insulate the soil for plants, toads, and more.

Mark the location of perennials like butterfly weed and hardy hibiscus that emerge later than most plants in spring. This helps to avoid accidentally weeding them out. Leave a few stems standing, use plant markers, or next fall plant

some spring flowering bulbs near the plants to serve as a colorful placeholder.

Consider leaving some sunny spots bare for ground-nesting bees. Avoid areas like entryways and gathering spots where people and the bees may collide. Although the bees are docile and not likely to sting, people are often fearful leading to their elimination. Setting aside some out-of-the-way spaces for ground-nesting bees allows everyone to coexist more happily.

This is also a good time to tidy up garden beds and lawn edges. You’ll slow the invasion of weeds and grass into garden beds and lawn encroaching onto walks.

Remove weeds as they appear. The smaller weeds are easier to remove and eliminating them before they flower and set seed means fewer weeds you’ll need to pull in the future.

Take advantage of the delay in spring cleaning by cleaning and sharpening your tools. When the temperatures are right, with tools in hand, you will be ready to get busy in the garden.

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

POSITIVELY *continued from page A6*

impending argument, only to discover they simply wanted advice. The text, devoid of tone and context, became a breeding ground for misunderstanding, showcasing a moment where telepathic clarity — understanding the true intent behind the words — could have spared you the stress.

Or picture this: two travelers, one speaking only Italian and the other only Japanese, trying to find their way in a crowded international airport. Their attempts to communicate through gestures and broken English spiral into confusion. Misinterpreting each other’s actions, they become increasingly frustrated and offended, convinced the other is being rude. The situation escalates, as neither can grasp the true intention behind the other’s gestures.

A bystander who happens to speak both lan-

guages steps in to mediate. The translator breaks down the language barrier and quickly resolves the misunderstanding. The tension dissolves into laughter and gratitude as they finally understand what each other means.

Misunderstandings involve more than language differences. Even when we speak the same language, we often end up confused and in conflict because of misinterpreting what’s meant by what’s said.

If we could truly understand the intentions and emotions behind other’s words and actions, many misunderstandings that lead to conflict could be avoided.

This is easier said than done, but what if?

What if we just took a breath and tried to understand rather than reacting with a knee-jerk reaction and getting upset? Could we reduce social divisions, understand

that we are all human, and accept that we are all different?

The world is filled with miscommunication; what if we could become a more collaborative and innovative planet by truly looking past what is said and trying to understand what is meant.

Relationships could flourish free from the constraints of misinterpretation, with partners, friends, and family members trying to understand rather than assuming that they know.

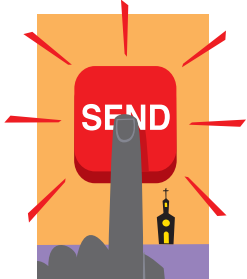
Telepathy, as defined by the late Terrence McKenna, could be the key to unlocking a new era of human understanding and cooperation.

Is this possible? I don’t know, but I suppose if we stopped jumping to conclusions and practiced more patience, we might be headed in the right direction.

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Get schooled on vocational training

High school graduates or individuals looking to explore continuing education at any age have various options. Among the most popular options is enrolling in a college or university. Studying a trade in a vocational school is another popular option.

What are vocational schools?

Vocational schools are sometimes referred to as career or trade schools. Vocational schools tend to offer certificate programs that are much shorter in duration than traditional college degree programs, and train students for skilled jobs. Vocational programs prepare individuals for careers in electrical work, hairstyling and cosmetology, certified nursing aids, automotive work, and HVAC services, among others.

Cost of attendance

Cost of education is an important factor when choosing a career, and the cost of vocational school is no exception. The College Board says trade school costs between \$5,000 and \$15,000 on average for a three- to 18-month program. By comparison, the national average for a two-year degree program at public and private colleges can range from \$3,621 to \$15,333 per year. The cost to attend a four-year college is considerably higher, though it varies widely by institution.

NerdWallet reports that, as of 2021, total student loan debt in the United States exceeded \$1.61 trillion. Vocational school can be a much more affordable option than attending college, without the specter of large amounts of debt looming once the training is over.

An obvious job path

Many higher education concentrations are confronting low enrollment, while vocational programs are doing quite well, according to The Hechinger Report, which covers innovation and equality in education. The reason may be that vocational training presents a clear career path, and a more secure way to a solid job. Mechanic and repair trade programs had an enrollment increase of 11.5 percent from spring 2021 to 2022, indicates the National Student Clearinghouse.

“America is lending money it doesn’t have to kids who can’t pay it back to train them for jobs that no longer exist,” says Mike Rowe, television personality and founder of the Mike Rowe Works Foundation, which offers scholarship money to those who are pursuing the trades. Rowe feels that America has convinced people that the best path for most people is an expensive education. Meanwhile, the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates there are more than seven million jobs available across the U.S. that do not require a four-year degree.

Advantages to vocational schools

Trade school students can look forward to some benefits.

- hands-on learning
- more rigid schedule
- efficient time usage
- faster class pace
- small class sizes
- ability for licensure, where needed
- lower costs of attendance compared to other types of schooling
- instructors who are experts in their fields

Vocational schools are an option for students right out of high school or those returning to school later in life. Such schools provide access to millions of rewarding and lucrative jobs that can offer financial security.



Consider these community college benefits

College is the next natural step for many students after they finish high school. The process of finding a school begins in junior year of high school, and students and their parents may visit many different colleges and universities throughout the next year. Even though the bulk of the focus might be on four-year schools, students who may not yet have everything all figured out should not overlook the many benefits of community colleges.

The United States Department of State’s Education USA says community colleges offer two-year programs that lead to the Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree. Some community colleges also have vocational programs. Community colleges are a viable option for students interested in continuing their education. Undergraduate students studying at community colleges can earn academic credit that will eventually go toward a bachelor’s degree should they choose to continue schooling. The following are some of the benefits of community college.

- Flexible admissions process: Community colleges do not have the same time restrictions and other requirements as schools offering four-year degrees. Interested parties may be able to register for classes at any time and not have to worry about being accepted or not.
- Part-time scheduling: Community colleges often offer part-time academic coursework, which means students do not have to take a set number of credits each semester to remain enrolled. This allows students to attend college classes according to their own schedules and work at their own pace.
- More affordable tuition: Lower tuition is one of the major draws to community colleges. The career planning resource Indeed says that many community colleges further discount their offerings to in-state students. This helps make post-secondary education much more affordable, particularly for those who are not sure about what they want to study.
- Relationships with four-year schools: A number of community colleges have partnerships with sister schools to facilitate the transfer of associate degree credits for a student working toward a four-year degree. Education USA says in this “2+2” process, a student can earn a bachelor’s degree with two years of community college, followed by two years of university study. Some community colleges also serve as satellite locations for other schools, meaning one can take classes for a four-year school right on the community college campus if the location is more convenient.
- Smaller class sizes: Many community colleges have smaller class sizes that make it easier for students to adjust to the pace of college life.
- Proximity to home: As the name implies, community college is a school that serves a particular community. That means it is likely close to home for the majority of students. Students who may not be willing or able to go away to school may appreciate the convenience and proximity of a community college.

Community college is an option that students may want to explore as they pursue post-secondary education.



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Big Bunny shoppers come through again



Left to right: Bro. Eric Willard, Bro. Clay Tull, center with arms spread Bro. Larry Burbridge, Bro. Will Proper and Kodie Tull, who is a volunteer and member of the Worcester Chapter of DeMolay.



Left to right: Bro. Clay Tull, Big Bunny Meat Manager Mark Soulliere, holding a bag of rice, Bro. Larry Burbridge and Big Bunny Assistant Manager Coralee Safin holding a bag of rice.

BY BRO. JIMMY FALZONE
QUINEBAUG MASONIC LODGE

SOUTHBIDGE — On Saturday, March 9, the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge Community Outreach Program was in full swing at Big Bunny Supermarket in Southbridge. This first event was a Food Drive to collect food donations for the food share pantry, located at 79 Elm St in Southbridge.

Volunteers from the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge in Southbridge weathered the cool windy morning for five hours to collect food donations. The food share services Southbridge, Sturbridge, Holland, Wales, Brimfield, and Charlton. Big Bunny Market was buzzing with shoppers that morning and people were very generous and supportive of the food drive.

The shoppers from Big Bunny market were bringing all kinds of donations. For example, a case of cereal, a case of peanut butter, a case of canned Chef Boyardee ravioli, and so many boxes of pasta and canned goods items. By the time the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge members put all these single items in paper bags along with the paper bags already full of what the shoppers have given us, we were able to collect and donate 100 bags of groceries to the food share two pick-up trucks full of food. We also collected \$210 dollars in cash donations thanks to the generosity of the Big Bunny shoppers. The lodge volunteers unanimously decided to take the \$210 and went back into the supermarket and purchased a lot more groceries for the Southbridge food share pantry. A special thank you to Big Bunny Assistant Manager Coralee Safin for the generous donation of two huge 20-pound bags of rice which will feed many families.

William Bouvier one of the volunteers of the Southbridge food share was all smiles and very, very happy to see two pickup trucks full of grocery bags that was collected from the food drive. Mr. Bouvier mentioned to our volunteers that this is, as far as he knows, one of the largest single food donations that the food share has ever received. This food will feed a lot of families in the community and in one month they estimate to feed about 80-90 families. The Food Share was very grateful to the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge for picking the Southbridge food share as part of their Community Outreach Program for this year. If you would like more information about Freemasonry, go to massfreemasonry.org to read to and to find a lodge nearest you.

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OBITUARY

Ralph W. Gajewski, 90



Sturbridge: Ralph W. Gajewski, 90, passed away on March 3rd, with his daughters by his side at Quaboag Rehabilitation and Skilled Care Center, West Brookfield, after a brief illness.

He was predeceased by his former wife of 27 years, Dorothy (Richard) Gajewski and his longtime partner Marsha Bader. He leaves his daughters, Debra L. Titus and her husband Matthew of Jamesville, NY and Karen Niday and her husband Tim of Tully, NY; his grandchildren, Kyle Titus and his wife Alicia, Caitlin Griffin and her husband Richard, Tyler Niday and his partner Kate, Aaron Niday his partner Jackie; 4 great grandchildren and his sister-in-law Gloria Ryan.

Ralph was born in Webster the son of Marcin and Elizabeth (Walkowiak) Gajewski. He attended school in Webster and went on to serve in the US Navy during the Korean War. He then held a long career at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, in East Hartford, CT for 40+ years.

Ralph was an avid sportsman enjoying archery, hunting and fishing. He loved teaching his grandchildren and many others the sports he thoroughly enjoyed. As a lifetime member of the Hamilton Rod & Gun Club, Ralph was a founding member of "The Big MOE", a sportsmen expo for children. Ralph was also a fan of the Boston Red Sox and the New England Patriots. He enjoyed many games with his good friend Hanford Clay.

If you knew Ralph, you knew he enjoyed each and every day/season and lived life to the fullest.

Burial will take place at a later date. The Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge, is directing arrangements.

www.morrillfuneralhome.com

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Saturday March 30, 2024 ~ 9 am to 1 pm

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Materials That Will Be Accepted FOR A CHARGE:

Appliances \$20 each (computer monitors, televisions, refrigerators, dehumidifiers, air conditioners, water coolers or freezers). Propane tanks, car/truck tires, car/truck batteries \$20 each. **Mattresses: As of November 1, 2022, mattresses will be accepted for a \$25 fee at the Oxford Transfer Station located at 200 Leicester Street, North Oxford, MA, between the hours of 8:00 am and noon on Collection Event Days.**

MATERIALS THAT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AT 165 BAREFOOT ROAD FACILITY:

- NO Asbestos, PCBs, explosives or shock-sensitive materials, ammunition, compressed gas cylinders, radio-active wastes, pathological wastes, infectious waste, or medicines.
- CONSTRUCTION & DEMOLITION DEBRIS (SEE NOTE BELOW FOR ALTERNATE DELIVERY SITE)
- NO COMMERCIAL WASTE
- NO LATEX PAINT
- NO METAL
- NO RECYCLING/CARDBOARD
- NO FOOD OR HOUSEHOLD TRASH

On March 30, 2024, Southbridge Residents may bring up to 2 cubic yards (approximately 4'x4'x4') of construction and demolition waste, free of charge, to the Casella Oxford Transfer Station located at 200 Leicester Street, North Oxford, MA, between the hours of 8:00 am and noon.

You **MUST** provide a valid form of identification showing you are a resident of Southbridge (Driver's license, Town tax bill, etc.) or you will have to pay a fee to use the facility.

The Oxford Transfer Station will be accepting **RESIDENTIAL** construction and demolition debris **ONLY**. **NO OTHER** wastes or recycling will be accepted in Oxford. No commercial wastes will be accepted free of charge.

Construction and Demolition Waste is waste building materials and rubble resulting from construction, remodeling, repair or demolition of buildings, pavements, roads or other structures (including but not limited to concrete, bricks, asphalt pavement, masonry, plaster, gypsum wallboard, metal, lumber and wood).

See Southbridge Cable Access Channel 192 for more information

No pre-registration is necessary. Proof of residency will be required.


If you have any questions about the event or acceptable materials, please call

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How to help students master college entrance exams

The college admissions process is multifaceted and stretches out over a year or more. High school students who plan to continue their education at four-year schools typically go through the admissions process at various schools before deciding where the next step on their academic journeys will take them.

Testing is part of the college admissions process. Parents and guardians who want to give young people the best chance of being admitted to their preferred school can help students prepare accordingly. In the United States, performance on the SAT and/or the ACT has traditionally been a key consideration for college admissions departments. The college information resource CollegeVine says standardized test scores are not required in the admissions process for public Canadian universities, although some private ones will accept SAT scores. According to the Princeton Review, the SAT is created and administered by the College Board. The test consists of Math and Evidence-based Reading and Writing. Each section is scored on a 200-to-800-point scale, (a score of 1600 indicates mastery of the exam). The ACT is a similar test that also helps measure college readiness. The ACT consists of four sections: English, Reading, Math, and Science. There's also an optional 40-minute Writing Test that some colleges may require. The maximum composite score for the ACT is 36.

Most schools do not favor one test over the other, so it's possible students will take just one exam. However, college-bound students are increasingly taking both the SAT and ACT and only submitting the higher score to schools. This is important for families and students to recognize. Generally, students can study concurrently for both tests, and the following are some additional strategies to prepare for college admissions testing.

- Enroll in a test prep course. Students may benefit from taking test prep courses either in sophomore year of high school or early in their junior year. These courses familiarize students with the testing format and enable them to take practice exams. They also offer tips for getting through the test within the allotted time. Knowing "how" to take the test is often just as important as knowing the material on the test.
- Focus on vocabulary. Families can work together to expand students' vocabularies. Everyone can learn new words and use them on a daily basis.
- Prioritize rest and a healthy lifestyle. This can be a stressful time in students' lives. Parents and other caregivers can recognize this and reinforce healthy living habits that will help teens get the rest they need to stay both physically and mentally well. Try not to put extra pressure on students during this critical time. Avoid emphasizing a need to get the best test scores possible, which can lead to additional stress, burnout and resentment.
- Realize many schools are test-optional. Students who simply are not excellent test-takers may take comfort in knowing that a growing number of schools have become test-optional. Families can determine if students want to be "one-and-done" on standardized testing, or take the test a few times to improve their scores.

Families can work together to make preparing for standardized testing more successful. • Prioritize rest and a healthy lifestyle. This can be a stressful time in students' lives. Parents and other caregivers can recognize this and reinforce healthy living habits that will help

teens get the rest they need to stay both physically and mentally well. Try not to put extra pressure on students during this critical time. Avoid emphasizing a need to get the best test scores possible, which can lead to additional stress, burnout and resentment.

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- Families can work together to make preparing for standardized testing more successful. BS244845



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AIC student Morgan Martello named to American Field Hockey Coaches Association National Academic Squad

SPRINGFIELD —American International College (AIC) congratulates Morgan Martello of Uxbridge for being named by the American Field Hockey Coaches Association as a member of the 2023 Division II National Academic Squad.

Martello was among fourteen members of the AIC field hockey team to be awarded the honor. These undergraduate student-athletes were recognized for having a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.50 on a 4.00 scale through the end of the fall 2023 semester.

Founded in 1885, American International College (AIC) is a private, co-educational, doctoral granting institution located in Springfield, Massachusetts, comprising the School of Business, Arts and Sciences, the School of Education, and the School of Health Sciences. AIC supports and advances education, diversity, and opportunity for its students and the community.

National Quilting Day exhibit & demonstration at Charlton Public Library

CHARLTON — Saturday, March 16 is National Quilting Day and Cornerstone Quilters Guild is holding their Second Annual Quilting Day Exhibit and Demonstration in Dexter Hall from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

The room will be filled with many different types of quilts, and participants will host demonstrations of hand and machine quilting techniques highlighting the diverse world of quilting from traditional to modern to contemporary. They will also be available to answer questions. They will have information about their workshops and community outreach as well.

This event is free and open to all; no registration is required. Stop by!

The Cornerstone Quilters Guild is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in the spring of 2000. The Guild has more than 100 members from the Central Massachusetts and Northeast Connecticut areas. They welcome everyone with an interest in the art of quilt making, both beginners and experienced quilters alike!

Charlton Public Library is located at 40 Main St.



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SPORTS

Second period special teams help Tewksbury defeat Rockets in State Tournament Elite 8



Nick Ethier
After scoring a goal, Auburn's Nathan Dono (4) and Austin Dono (9) jump into the glass to celebrate with the Rockets' faithful.

BY NICK ETHIER
SPORTS EDITOR

WOBURN — When taking on the top seeded Tewksbury boys' varsity ice hockey team in the Elite 8 round of the Division 2 State Tournament, Auburn head coach Glen Bombard made one thing clear:

"A team like that, they're skilled and you can't give them power plays. Point blank. You just can't do it," said Bombard.

The ninth ranked Rockets — a co-op with student-athletes also from Tantasqua, Shepherd Hill and Millbury — allowed a pair of second period power play goals and then the Redmen also scored a shorthanded strike, turning a 3-2 advantage after one period into a 6-2 lead through two.

"We screwed up in the second period," said Bombard, as Auburn eventually lost, 7-2, at the O'Brien Ice Rink on Wednesday, March 6. "That's pretty much what it came down to."

With the game at 3-2 early in the second, the Rockets were awarded a power play. But Auburn took a penalty of their own, and then another a minute later. Now skating five-on-three, Tewksbury took advantage. Tyler Bourgea made a pass over to Matthew Cooke, who then slapped a pass near the right post to Jeremy Insogna, who tapped the puck into the net. The Redmen made it a 5-2 game a minute later with Bourgea scoring, and Insogna and Tyler Barnes grabbing the assists.

With the clock ticking toward the end of the second period, the Rockets went on another power play. But it was Tewksbury who found the net, Bourgeau taking a pass from Barnes and beating Auburn goalie Ethan LaPlante (21 saves).

"We gave up the five-on-three and then the short-handed, and that kind of put the nail in the coffin," said Bombard.

The Redmen put the finishing touches on their victory with another power play goal — they were three-for-three with the man-advantage — midway through the third period. There, Insogna scored with Cooke and Jake Cunha assisting.

"I thought we played a great third period. We just didn't put anything into the net," Bombard said of the final frame of his team's season.

The first period was a back-and-forth affair. Tewksbury took 1-0 and 2-1 leads (Jason Shreenan and Bourgea scoring), only for Auburn to battle back to twice tie the score. Nathan Dono beat Redmen goalie David Karlberg (26 saves) twice for both of the Rockets' goals, with Austin Dono and Ethan McDermott assisting on the first, and the second coming unassisted.

Cooke scored later in the first for Tewksbury to take a 3-2 lead into the first intermission, but Bombard wasn't concerned at that point in time.

"I felt pretty confident going into the second period," said Bombard.

But the Redmen took advantage of their opportunities and moved to the tournament's Final Four.

"We just made mistakes that we haven't made in the last nine games, and those mistakes came back to haunt us," said Bombard.

Tewksbury (21-3) then defeated No. 4 Woburn, 6-4, to advance to the State Final, while the Rockets wound up with a record of 17-6.

"We have a ton of these guys returning next year, so we'll see what happens," said Bombard. "I'm extremely proud. They're awesome kids. We'll keep building."



Nick Ethier
Goalie Ethan LaPlante of Auburn saves the puck versus Tewksbury.



Nick Ethier
Wyatt Zalneraitis of Auburn plays the puck along the blue line.



Nick Ethier
Auburn's Erik Dupuis, left, gets ready to win a faceoff against Tewksbury.



Nick Ethier
(Right) Auburn's Owen Stattenfield handles the puck into Tewksbury's zone.

Shepherd Hill, Tantasqua both reach Round of 16 before bowing out



File photo
Lucas Miglionico and the Shepherd Hill boys' varsity basketball team had a successful season that finished in the Division 2 State Tournament Round of 16.

On Tuesday, March 5, the local boys' varsity basketball teams from Shepherd Hill (Division 2) and Tantasqua (Division 3) embarked on their respective Round of 16 contests.

The 16th seeded Rams battled with the tournament's top seed, Malden Catholic, but were unable to secure a victory in a 59-40 setback. Malden Catholic then topped No. 8 Holyoke, 60-43, to advance to

the Final Four. And the ninth ranked Warriors couldn't get past No. 8 Newburyport, 59-58.



File photo
A strong season that included the Clark Tournament Large Schools Championship, Jack Rapose and the Tantasqua boys' varsity basketball team eventually lost in the Round of 16 of the Division 3 State Tournament.

Newburyport then lost 16-6 while Tantasqua, the Clark Tournament Large Schools Champions, ended 15-8.

Charlton Youth Basketball Accepting Scholarship Applications

Charlton Youth Basketball (CYB) is proud to announce that it will be awarding up to four (4) \$500 scholarships to graduating seniors that have participated in their recreational program.

"The CYB program has been built on the strength of the Charlton community, and we recognize the rising cost of higher education can have a tremendous impact on

a child's decision to attend college. We want to do our small part to encourage our alumni to follow their dreams, and hope this scholarship does just that," said CYB President Garret Holland.

Information and the application can be found at <http://www.charltonbasketball.com>. The deadline to apply is March 31.

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4 Howard Street, Brookfield, MA 01506
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Saturday 9AM-11AM

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Chip - In Food Pantry
McKinstry Building
37 Main Street, Charlton, MA 01507
Distribution: 3rd Saturday 9 AM-12 Noon

LEICESTER

Leicester Food Pantry
St. Joseph-St. Pius X Parish
759 Main Street, Leicester, MA 01524
Distribution: Tuesday 5 PM-7 PM

NORTH BROOKFIELD

St. Joseph’s Food Pantry
Located in the church hall at 296 North
Main St. North Brookfield
Distribution is the 1st Thursday of the
month from 5:00-6:30PM
the 3rd Thursday of the month from 12
Noon-1:15PM
Any questions should be directed to the
Rectory office 508 867-6469.
St. Joseph’s Food Pantry is a community
partner affiliated with the Worcester County
Food Bank.

SOUTHBRIDGE

Saint John Paul II Food Pantry
Saint Vincent de Paul
279 Hamilton St, Southbridge, MA 01550
Distribution: Tuesday 3 PM-5 PM, Wednes-
day 9 AM -11 AM

Southbridge Food Share Pantry
79 Elm St., Southridge, Ma. 01550.
Distribution: MWF from 10:00AM -
11:15AM

**SPENCER- EAST BROOKFIELD -
RESIDENTS ONLY**

Mary Queen of the Rosary Food Pantry
60 Maple St, Spencer, MA 01562
Distribution: Thursday 10 AM-12 Noon

WEST BROOKFIELD

Sharing Cupboard Food Pantry
First Congregational Church
36 North Main Street,
W.Bookfield, MA 01585
Distribution: Wednesday 10 AM-11:30 AM
- Thursday 7 PM- 8 PM



MILL
continued from page A1

mostly featured local acts with some bigger names, including Gene Loves Jezebel.

But the sprawling building played a much larger role in Southbridge's life in its earlier incarnations. Until 2002, a large section farther up Mill Street was home to the nation's first Ames Department Store, starting in 1958.

"...I remember going there, especially on Friday nights and Saturdays to shop," local historian Dick Whitney recalls on his Web site, dickwhitney.net. "When I think of Ames, I recall walking through the front doors and stepping on the creaky wooden floors. I also especially can picture the large wooden staircase that was located to the left in center of the store, as I believe it led down to the toy section of the store. This is where I spent most of my time, and I avoided the clothing area (and most often still do!)."

At the same Web site, former Southbridge resident Dick Bedard recalled, "From 6 p.m. to 11:30 [p.m.], Monday through Saturday, I worked at the cafeteria in the basement of the Ames Worsted located at the jog on Mill Street. I was alone for the night shift and ran the "roach coach" food wagon around the entire plant; once before 7 p.m. and twice following the evening meal in the cafeteria at 7 [p.m.]. As I remember, the plant was rather busy during '49/'50 and working with those folks was a great experience."

The department store was an outgrowth of the Ames Worsted Co, which acquired the entire complex in the late 1930s and ran it "until sometime in the 1960s," Whitney's site states. The name came from its owner, Ames Stevens, who also owned Lowell's US Bunting Co.

Stevens bought it largely intact after the stockholders of Hamilton Woolen Mfg. Co. voted to close in 1935.



A perspective that can never be seen again: The mill's main tower as seen through a back wall window halfway through demolition.



This is what the mill complex looked like in 1903, as seen from across the river on Hamilton Street. The wooden buildings in front have been gone a long time, and the three-story wing at left was demolished last weekend. (Source: Digital Commonwealth)

According to the unsigned "Shocked Southbridge" story in Time magazine of Jan 28, 1935 (<https://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,748377,00.html>), the closure was management's response to a unionization effort that had attracted 300 of the firm's 1000 employees. The prior September, workers had gone on strike over pay and working conditions, so the mill closed temporarily pending negotiations. It reopened, but the union called for strike anyway.

"The factory was picketed, non-union workers were threatened with violence, their homes stoned," Time reported. "Rather than limp along with a crippled staff, the mill closed and has remained closed ever since."

Despite appeals from nonunion workers and local stockholder George Grant (who also owned the Southbridge Press

and was dubbed "may-or of Southbridge"), the "little group of elderly, well-dressed Massachusetts folk" in Boston voted to close 26,589-815. Note that total is by shares not by individuals; it doesn't say how many people actually held stock.

"That night nearly one-fifth of the people of Southbridge crawled into bed with nothing to look forward to but the dole," Time concluded.

Records at Harvard University's Hollis Archives (<https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/11/resources/9867>) agree on the big picture, but have differing details. For example, that site's summary states, "In 1934, the company was hit with a general strike with demands of higher wages, a smaller machine load, equal distribution of work, and a union shop. Company records and newspaper clippings in the



The fate of the main tower and the section behind it along Mill Street remain in doubt.



A view from the river end of the mill's east wing during demolition.

collection make it clear that women were active in all aspects of the strike. The strike was led by Miss Janviers (Jean) Gauthier, President of United Textile Workers of America, Local # 2324, who had formulated the demands."

Until that point, Hamilton Woolen had been one of the town's most stable and long-lasting businesses, according to a Mass Historical Commission (MHC) report from 1983. For most of that time, it did far more than just wool; its products included cotton,

broadcloth, delaines and various other textiles, plus finished clothing in later years.

By the early 20th century, it "continued to dominate the local textile industry" even though it ended cotton production. That dominance was largely represented by new products that allowed it "to remain competitive in the world market," a willingness to retrofit, and the firm's purchase of Central Mills downtown. By 1927, the MHC states, Hamilton had 1400 employees, 59,000 spindles and 1200

looms in 27 buildings. Late in the 1800s, Hamilton was the genesis of another major Southbridge company that would actually go on to outlive Hamilton itself, but not compete with it. That was American Optical. Its 1891 president George Wells used "his experience with the machinery at Hamilton Woolen Mfg. Co. ... to develop new machines and tools which greatly improved the production process," the MHC states.

Hamilton had by then existed since 1831, surviving a major fire in 1850. It was one of several textile firms that drew thousands of Irish, French-Canadian, Albanian and other immigrants to Southbridge during that century and later. It fueled the development of Globe Village, which had its own post office and telegraph office in the Union Block by at least 1896, its own fire station (alongside the mill's fire department), and extensive residential housing.

"Despite its overall expansion, the growth of the textile industry was far from even. Repeated fires and long periods of inactivity at several of the mill sites were common," MHC reports. "... Those mills that continued in operation, with the exception of the stable Hamilton Woolen Mfg. Co., underwent frequent changes of ownership by Boston and Rhode Island investors."

Elsewhere, it notes that was because of the "very unstable nature of the early textile industry and repeated periods of depression and prosperity."

Hamilton was not the first mill on that site, though. That was the village's namesake Globe Mfg Co, founded in 1814 as a cotton mill and later renamed Wolcott Woolen Mfg. Co. Wolcott was "destroyed by a flood and the collapse of the 'Big Dam' in 1829," MHC states.

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

LEGALS

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 2 OF THE TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE BOARD OF HEALTH CODE OF REGULATIONS: STORAGE AND DISPOSAL OF SOLID WASTE

On March 28, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. the Southbridge Board of Health will hold a Public Hearing at the Town Hall, Veteran's Room (main level) to discuss comments, and vote on **minor language and amendments** to the Town of Southbridge Board of Health Code of Regulations, Chapter 2: Storage and Disposal of Solid Waste **specifically adding**, Section 5.5.; §5.5.1-6: Opting in or out of the Municipal Curbside Program. **Amending** Section 6.4: Inspections and Enforcement §6.4.2 Penalties and Section 7.5 Inspections and Enforcement §7.5.2 Penalties. A draft of the proposed amendments can be reviewed on the Town of Southbridge web site at ci.southbridge.ma.us, Office of the Town Clerk or copies may be obtained by mail or email upon request. All persons requesting copies must contact the Southbridge Board of Health at (508) 764-4252. All interested parties may submit comments in writing to the Office of the Board of Health 41 Elm Street Southbridge, MA. Any written comments regarding these proposed regulations will be accepted at the office of the Board of Health until 12:00 p.m. (noon) Wednesday, March 27, 2024. March 14, 2024 March 21, 2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Worcester Probate and Family Court Docket No. WO24P0561EA Estate of: Timothy Lamica Date Of Death: January 4, 2023 INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above-captioned estate by Petition of Petitioner **Richard Lamica of Southbridge MA Richard Lamica of Southbridge MA** has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the 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. March 14, 2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Worcester Probate and Family Court 225 Main Street Worcester, MA 01608 (508) 831-2200 Docket No. WO24P0635EA CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION Estate of: Marie Angela Blazonis Date of Death: 01/08/2024

To all interested persons: A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Laura A. Sommers of Coeymans Hollow NY** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: **Laura A. Sommers of Coeymans Hollow NY** 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 03/26/2024.** This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a time-

ly written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you. **UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)** A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration. **WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.** Date: March 04, 2024 Stephanie K. Fattman, Register of Probate March 14, 2024

For Legal Advertising Information, Call 508-909-4127 email: legals@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. WO24P0616EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate of:
Dorothy S. Wright
Date of Death: 09/30/2023**

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Martha Mitchell of South Hadley MA** that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.
The Petitioner requests that:
Martha Mitchell of South Hadley 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 04/02/2024.**

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

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)
A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.
WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 28, 2024
Stephanie K. Fattman,
Register of Probate
March 14, 2024

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Scott R. Leduc to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Mackinac Savings Bank, FSB, dated July 13, 2010 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 46054, Page 185, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, by assignment from:

Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. to Bank of America, N.A., successor by merger to BAC Home Loans Servicing LP, FKA Countrywide Home Loans Servicing LP, recorded on June 28, 2012, in Book No. 49198, at Page 363

Bank of America, N.A., successor by merger to BAC Home Loans Servicing LP, FKA Countrywide Home Loans Servicing LP to Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, recorded on December 22, 2016, in Book No. 56507, at Page 264

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to Bayview Loan Servicing, LLC, recorded on December 22, 2016, in Book No. 56507, at Page 267

Bayview Loan Servicing, LLC to Bayview Dispositions IVB, LLC, recorded on February 19, 2020, in Book No. 61910, at Page 365

Bayview Dispositions IVB, LLC to J.P. Morgan Mortgage Acquisition Corp., recorded on February 19, 2020, in Book No. 61910, at Page 368

J.P. Morgan Mortgage Acquisition Corp. to U.S. Bank Trust National Association, not in its individual capacity but solely as owner Trustee for RCF 2 Acquisition Trust, recorded on October 22, 2021, in Book No. 66355, at Page 241

for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at 3:00 PM on March 25, 2024, on the mortgaged premises located at 153 New Boston Road, Sturbridge, Worcester County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,

TO WIT:
The land in Sturbridge, Worcester County, Massachusetts, situated on the northeasterly corner of New Boston Road and Field Drive, being Lot #120 on Plan of Glen Ridge by R.O. and G.G.

Dingman, Engrs., dated November 19, 1949, filed with Worcester District Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 164 Plan 3, bounded and described as follows: NORTHERLY by lot 121 on said plan, 174.36 feet; EASTERLY by New Boston Road, 90.19 feet; SOUTHERLY by Field Drive 180 feet; and WESTERLY by lot 119 on said plan, 90 feet.

For mortgagor's(s') title see deed recorded with Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 24876, Page 160.

These premises will be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed.

TERMS OF SALE:

A deposit of Five Thousand (\$5,000.00) Dollars by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by certified or bank check at Harmon Law Offices, P.C., 150 California St., Newton, Massachusetts 02458, or by mail to P.O. Box 610389, Newton Highlands, Massachusetts 02461-0389, within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.
U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS OWNER TRUSTEE FOR RCF 2 ACQUISITION TRUST
Present holder of said mortgage
By its Attorneys,
HARMON LAW OFFICES, P.C.
150 California St.
Newton, MA 02458
(617)558-0500
25069
February 29, 2023
March 7, 2024
March 14, 2024

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing on the proposed Tantasqua Regional School District budget for 2024-2025 will be held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. in the Cafeteria of Tantasqua Regional Junior High School, in accordance with M.G.L., Chapter 71, § 38N. A copy of the proposed budget is available at the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, 320A Brookfield Rd., Fiskdale, MA.

NOTE: The regular school committee meeting will begin following the Public Hearing at 6:30 p.m.

Michael Valanzola
Chairman
Tantasqua Regional School District Committee
March 14, 2024
March 15, 2024

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Eric Vaughan to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Guaranteed Rate, Inc., dated January 31, 2018 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 58396, Page 54, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, by assignment from:

Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Guaranteed Rate, Inc., its successors and assigns to Nationstar Mortgage LLC d/b/a Mr. Cooper, recorded on August 22, 2019, in Book No. 60917, at Page 335

for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at 1:00 PM on April 12, 2024, on the mortgaged premises located at 27 Henry Street, Southbridge, Worcester County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,

TO WIT:
The land in Southbridge, Worcester County, Massachusetts, with the buildings thereon, situated northerly from Worcester Street and on the westerly side of Henry Street, bounded and described as follows:
BEGINNING at the southeast corner at an iron pin in the ground on the westerly line of said Henry Street and

at corner of land now or formerly of Philibert Quevillon;
THENCE northerly by said line of said street fifty-nine (59) feet, more or less, to an iron pin in the ground at land now or formerly of Henry A. Morse;
THENCE westerly by land now or formerly of Henry A. Morse, seventy-one (71) feet to wall and land now or formerly of said Morse;
THENCE southerly sixty-six (66) feet by land now or formerly of said Henry A. Morse to an iron pin in the ground at land now or formerly of said Philibert Quevillon;
THENCE easterly by land now or formerly of said Philibert Quevillon, seventy-two (72) feet to the point of beginning.
Said premises are Lot #13 as numbered and shown on a plan of lots made for Henry A. Morse by Arthur C. Moore, C.E., dated August 17, 1889.

For mortgagor's(s') title see deed recorded with Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 58396, Page 51.

These premises will be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed.

TERMS OF SALE:

A deposit of Five Thousand (\$5,000.00) Dollars by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by certified or bank check at Harmon Law Offices, P.C., 150 California St., Newton, Massachusetts 02458, or by mail to P.O. Box 610389, Newton Highlands, Massachusetts 02461-0389, within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.
NATIONSTAR MORTGAGE LLC D/B/A MR. COOPER
Present holder of said mortgage
By its Attorneys,
HARMON LAW OFFICES, P.C.
150 California St.
Newton, MA 02458
(617)558-0500
24977
March 14, 2024
March 21, 2024
March 28, 2024

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT AMENDMENTS TO BOARD OF HEALTH FEE SCHEDULE

On March 28, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. the Southbridge Board of Health will hold a Public Hearing at the Town Hall, Veteran's Room (main level) to discuss comments, and vote on adoption of the Board of Health Fee Schedule.

A draft of the proposed Board of Health Fee Schedule can be reviewed on the Town of Southbridge website at ci.southbridge.ma.us, Office of the Town Clerk or copies may be obtained by mail or email upon request. All persons requesting copies must contact the Southbridge Board of Health at (508) 764-4252.

All interested parties may submit comments in writing to the Office of the Board of Health 41 Elm Street Southbridge, MA. Any written comments regarding the Board of Health Fee Schedule will be accepted at the office of the Board of Health until 12:00 p.m. (noon) Wednesday, March 27, 2024.

March 14, 2024

March 21, 2024

Sturbridge Planning Board Public Hearing Application for Site Plan Approval Tsantinis, LLC

In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 40A, §11, the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at 6:35 PM** in the **Center Office Building located at 301 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566** and/or by virtual means if circumstances warrant, in accordance with applicable law; on the application of Tsantinis, LLC for the property located at 5 Snell Street.

The applicant requests Site Plan Approval as required by the Sturbridge Zoning Bylaws Article XIX, Site Plan Review to change the use of the existing structure to a mixed-use retail and residential use and to continue use of

the pre-existing non-conforming parking lot

The existing residential unit upstairs will remain and the unit downstairs will be converted into a small retail shop containing 873 square feet. In accordance with the plans and application submitted, the only exterior changes will be the construction of a handicap ramp, new signage, and the relocation of the existing wooden planters to accommodate the full length of the parking spaces on site. No new pavement or grading is required or proposed. The existing parking lot contains five (5) pre-existing parking spaces and the applicant has a shared parking agreement with 428 Main Street for three (3) spaces for a total of eight spaces where 6 are required.

A copy of the site plan and application can be inspected on the Sturbridge Town Website at <https://www.sturbridge.gov/planning-board/pages/recent-filings> or arrangements can be made to view the application packet by contacting the Sturbridge Planning Department at (508) 347-2508 or by email at jlacy@sturbridge.gov.

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted in person and may be conducted via remote means if circumstance warrant, in accordance with applicable law. This means that members of the public body as well as members of the public may access this meeting in person, or via virtual means.

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/472675877>

Every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post of the Town's website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of the proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

Charles Blanchard
Chairperson
March 7, 2024
March 14, 2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Division
Docket No. WO24P0530EA
Estate of:
Dan Foskett
Date Of Death:
December 9, 2024
INFORMAL PROBATE
PUBLICATION NOTICE**

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

**Lynn Purcell of Southbridge MA
Lynn Purcell of Southbridge MA**

has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the 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.

March 14, 2024

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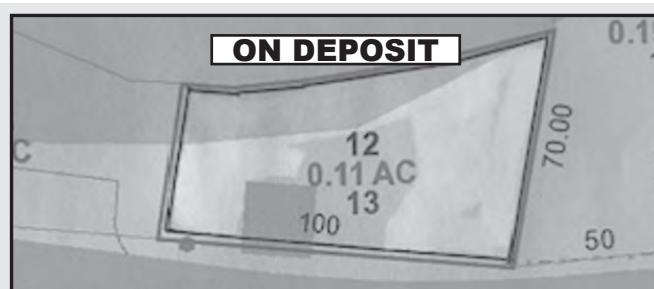
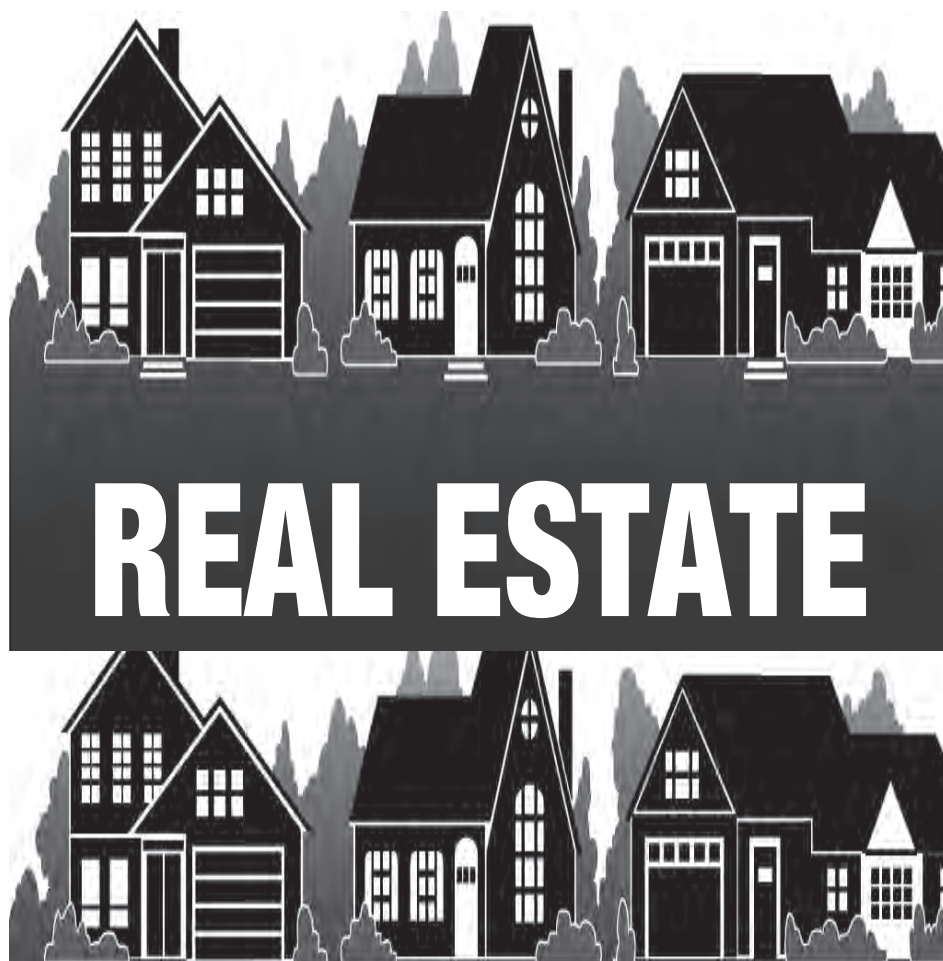
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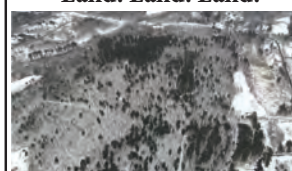
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TESTING

continued from page A1

themselves. Sturbridge has the necessary sampling equipment, but it costs about \$1000 per test, and he said DEP might require additional samples if they find detectable PFAS levels. Either way, such tests are now required annually.

He noted the PFAS arriving at the sewer plant is not in the drinking water, so Sturbridge has to identify where its coming from.

DPW Director Heather Blakeley said the new testing limits are so low that even wearing gloves to take the samples will cause it to violate the limit. To make sure the tests are accurate, the town will need to do them using strict processes.

That prompted Town Administrator Robin Grimm to say she will draft a policy for how to do this whole process with the town attorneys and submit it to the selectmen for approval.

Before that discussion, the selectmen approved hiking the septage (sewage) costs from nine to 11 cents per gallon, after Moody cited rising costs in various areas.

To contrast with that, Tourism Coordinator Terry Masterson had far better business-related news, noting the town is releasing its first tourism map, video and an updated guidebook highlighting the various amenities the town has to offer visitors.

He said the tourist traffic has rebounded since Covid, with hotel revenues hitting \$21.4 million last year after bottoming out at \$8 million in 2020. That came from an estimated 100,000 people in the town's nine hotels and 90,000 using the four RV parks, the latter based on 50 percent occupancy of its 500 spaces.

A lot of them come to Old Sturbridge Village, but his goal is to encourage them to hit the more than 120 other business-

es in the region. He noted business vacancy has fallen from about 15 percent in 2014 to just five storefronts today, and "anytime a store goes vacant, it tends to get full [quickly], which is a very good sign."

Looking forward, he said he sees the 501 Main Street project being "the arithmetic of one parking lot plus one bridge plus one trail equals a lot of consumer spending." That project is building a 24-paid-space lot with a footbridge to the River-

lands trail system across the Quinebaug River.

Grimm added she's been looking into joining the regional "Discover Central Mass" effort to "broaden our reach up out Albany way." Today, Sturbridge gets a "good draw" from Providence and Philadelphia, and she hopes to draw RV travelers and people going events in Worcester.

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

TOWN CLERK

continued from page A1

giving the town time to propose a change to town bylaws, bring the matter to town meeting and a ballot vote, receive authorization from the state, and begin the new hiring process. The committee's arguments in favor of the change focused on the need for a qualified and experienced individual to fill the role rather than someone elected with no experience and that keeping the position as elected can prevent staff from being promoted to the position regardless of their performance.

LaCroix herself spoke in favor of changing the town's approach to the position.

"The election part has changed the job, and changed the office. I've been in there for 14 years. I can't imagine walking in this year and never having set foot in a town clerk's office. People do it, but you're not going to keep them at this point. You really need someone that's had some background and has been an assistant somewhere else and if you have an assistant that doesn't live in town they can't move up to the town clerk's position," said LaCroix.

Reaction from the Board of Selectmen was mixed. Although most noted they weren't necessarily against the change, some did present arguments in the interest of transparency and to play "devil's advocate."

Selectman Peter Lancette said he feels there's a lot more to be done before they bring the matter to the public.

"There's potentially more work to be done to make sure that we, as a board, would assign or appoint someone appropriately, like list their competencies, what is the evaluation process, what determines remov-

al. We're taking away from the general public and putting it in the hands of a select few, so I think for transparency purposes, if we were to move forward with this, we would need to be very clear what qualifies the board for appointing somebody and what is grounds for removal from that position. In my opinion I think we need more work on that," said Lancette.

Selectman David Singer made it clear he wasn't advocating for or against the issue but made a point that the state offers trainings annually for new clerks and that changing the

job would severely limit the pool of candidates to those who meet specific requirements. He said the Board needed to take its time considering all recommendations brought forward by the Government Study Committee including the Town Clerk change.

"My personal recommendation is the board should not sit here and go one by one just make decisions off the cuff for what we're going to do. We've got the recommendations to take under advisement. I'd rather see us come together in a workshop and go over these to bring forward our opinions on why

we're going to move forward with this one and not that one," said Singer.

Several selectmen said they weren't prepared to act on the recommendation that night. They also hesitated to bring the matter to the town during the May town meeting. The board inevitably decided to table the matter until May while working to finalize all the specifics of the proposal with the anticipation of bringing it to the voters in May of 2025.

OFFICERS

continued from page A1

vilian awards for their actions that night.

For Early, it's always an honor to recognize local first responders who deliver for their communities during dire occasions. But unlike most incidents first responders encounter, it wasn't a civilian who needed help on Dec. 17—it was a brother of the badge.

"They answer the bell any time they are called, no matter what. For these officers, this is one of the worst scenarios they can face—having to work on one of their own. They knew the severity of the situation and that they had to put aside their personal feelings to save a life," Early said. "Quick thinking by his family members and the teamwork of the crew of emergency responders ensured not a minute was wasted in

the fight to save Officer Lavallee's life. Because of each person's actions on that night, he is still with us today."

Around 10 p.m. on Dec. 17, Sturbridge Emergency Communications Unit dispatcher Grasso received a 911 call requesting an ambulance. The caller, Sandra Murphy, reported that her husband had indicated he was not feeling well and was going to rest. When she went to check on him, she found him unconscious and not breathing.

Murphy immediately called the police to request an ambulance before rushing downstairs to request assistance from Officer Schlegel, who lived on site in an in-law apartment.

Schlegel, off-duty from his job at the East Brookfield Police Department, was the first to begin performing CPR on Lavallee. Schlegel

worked with Lavallee's stepson, Brayden, to pull Lavallee down from the bed and onto the floor to begin chest compressions until further help arrived.

After Dispatcher Berry sent Officers Danna, Patterson, and Hemingway to the scene, they immediately recognized the address of one of their fellow officers. Lavallee was a 25-year veteran of the Sturbridge Police Department who had retired from full-time duty only recently. He was still serving as a part-time officer at the time of the incident.

Officer Danna was the first to arrive on scene, followed by Patterson and then Hemingway. Danna had an automated external defibrillator (AED) machine and administered shocks to Lavallee. Responders delivered multiple shocks on scene.

Lt. Sean Moynagh

and Joseph Doldoorian, of the SFD, arrived shortly after the officers. They transported Lavallee to Harrington Memorial Hospital.

Initially, medical personnel were unsure whether Lavallee would survive the heart attack. He had to be put into a medically induced coma and have his body temperature brought down for several days, officials said.

Lavallee was eventually released from the hospital and is working his way toward a full recovery.

"You never think you'll be the call. Never in a million years did I think it would be me," Lavallee said. "Everybody I train with when we do our CPR training—and when I look around my roll call room—I know I'm around capable people at all levels."

Added Lavallee, "It's been an emotional thing

for me and my family. I'm sure it affected the other officers; emotionally, it's going to hit everybody. Nobody is promised tomorrow. I just couldn't be more thankful to the guys who've assisted me in this whole thing."

For police leaders, a range of emotions went through them upon learning the details of the response and those involved.

"As a police chief, you're used to answering the phone at all hours of the night, and you know when the phone rings it's not going to be a good call—but you're not used to getting a call about one of your own officers not breathing, not responding, CPR in progress," said Sturbridge Police Chief Earl Dessert. "It causes a little different anxiety, but me answering that call was nothing compared to what the first responders on the scene must have felt

working on their own friend. It was so nice to have this official recognition from the District Attorney's Office today. First responders across the country are doing this work day in and day out, and it's often overlooked. Having this recognition makes a big difference."

Added Sturbridge Fire Chief John Grasso, "The TEAM Award is an appropriate name. You'll notice we're all up here in different uniforms, but we're all on one team."

The TEAM Award was created by Early in 2019 to recognize public safety employees who go above and beyond the call of duty.

If you would like to nominate someone for the award, contact the Worcester County District Attorney's Office at 508-755-8601.

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Joshua Hyde
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Everyone will read “Mister Popper’s Penguins” and come ready to discuss the book. After the discussion, there will be a craft and a healthy snack. Books will be available at the library.

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