

Gateway Players Theatre celebrates 50 years!

SOUTHBRIDGE — Gateway Players Theatre kicked off their 50th season with a performance of Neil Simon’s “Plaza Suite.” This year, the Board of Directors decided to fill the season with shows that had been performed during one of the decades that

Gateway Players has been in existence. In 1975, the Tri-Community Theater Association, soon renamed to Gateway Players Theatre, held auditions for its first ever production. Charles F. Russell, Jr., director of Plaza Suite, led the auditions at the AO auditorium. After

Perry (Bellhop), Charles Hesse (Jesse Kiplinger), Sally Seelig (Muriel Tate), Pauline Julien (Norma Hubley), Michael Dube (Roy Hubley), Andrew Simpson (Borden Eisler), and Carol Dietrich (Mimsey Hubley). Members of the theatre group soon began working on the Plaza Suite set in an AO donated shop. Construction would continue every Saturday until production time. Once built the sets would be transported to Southbridge High where the show would be performed. The show was performed on May 8-10, 1975.

Occasionally a community theater produces a show more than once. So was the case with Plaza Suite. In 1987, “Plaza Suite” was performed at the Gateway Barn located behind the Dresser House, now home to the Ruth Wells Center at 111 Main St., Southbridge. The production team consisted of Carole Hayes, Director and Jane Clarke-Loretz as stage manager. The cast for this production included: Cathy Righi, Dick Reardon, Peter Proulx, Larry Day, Wendy Blizzard, Sally Seelig, Al Cook, Ross Dixon, Pauline Julien, and Lorna Bumpus. Production dates were June 19, 20, 26 & 27, 1987.

This year’s production directed by Mike Dupuis and produced by Jeanne Dupuis brought the story back to life in Gateway’s current home – Elm Street Congregational Church. Appearing in this production were: John Golden (Jesse Kiplinger), William Bolster (Waiter), Kevin McGee (Roy Hubley and Sam Nash), Hillary Robertson (Jean McCormick and Muriel Tate), Deb Hollett (Karen Nash), Asher McCoy (Borden Eisler), Cynthia Claudio (Norma Hubley), and Chamira Santia-

go Flores (Bell Hop and Mimsie Hubley). The show dates were February 21, 22, 28 and March 1 & 2. Coming up next at Gateway Players Theatre will be On Golden Pond by Ernest Thompson, May 2, 3, 4, 9 and 10. Visit our Facebook page or website gatewayplayers.org for complete information.



The 1975 and 2025 casts of “Plaza Suite.”

Courtesy

Capstone

Planning Group

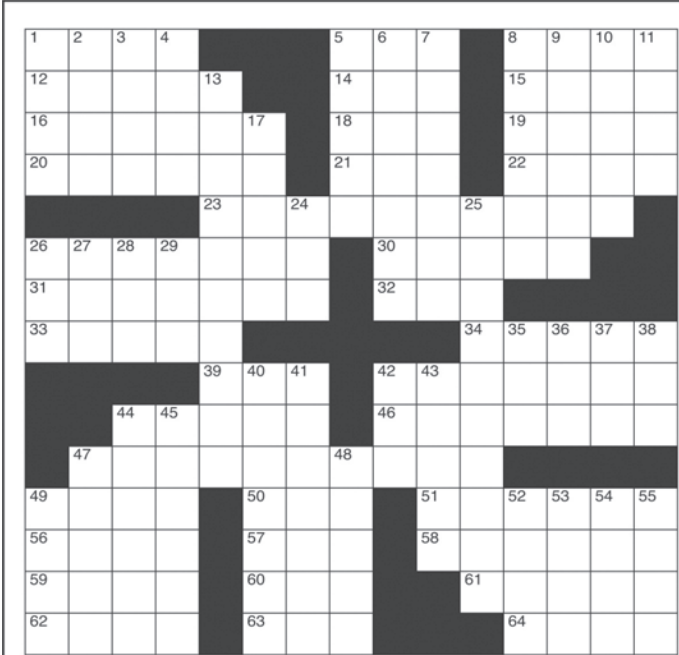
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Unsheared sheep

5. Rock TV channel

8. Streetcar

12. Concerning

14. Expression of recognition

15. Greek goddess of youth

16. An iPad is one

18. Adult beverage

19. Manning and Wallach are two

20. Makes a petty verbal attack

21. Tyrion Lannister’s nickname

22. Pointed ends of pens

23. Wristwatches

26. Body part

30. Made a mistake

31. Adjusted

32. Turkish honorific title

33. Yell
34. Historic Alabama city

39. Cub

42. Type of sea bass dish

44. To call (archaic)

46. Unfortunate

47. Separate oneself from others

49. Hero sandwiches

50. Former OSS

51. Open spaces in a forest

56. Innermost brain membranes

57. Fortune

58. Hunting expedition

59. Doomed queen Boleyn

60. Peyton’s little brother

61. Type of wrap

62. Scottish tax

63. Soviet Socialist Republic

64. An increase in price or value

CLUES DOWN

1. Works of body art

2. Abba __, Israeli politician

3. A desert in Asia

4. Eat greedily

5. Doomed French queen

6. Beat

7. One who survives on blood

8. As a consequence

9. Counted on

10. Acquired Brain Injury

11. Unclean

13. One who does not drink

17. Wild ox of the Malay Archipelago

24. __ student, learns healing

25. Bacterial skin infection

26. Expresses surprise

27. What one says on a wedding day

28. Crony
29. Where you entered the world (abbr.)

35. Unit of length

36. Side that is sheltered from the wind

37. More (Spanish)

38. Autonomic nervous system

40. Violent troublemakers, originally in Paris

41. Statements that something is untrue

42. Greek alphabet letter

43. Suspends from above

44. Popular types of cigars

45. Girls

47. U.S. philosopher and logician

48. Nocturnal hoofed animal

49. Relaxing spaces

52. From a distance

53. Form of Persian

54. Amounts of time

55. Trigonometric function

discussions between Russell and Aileen Lau, show producer; the following cast was set: Chris Castendyk (Bellhop), Phyllis McNitt (Karen Nash), Wade Cloyd (Sam Nash), Sofoclis Kollios (Waiter), Lonalee Berkowitz (Jean McCormack), Kinson



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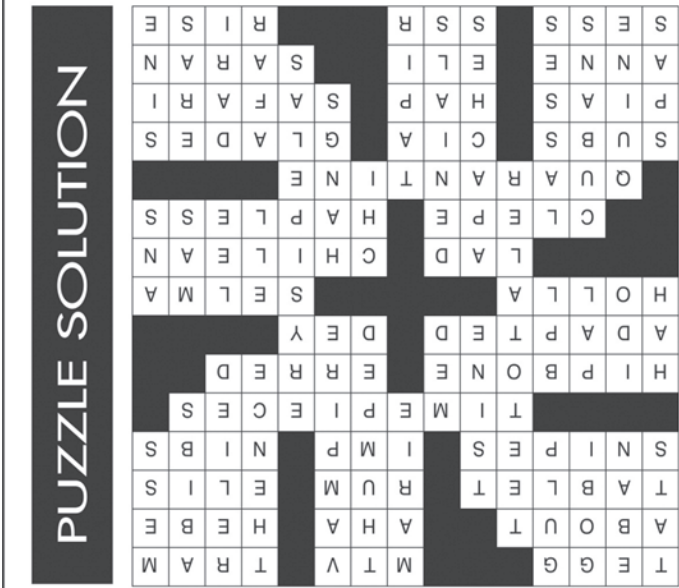
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508- 248-5550, Sunday worship 10:30 a.m. Summer

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• Charlton Baptist Church, 50 Hammond Hill

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• Charlton City United Methodist, 74 Staf-

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Gavel Raiders!

Courtesy

From left to right, members of the Rabonni Lodge of Westwood Mass brother Evan Weisenfeld, bro. Edward Alexander, bro. Michael Slyman, Master of Quinebaug Lodge Southbridge with top hat Bro. Will Proper, Master of Rabonni Lodge, Bro. William Ralph holding Quinebaug beautiful Gavel, Bro. Paul Williams holding Rabonni Lodge Gavel and Bro. Joel Reich the master mind of this Gavel Raid!

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BY BRO. JIMMY FALZONE
QUINEBAUG MASONIC LODGE
SOUTHBRIDGE

SOUTHBRIDGE — On Monday, March 3, the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge had its regular monthly meeting. In attendance were a group of men not seen in our lodge before. These Master Masons from different parts of the state came to our lodge for a fraternal visit. Come to find out these men were from the Rabonni Lodge of Westwood Mass. This Lodge is part of the 6th

Masonic District which covers the southwest of Boston area. These visiting brethren were on a mission. The Rabonni Lodge heard about our huge, beautiful Traveling Regalia Gavel that the Quinebaug Masonic Lodge had in their possession and wanted to take this huge, beautiful Gavel back to their home lodge. Other Masonic Lodges from throughout the state may come to a regular monthly meeting to retrieve these Traveling Regalia Gavels. This lodge heard about Quinebaug Lodge Traveling

Gavel adventures and wanted a piece of the action. To retrieve the gavel and return it to their lodge they must have a minimum of three brothers which must include a Worshipful Master, an officer and a fellow brother. In return the lodge that it was taken from must go to one of their monthly meetings to retrieve it back. This is one way how fellow Master Masons meet new brethren. If you would like more information about Freemasonry, go to www.massfreemasonry.org and to find a lodge near-est you.

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Elm Street Congregational Church, located at 61 Elm St., Southbridge, invites you to join us on Sunday, March 16 at 1 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Pastor Jennifer Layte, pastor at Central Baptist Church in Southbridge, will be leading a discussion of her book "Favored One." A writer, teacher, and spiritual caregiver at heart, Jenn loves team building, introducing people to Jesus, and teaching things she is also learning. A lot of that happens via the written word, as in the book "Favored One." A potluck lunch will precede the book discussion beginning at noon. For more information call 508-764-4531 and leave a message. We will return your call as soon as possible. All are invited to attend this lively discussion and community meal. Pictured below is Central Baptist Church.

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Lanette Lepper holds up one of her sample jars, with several others in the background.

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY – With higher winds and more unpredictable weather, we’ve been seeing more power outages in recent years. Sometimes they’re brief, sometimes they last days.

Of course, the latter is a problem when you have food in the fridge.

But if it’s dehydrated, it’s “shelf stable,” local farmer Lanette Lepper told a small group at Dudley library last weekend. “If the power goes out, it doesn’t matter.”

Lepper, of the Dudley Agricultural Commission and Grange, has been dehydrating food “probably 15 years,” since before she even started growing her own food.

But human beings have been doing it, in one form or another, for at least 1000 times that long.

She notes “everyone’s going to have different

reasons for doing it.” Among them are “you’re overrun with zucchinis” in summer and don’t want to buy in winter, or you want to send loved ones their favorite recipe, or you want lightweight and space-saving food for camping, or you have stuff that’s stale or just about to go bad and don’t want to waste it. The list is pretty long.

While there are many food preservation methods, most require more work than dehydration. Take canning, for example – that requires boiling in a large pot and being very careful to make sure the cans seal to avoid botulism. Dehydration doesn’t have that risk, although if you don’t make sure it’s truly dry, you might see it mold in storage. (That said, though, Lepper notes “Some things just need to be canned.”)

One commonly canned thing – tomato sauce – is also ideal for dehydrating. Lepper

showed her audience it in two forms – a jar of powder and a crinkly sheet that looked like a fruit rollup (which it essentially was). Both of them will reconstitute into sauce by simply adding water, and you can do the same thing with apple sauce and many other things.

She said dehydrating provides a lot of “DIY convenience,” giving her a lot of ingredients to throw in soup, often with more nutrients than stuff that’s “fresh” at the supermarket (especially in winter). Beyond that, it’s preparation for the unexpected; “It’s good way to have things on hand when you don’t know if you can get them,” Lepper said.

“Almost anything” can be dehydrated, “but there are a few things I don’t recommend,” she said. One of the latter is meat – very lean meat is OK, but fats will spoil (true also of fatty plant products like avocadoes;



Lanette Lepper and Maureen Doyle look over one version of a dehydrator.

she urged just freezing them).

Historically, meats and fish were typically cured with salt and/or various spices and dried either in the sun or smoked in a dry, hot place. According to the online essay “Historical Methods of Food Preservation” by Brian Nummer, “Evidence shows that Middle East and oriental cultures actively dried foods as early as 12,000 B.C. in the hot sun.” (Chances are it was actually far older than that.) He also notes, “In the Middle Ages purposely built ‘still houses’ were created to dry fruits, vegetables and herbs in areas that did not have enough strong sunlight for drying. A fire was used to create the heat needed to dry foods and in some cases smoking them as well.”

His essay is at <https://nchfp.uga.edu/resources/entry/historical-origins-of-food-preservation>. Lepper noted there are many online resources for curing meat, something she doesn’t do.

Lepper said she typically starts by chopping, slicing or shredding the fruit or vegetables, and frozen veggies will dehydrate quite well. Apples and pears are “easy-peasy,” – and apples are one of her family’s favorites; “They hardly ever

make it to a storage bag, they’re so good.” Also easy are peas, tomatoes, peaches, strawberries, nectarines and cherries. Some, like cherries and cherry tomatoes, need to be cut in half first, with the cut side up to retain the nutrients; full size tomatoes get sliced (as do most others).

Lepper is not fond of dehydrated blueberries; she’ll freeze them instead, and notes you can’t get banana chips from dehydrating because they’re actually fried in oil. Carrots, celery, broccoli and many other things dehydrate easily, but onions, hot peppers, and garlic will “stink up your house,” so she recommends doing them outdoors.

She also noted potatoes “are one of the types of vegetables you have to blanch before dehydrating” or they’ll turn black. They’re still edible, but not very appealing; blanching is simply boiling them for a few minutes before slicing them. She recommends running them under cool water before sticking them in the dehydrator.

Most herbs don’t need a dehydrator; just hang them in a dry, dark place. But you need to harvest them before they go to flower to collect the most essential oils and nutri-

ents. If doing them in a dehydrator, they need a temperature of 95 degrees “so it doesn’t ruin the essential oils,” she said.

Other things need the following: vegetables, 125 degrees, fruit, 135 degrees, and 160 degrees for meat jerky (because it has to cook, too). Some ovens can get that low, but most can’t. Most dehydrators have thermostats, but she notes they’re “helpful but not necessary.” Timers are useful, but also unnecessary; the key is simply to check on the drying process occasionally.

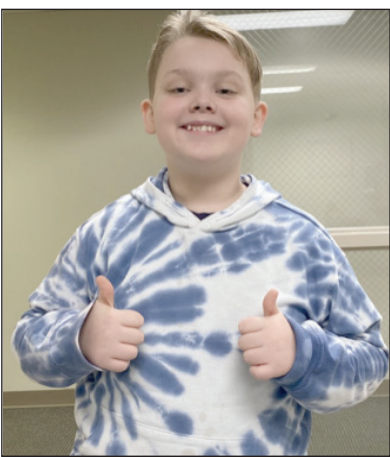
“If you have any doubt, leave it in an extra hour or two, but don’t leave it in overnight,” she added. Things are dry if they pass the “snap, crackle, pop” test – they break easily when folded, for example.

One useful tool is a portable vacuum-sealer for cans; they’re available online and in some stores. You can reuse cans of various kinds (with or without vacuum seals) for storage, unlike in canning.

Lepper said a basic startup costs \$50-\$60, her dehydrator cost about \$300, and commercial varieties can cost thousands.

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

Friday's Child



Thomas
Age 14
Registration # 8537

Tommy is very passionate and enjoys engaging in conversation with adults and children. He loves a good debate with a trusted adult! Tommy loves techno music and Pokémon. He is also very active outdoors, riding his scooter around the neighborhood and helping his foster mother with gardening and yard work. He is a very entrepreneurial young man, and is creating a small business plan to mow his neighbors’ lawns. Tommy is very interested in golf. He is a wealth of knowledge when it comes to club styles and putting

techniques.

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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.

Southbridge Lions Club hosts successful No-Limit Texas Hold ‘Em Tournament

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Lions Club’s No-Limit Texas Hold ‘Em Poker Tournament, held on Saturday, March 1 at Maqui’s, was a resounding success. A total of 81 players tested their skills and strategies, competing for a prize pool of \$4,400.

Throughout the evening, participants and spectators enjoyed a lively atmosphere with food and refreshments provided. The event was not just about competition—it was also an opportunity to bring the community together for a great cause.

The Lions Club extends its heartfelt gratitude to all the players, supporters, and volunteers who contributed to making the tournament a memorable occasion. Proceeds from the event will go toward supporting local initiatives, helping those in need within the Southbridge community.

With such enthusiastic participation, the Lions look forward to hosting future tournaments and continuing their mission of service and support.

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Electric vehicle mandate at issue in local budgeting

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

STURBRIDGE — In the course of this year's budget presentation March 4, Town Administrator Robin Grimm brought up an issue that will likely affect all area communities.

Starting with model year 2026 (that is, later this year), the state is requiring many municipal trucks be electric. Her budget seeks to buy a new truck this year for the DPW (plus an ambulance) and has others upcoming for future years.

The problem, she and others noted, is that "the technology has not caught up" with what they're needed for. Towns generally lack the infrastructure to run them or store them indoors, and they don't run well in winter.

"The vehicles themselves are not ready to handle the kinds of storms where we're out 45-50 hours (for plowing)," Grimm said. "You have to take them off the road earlier, and that means you need more trucks."

For now, though, she's aiming to get in line to buy one of the remaining diesel trucks, and will keep the old one it replaces instead of selling it at auction. She said Sturbridge is lucky to have an early Special Town Meeting (the same night as the annual in April), since it might enable the town to get its order in before communities who have to wait for next year's budget to start in July.

Finance Director Barbara Barry agreed, saying the Mass Municipal Association "is working to get (this requirement) delayed because of the issues Robin said."

So did Finance Committee chair Kevin Smith, who said, "Even though we're mandated to buy them, they don't exist." Another speaker predicted the Legislature will end up delaying the rule.

On Nov 5, MMA's Web site noted the state already has delayed it once;

it was slated to start last year. It's online at <https://www.mma.org/massdep-adjusts-emissions-rules-for-medium-and-heavy-duty-trucks/>.

"MassDEP announced that it will exercise enforcement discretion to exempt vehicles purchased by state and local agencies for snow plowing, snow removal, and street sweeping purposes from ACT manufacturer compliance requirements for model years 2025 and 2026," MMA stated. "... State and local government agencies must submit written requests to MassDEP and manufacturers or their authorized dealerships detailing the make, model, model year, and number of vehicles to be purchased. MassDEP will make a determination as to whether enforcement discretion is allowable for the proposed purchase, and will communicate its decision to the requesting agency and the manufacturer."

The same page notes, "In Massachusetts, for model year 2025, the rule requires 7 percent ZEV (Zero Emission Vehicle) sales in classes 2b-3, 11 percent in classes 4-8; and 7 percent for tractors classes 7-8." According to Wikipedia, Class 2b "light duty" starts at 8501 pounds; Classes 3-6 "medium duty" run from 10,001-26,000 pounds; and Classes 7-8 "heavy duty" are up to 80,000 pounds.

Grimm said that issue is just one this year's budget faces. Fiscally, the town is looking at a retirement system hike of 16.7 percent, plus a health insurance hike averaging 16.1 percent over last year's rise (9.9 percent for active employees, but more than 20 percent for retirees). The total budget increase this year is about \$1.5 million, 45 percent of it "for those uncontrollable costs," she said. General government salaries, by contrast, make up 12 percent of the increase, although they're only rising 2 percent.

Grimm said Sturbridge "is not a big enough pool to take the risk of self-insuring," but she wants to look into plan changes and may consider bidding out insurance next year, depending on union negotiations.

At the same time, state aid is only rising 0.6 percent, and she noted Sturbridge only gets the minimum for education aid (\$100 per pupil). Overall, department requests exceeded income projections by about \$815,000, and that required Grimm and Barry to do some things they said they normally do not want to do to balance the budget. Among them are cutting two part-time jobs, eliminating two cruisers (they'll buy one with free cash), buying a bus with

free cash, cutting police and fire overtime. She's also seeking to buy an ambulance with Ambulance Stabilization funds and free cash, and she noted the fire department is already seeking two major vehicles next year. Some other changes shifted certain costs into revolving funds that had been in the general budget (typically in the health department, regarding the landfill).

Regarding free cash usage, Smith objected, noting that's essentially using it "to pay operating expenses to balance the budget." Grimm agreed, saying she'd rather have things like cruisers in the budget because they're regular needs. Many towns do use free cash for such purchases, but the

amount of free cash varies annually.

She added that part of this year's budgeting issue is the fact it's earlier. The state has "no urgency to have a budget balanced and out to us," and sometimes doesn't even approve one until the fall. (Towns usually base theirs on the Governor's proposal, because it comes out fairly early in January.)

"We're not in distress, just not in as good a shape as we've been," she said. "... We don't feel good about how we had to do it, but we held the line," noting the actual budget increase is the same as last year's, 3.6 percent.

One concern going forward, though, is that hotel/motel and food tax-

es have basically been "flat for years" excluding covid, Grimm added. The town has largely built-out its commercial zone and has shown no interest in multiple such areas, so there's "not a lot of places for major commercial/industrial growth" and only a little population growth.

To Smith, "We're getting close to spending more than we earn. This year, we're covering it ... but it seems we're at that tipping point" if costs keep rising. He noted a 3.6 percent budget hike isn't bad, but "we're not getting 3.6 percent increase in revenue."

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

Celtic Celebration returns to Old Sturbridge Village



STURBRIDGE — Old Sturbridge Village is excited to welcome back Celtic Celebration this year, a celebration of cultural heritage through music, dance, storytelling, and poetry. This event occurs March 15 and 16 from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Plus, during March and April up to two children aged seventeen or younger will be admitted for free with each adult full-price standard daytime admission ticket.

Enjoy a selection of Celtic music performances, including fiddle tunes,

bagpipes, and harp (Sunday only). On Saturday, the Village will host the Lee Irish Dance school, and guests can watch an Irish step-dancing performance.

Visitors will learn about Celtic history in 19th-century New England and the impacts that people of Celtic heritage had on early America, including the Montgomery Guards, the first volunteer militia company in Massachusetts comprised entirely of men of Irish heritage. Various folk tales and poetry read-

ings will be held in the Village for guests to enjoy throughout the weekend. Celtic magician Daniel Green Wolf will perform a magic show for guests on Sunday, and children can participate in Irish games on the common.

New this year, Old Sturbridge Village will host a poetry reading. Registration to participate in the poetry reading ends on March 10. Information about the poetry reading opportunity can be found at osv.org. Poetry readings will be from 3 to 4 p.m. during Celtic

Celebration weekend.

Celtic Celebration is included with standard daytime admission. To learn more about this event or to purchase tickets, visit osv.org/event/celtic-celebration.

Visitors are encouraged to purchase tickets online in advance, with an additional \$3 discount compared to door prices. The Kids Free March and April offer applies to standard daytime admission. To learn more about this offer, visit osv.org/event/kids-free-march-april/.



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EDITOR

*This
moment
will never
come
again*

It's easy to rush through the day, to get caught up in schedules, responsibilities, and the endless loop of what's next. But the moment you are in right now will never happen again. It will pass, just like all the ones before it, and once it's gone, you don't get it back.

We think we have time. But the truth is, life isn't a dress rehearsal. This is it. The way you show up today, the way you treat people, the way you spend your time, it all matters, because every single second is a version of life you'll never live again.

Some moments seem small standing in line at the store, a conversation with a friend, a quiet drive home. But even that matters. Every interaction, every choice, every seemingly unremarkable moment adds up to the story of your life. Are you making it a story you'll be proud of?

It's not about perfection, it's about presence. It's about choosing to be where you are, instead of always looking ahead to where you think you should be. It's about speaking up when something needs to be said, reaching out when someone needs you, and appreciating the good that exists right now, even if it's not the moment you expected.

If today were the last time you had this exact moment, how would you show up for it? Would you listen more? Laugh harder? Say the thing you've been holding back? Would you let the small stuff go and focus on what actually matters?

The seconds are already slipping by. Make them count.

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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

TO THE EDITOR

Thank you for caring for your community this winter

To the Editor:

I guess the winter is over. Soon, we'll be hearing the spring peepers, seeing the robin return, and getting our gardens ready.

I just wanted to take the time to thank all the people who shoveled out the fire hydrants and catch basins, helped neighbors with ice and snow (our neighbors helped to extricate our car when it was frozen to the driveway!) and, of course, all the municipal employees (the firefighters, police, DPW workers, teachers, etc.) who kept things plowed and moving. They helped build community, while the people who shoveled their sidewalk and left the pile of snow at the end (or didn't move the pile that was plowed there), leaving it to get icy and being difficult for folks with walkers, wheelchairs, strollers, or just bad knees to get over did not. Shame on them.

MAUREEN DOYLE
SOUTHBRIDGE

Meatless Meals Roundup Part II

Still searching for creative and tasty meatless meals to serve this season? Read on for a second compilation of delicious dishes - sans the meat.

And remember readers, your hints will put you in the running for a fabulous three course dinner for two at the Publick House!

**

A reader suggested this meatless favorite that is quick, easy, and a tried and true favorite during Lent.



TAKE
THE
HINT

KAREN
TRAINOR

An inexpensive recipe for Lent is frozen pierogis w/potato or cheese or fresh pierogis (some of the churches make them) with sautéed onions & mushrooms.

Jean Ciesluk

**

Mock Crabmeat and Artichoke Casserole

Rich, filling and delicious, this recipe, making the rounds on the internet, is a five star favorite!

Ingredients: 8 ounces uncooked small shell pasta; 2 tablespoons butter; 6 green onions, chopped; 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour; 1 cup half-and-half; 1 teaspoon dry mustard; ½ teaspoon ground red pepper; salt and black pepper; ½ cup shredded Swiss cheese, divided; 1 (8 ounce) package imitation crabmeat, chunks; 1 (14 ounce) can artichoke hearts, drained and cut into bite-size pieces

Directions: Preheat oven to 350. Cook pasta according to package directions; drain and set aside. Melt butter in large saucepan over medium heat; add green onions. Cook and stir about 2 minutes. Add flour; cook and stir two minutes more. Gradually add half-and-half, whisking constantly until mixture begins to thicken. Whisk in mustard and red pepper; season to taste with salt and black pepper. Remove from heat and stir in 1/4 cup cheese until melted. Combine crabmeat, artichokes and pasta in a buttered two quart casserole. Add sauce mixture and stir until blended. Top with remaining 1/4 cup cheese. Bake about 40 minutes or until hot, bubbly and lightly browned.

Simple Soufflé

This souffle uses canned soup as a shortcut, but it still tastes impressive

Note: If you object to canned soups, you can make homemade condensed cream of celery soup with celery, onion, flour, butter, vegetable stock, s & p. Recipes are easy to find online.

Ingredients: One (10 3/4 oz) can of condensed Cream of Celery Soup (or homemade); 1 cup sharp cheddar cheese, grated; 3 eggs, separated

Directions: Mix together soup and

Don't lose track of financial accounts



FINANCIAL
FOCUS

TREVOR
NIELSEN

For years, people save and invest in 401(k) plans, IRAs and other financial accounts. They wouldn't lose track of this money, would they?

You might be surprised. About one in seven people has unclaimed cash or property, totaling billions of dollars, according to the National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators.

People lose track of their money for a variety of reasons: They change jobs and forget about their retirement accounts; they move and leave no forwarding address; they change names and don't notify former employers; or their employers go out of business or merge with another company.

Whatever the reason, losing tabs on accounts that could be worth thousands of dollars is never a good thing. What can you do to avoid suffering this type of loss?

Here are a few suggestions:

Maintain good records. Keep records of all your financial, investment and retirement accounts — and let a family member know where these records are kept.

Keep a manageable number of financial accounts. The fewer bank and brokerage accounts you have, the easier it will be to keep track of everything. You might even want to consolidate accounts when possible.

Report your change of address. Whenever you move, contact your financial services providers and any former employers with whom you may have retirement accounts.

Report name changes. If you change your name, notify new and old 401(k) plan administrators, banks, brokerages and any other institution connected to your money.

Manage retirement accounts when you change jobs. If you leave your job, you might be able to leave your 401(k) behind with your old employer. But if you do, keep track of it. On the other hand, you could roll your old plan into your new employer's plan or into an IRA.

Inform your financial professional about all your accounts. If you work with a financial professional, they can help you track your accounts, so inform them of all past and present IRAs and 401(k)s or similar employer-sponsored plans.

So far, we've looked at ways you can prevent losing track of financial accounts. But can you do anything if you suspect you've already left some money behind?

If you think you've lost tabs on an IRA, you can check old tax returns and bank statements to help you track your contributions and find the name of the financial provider that held your account. If it's a 401(k), you can contact your old employer's plan administrator.

You can get some help from other sources, too. The Department of Labor recently launched a retirement savings lost-and-found database (lostandfound.dol.gov) that can help you find pension or 401(k) plans connected to your Social Security number. For a stray IRA, you can check unclaimed.org, the website of the National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators. And for various other sources of money — including uncashed checks from corporations and financial institutions, inactive brokerage accounts and unclaimed safe deposit boxes — you can check MissingMoney.com, the unclaimed property Web site of the National Association of State Treasurers.

These sites offer no guarantees of finding your lost or missing accounts or other sources of money, so you still may have to do your own sleuthing. But as the old saying goes, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" — which, in this case, means you'll help yourself greatly by tracking your accounts from beginning to end.

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

Remember the Alamo!

My dad was obsessed with the Battle of the Alamo, which fell in the early morning hours of March 6, 1836—nearly 189 years ago this week.

His passion for this pivotal moment in history shaped some of my earliest memories. The first time I ever traveled on a plane was when he took me to San Antonio, Texas, just to see the Alamo.

He'd guide me through every historical marker, narrating the story with the enthusiasm of a historian. After dinner, we'd walk back to the Alamo and just stand there, staring at its walls for hours. I was only six years old, and even then, I was intrigued—less because of the battle itself and more because of how much it meant to him.

His obsession ran

deep. He owned every book ever written on the Alamo, studied every account, and took us back to San Antonio many times over the years. And if there was one night in that story that truly defined his fascination, it was the final night—the moment when the walls were breached.

For 12 long days, a small band of Texan rebels, including legendary figures like James Bowie, William B. Travis, and Davy Crockett, had held off the massive Mexican army led by General Santa Anna. Despite being vastly outnumbered—fewer than 200 men against thousands—not a single defender had fallen during the siege. But in the early hours of March 6, under the cover of darkness, the Mexican forces launched their final assault.

Wave after wave of soldiers stormed the mission, scaling ladders, battering gates, and overwhelming the defenders with sheer numbers. In less than an hour, the Alamo was overrun. Every last Texan fighter was killed, their sacrifice becoming the rallying cry of the Texas Revolution.

“Remember the Alamo!” became more than just words—it became the battle cry of those who would go on to win Texas its independence. And for my dad and so many others, the Alamo wasn't just history—it was a symbol of defiance, courage, and an unwavering stand against impossible odds.

I read one of my father's old articles that he wrote about the Alamo and he said something in that article that struck a

chord with me—something that transcends the Alamo itself.

Reflecting on the Alamo defenders, my father said, “Heroes are important. No human being today can hold up to the scrutiny we give them, but we need someone to emulate.”

Having someone to admire and emulate is important, especially when that person excels at something we aspire to do ourselves. It's natural to be drawn to greatness, to want to follow in the footsteps of those who have achieved something remarkable. But that admiration can sometimes turn into idolization, and that's where things get complicated.

I once idolized an Olympic swimmer. He

was a powerhouse in the water, someone I wanted to be like. But after getting to know him, I realized that while I respected his skill, I didn't necessarily admire his personality. And that's when it hit me—people are just people. Even those we put on pedestals.

Great people, even those with strong moral convictions, have made mistakes. And when those mistakes come to light, they can shatter the illusion we've built in our minds. The question isn't whether our heroes are perfect—they never are—but whether we can still draw inspiration from the best parts of who they were while understanding that they, too, were human.

No one is perfect, and if we expect our heroes to be, we set ourselves up for disappointment. The

truth is that greatness and imperfection exist side by side. A person can make mistakes and still leave behind something worth admiring.

Maybe we've become too harsh on our heroes, or maybe we've been too unrealistic about what it means to have role models in the first place.

Admiration doesn't require blind devotion; learning from someone's greatness doesn't mean ignoring their flaws. Because if perfection is the requirement for being worthy of admiration, we won't have any heroes left at all.

Our heroes, past and present, aren't meant to be untouchable figures. They're reminders that even flawed people can do extraordinary things. And maybe, that means we can too.

Garden longer with less muscle strain and fatigue

That first full day in the garden may find you tired, sunburned, and stiff. Whether you are a young or young-at-heart gardener, include some strategies to help extend your enjoyment and reduce fatigue and muscle strain so you can keep gardening longer each day and for years to come.

No matter your age, it's important to protect your joints when gardening. Use a kneeler pad or knee pads to protect your knees. Knee pads secured to your legs allow you to conveniently and comfortably protect

your knees as you move from one garden bed to another.

If you need help kneeling, consider a garden kneeler with handles. The handles provide needed support when kneeling and standing up. The ones that can be flipped over and used as a garden bench provide double the benefit. The seating position reduces bending and helps minimize the need to kneel.

Elevating your garden can also help. It is a great way to save space and eliminate the need to bend when planting,



GARDEN MOMENTS
• • • • •
MELINDA MYERS

weeding, and harvesting. Elevated gardens and raised beds also offer a place to garden where planting space is limited or nonexistent. You'll enjoy planting and harvesting with minimal weeding needed. Just be sure to monitor soil moisture and water as needed. Use self-wa-

tering containers, add irrigation or employ water-extending products to help lengthen the time between watering.

Further expand planting options by dressing up walls, fences, and more with vertical gardens. Monitor soil moisture in wall-mounted gardens regularly as many have limited soil that dries out quickly.

Clean and sharpen your tools, including pruning equipment, digging and weeding tools. This allows you to make cuts more easily and dig into the soil and weed with less effort.



Melinda Myers

Kneeler pads provide comfort and protection for knees

available anti-skid foot plate.

Don't overlook the importance of protecting your hands as well when gardening. Quality gardening gloves provide support and protection when digging, planting, pruning, and more.

Start with some pre-season training. Every gardener knows gardening is a workout and often involves different motions and muscles than other exercises. Always warm up your muscles and do a bit of stretching before getting out in the garden.

Enlist the help of wheeled carts and wagons to move plants, mulch, soil, and other heavy loads. Don't be afraid to break heavy loads into smaller batches or ask for help. You'll spare your muscles and probably save time in the long run.

Wear a pair of safety

glasses to protect your eyes and don't forget the sunscreen. Take frequent breaks and drink plenty of water.

Preseason planning and preparation can help reduce muscle strain as the garden season begins. You'll boost your enjoyment and be able to garden longer.

Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, including *Midwest Gardener's Handbook*, *Revised 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.

JUNIORS NAMED TO HONOR ROLL AT BAY PATH

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical School congratulates the following students in grade 11 on being named to the honor roll for the second quarter of the 2024-2025 school year.

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Ruth Wells Center offers charcuterie workshop

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Ruth Wells Center for the Arts, located at 111 Main St. in Southbridge, is very excited to offer a workshop on charcuterie.

Charcuterie by Cherise will be held Saturday, March 22 at 1 p.m. in the Ruth Wells Center gallery. This is for adults to learn about artful charcuterie presentations. You will make a small plate of meats, cheese, fruit, etc. and learn the skills necessary to make a beautiful presentation for all your parties. Cost is \$30 per person if you are a member, or \$35 for non-members. All materials are included.

Don't wait to register- space is limited for this fun and tasty workshop. Registration form is on Web site, ruth-wellscenter.com. Just go to workshop tab. For more information about the presenter, go to charcuteriebycherise.com. For more information about the Center or this workshop, call 508 764 3341. The Ruth Wells Center started in 1978 as the Quinebaug Valley Council for the Arts and Humanities and offers a variety of workshops, exhibits, classes- all to promote art and culture in the community. The historic building is also available for rental and there is a large parking lot.

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Old Sturbridge Village calls for CowParade art

STURBRIDGE — Old Sturbridge Village invites artists to unleash their creativity at the 2025 CowParade in Sturbridge. Artists can apply for the opportunity to transform life-size cow sculptures into unique artworks that support the largest outdoor living history museum in the Northeast.

With more than 200,000 visitors annually, Old Sturbridge Village provides a unique and inspiring backdrop for this vibrant public art event. CowParade welcomes artists of all levels to apply—from acclaimed professionals to enthusiastic amateurs. A panel of renowned judges from New England will select standout designs to become part of this celebrated tradition that has traveled the globe.

- CowParade facts:
- 250 million people on 6 continents and in 32 countries have seen CowParade
 - 7,000 cows have been painted and transformed by more than 15,000 artists
 - More than 20 talented artists will have the opportunity to participate. Once completed, the cows will be publicly displayed at New England's largest living history museum from June to September 2025.

Old Sturbridge Village Chief Marketing Officer Chris Tieri said, “CowParade at Old Sturbridge Village presents an exciting opportunity for artists to showcase their creativity in a global-

ly recognized event that has captivated audiences in remarkable cities around the world. This event invites artists of all levels to participate in a celebration of culture and creativity as well as the opportunity to showcase their work to thousands of local, regional, and international visitors expected at the Village this summer.”

CowParade Old Sturbridge Village is looking for artists to be inspired by their own cultural contexts and their artistic vision. There are three categories for artists to consider:

- Life in New England: Designs that celebrate the essence of life in New England. Submissions considered for this category should be inspired by Old Sturbridge Village, drawing from 19th-century textiles and wallpaper, historic homes, gardens, traditional trades, and extensive museum collection.
- America 250: Designs that honor the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, reflecting the spirit of the nation's founding.
- Artist's Choice: Designs with limitless creative freedom. Artists are invited to express their unique vision and style, exploring any theme or concept that resonates with them.

Artists, individuals, or groups interested in applying to paint, sculpt, or decorate a cow must submit their application online (osv.org/cowparade) by March 30. More information is available at osv.org/cowparade.

Southbridge Senior Citizens Association announces trip to Montreal and Quebec

Informational meeting changed to March 24

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Senior Citizens Association is pleased to announce that it is sponsoring a trip to visit Montreal and Quebec from July 15-18. The trip is presented by Best of Times Travel. Join us as we explore two of Canada's great cities in this wonderful four-day/three-night program.

Montreal is the second largest city in Canada and the largest city in the province of Quebec. Originally called Ville-Marie, or “City of Mary,” the city takes its present name from Mont-Royal, the triple-peaked hill located in the heart of the city. Designated a World

Heritage treasure by UNESCO, Old Quebec is the only walled city north of Mexico. As the cradle of French civilization in North America, it's a living history lesson with a remarkable mix of architecture, heritage, art and culture. After traveling to Montreal on day one we will have time visit Old Montreal. After enjoying dinner at Montreal's oldest continuous restaurant-DuVieux Port Restaurant we will retire to our accommodations at the Marriot Chateau Champlain.

Our adventure includes a guided tour of Montreal with visits to Notre-Dame Basilica, Olympic Park, the Botanical Gardens and the unique Biodome. In the evening folks will have time to enjoy a local casino or free time on you own to visit this cosmopolitan city. Once we leave Montreal it's off to Quebec with a stop at the

Basilica of Saint Anne de Beupre. Our hotel, the beautiful Marriot Delta Hotel is located just steps from the old walled area of Quebec. On our way home we will make a stop at the Citadelle, which is an active military installation and the oldest military building in Canada.

To learn more about this trip and have all of your questions answered join us the Casaubon Senior Center on Monday, March 24 at 10:15 a.m. The original meeting schedule for March 10 has been cancelled. The Senior Center is located at 153 Chestnut St. in Southbridge. All senior citizens are welcome. You need not be a resident of Southbridge to enjoy this trip. Bring your friends and make it a trip to remember! For more information, please email southbridgeseniortrips@gmail.com.

LEGALS

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING**
Project Description:
Route 20 Reconstruction Project in Charlton & Oxford
Project File No. 602659

A Live Virtual Public Informational Meeting will be held by MassDOT to discuss the Route 20 Reconstruction Project in Charlton & Oxford, MA.
WHEN: Tuesday, March 25, 2025, at 6:00 PM
PURPOSE: At this virtual meeting, **the project team will update the public on construction activities completed to date and plans for 2025** for the Route 20 Reconstruction Project in Charlton & Oxford.
PROPOSAL: The project consists of widening the roadway, replacing bridges over the Little River and the French River, adding sidewalks and shared-use paths, installing a median barrier, improving safety and traffic operations at various intersections, and enhancing stormwater treatment. This meeting is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the meeting. This meeting will be hosted, or a cancellation announcement posted, on the internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.
JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR
CARRIE E. LAVALLEE
CHIEF ENGINEER
March 14, 2025

(SEAL)
THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT
Docket Number: 25 SM 000589
ORDER OF NOTICE

To: Angela Chiodi f/k/a Angela Broden; Frances Broden, as Trustee of the Alan Broden Testamentary Trust and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq): Select Portfolio Servicing, Inc. claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Sturbridge, numbered 71 Shepard Road, given by Angela Broden, Alan Broden to Bank of America, N.A., dated August 23, 2006, and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 39630, Page 1, and now held by the Plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status. If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108 on or before April 14, 2025, or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act. Witness, Gordon H. Piper, Chief Justice of this Court on February 28, 2025.
Attest:
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
27034
March 13, 2025

The Brimfield ZBA will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, April 23, 2025, at 5:00 pm in the Town Annex Clerk's Office, 23 Main St. This hearing is on behalf of Michael Partlow of 114 Dudley River Rd, Southbridge, MA for the vacant land located at 145 Sturbridge Rd, Brimfield, MA. Parcel 14-A-11. The applicant is seeking relief in the amount of parking spaces allowed, 9 additional parking spaces are being requested, including one ADA space for the proposed building project. Project will conform and meet all setback and dimensional requirements. Abutters and members of the public are encouraged to attend and share feedback.
March 13, 2025

**CHARLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**
In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Charlton Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on March 26, 2025, at 7PM on the application of Danielle

Perron & Jessica Rodier. The applicant has submitted a Request for Determination of Applicability for the proposed upgrade of a septic system within 100 feet of a Bordering Vegetated Wetland. Address: 57 Old Spencer Road, Charlton, MA, 01507. Parcel ID: 3-B-5.25 Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Charlton Conservation Commission will be conducted in person and via remote means. Members of the public who wish to participate can access the meeting remotely by request. Copies of the RDA may be examined at the Conservation Office by appointment during business hours.
Thomas O'Malley
Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission
March 13, 2025

**CHARLTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**
In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Charlton Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on March 26, 2025, at 7PM on the application of Vincent & Katelyn Tiberii. The applicant has filed for a Notice of Intent for the proposed construction of a single-family residence, well, and associated site work within the 100-ft buffer zone of a Bordering Vegetated Wetland. The project location is: 75 E Baylies Road, Charlton, MA 01507. Parcel ID: 75-A-1.2. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Charlton Conservation Commission will be conducted in person and via remote means. Members of the public who wish to participate can access the meeting remotely by request. Copies of the NOI may be examined at the Conservation Office by appointment during business hours.
Thomas O'Malley
Chair, Charlton Conservation Commission
March 13, 2025

**Town of Holland Zoning Board of Appeals
Notice of Public Hearing**
In accordance with M.G. L Chapter 40A the Holland Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing on **Wednesday, March 26, 2025 at 7:15 P.M.** at the Holland Town Hall, 27 Sturbridge Rd, 1st Floor Community Room, Holland, MA 01521. If dial in access is needed, please contact the Town Hall at 413-245-7108 x101. The purpose of the hearing is to consider a request from **Ed & Patty Fellows** for a **Special Permit** accord-

ing to Holland Bylaw section 7. **Relief requested: Location of a Shed Installation**
The property located at: **31 Lee Ave., Holland, MA** Parcel ID # **R28/C/7**.
Don Beal, Chairperson
Zoning Board of Appeals
Date:3/4/2025
March 13, 2025

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508)831-2200
Docket No. W025C0109CA
CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME**

In the matter of:
Arthur George Sandola Jr.
A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by
Arthur George Sandola Jr. of Southbridge MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:
Arthur George Sandoli Jr.
IMPORTANT NOTICE
Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Worcester Probate and Family Court before 04/01/2025 at 10 a.m. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.
WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: Febuary 28, 2024
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
March 13, 2025

In accordance with the Wetlands Protection Act, Chapter 131, Sec 40, a public hearing by the Holland Conservation Commission will be held on Tuesday 03/25/2025 in the Community Room, 1st floor, Holland Town Hall, 27 Sturbridge Rd, Holland, MA. This meeting is to review a Notice of Intent (NOI) filed by Town of Holland for Lake management at Hamilton Reservoir, in Holland MA, to control nuisance and non-native plants growth, and lake drawdown. To comply with the Open Meeting Law, all public hearings are scheduled for 6:30 PM and, barring unforeseen circumstances, will be taken in the order in which they appear on the agenda. This meeting will be held in person and virtual; for virtual meeting login information contact Holland Conservation at conservation@hollandma.org or call (413) 245-7108 x114.
Conservation Commission
Town of Holland
March 13, 2025

Friends of Sturbridge Trails to hold Annual Meeting

STURBRIDGE — In the winter of 2013, a group of Sturbridge residents came together expressing an interest in establishing a local, non-profit (5013c) trail support group to be known as the “Friends of Sturbridge Trails” (FrOST) and how appropriate that their first organizational meeting was held in the winter of 2013. This group was started by Sturbridge resident and Conservation Commission member David Barnicle, as the establishment of a friend’s group is one of the objectives set out in the Town’s Recreation Trail Master Plan.

From that start in 2013, the Friends group has slowly grown, however as in any good organization, The Friends of Sturbridge Trails is looking for new members from the Sturbridge area, with a desire to help the trails in Sturbridge, from casual hiking and dog walkers to highly technical Mt Bikers, folks who just like to be outdoors and

everyone in between. In its bylaws, the mission of the Friends of Sturbridge trails states “composed of individuals, businesses and families sharing an appreciation of the potential for trails and trail related activities, interests and pursuits.”

The Friends of Sturbridge Trails (FrOST) will hold its 13th annual meeting on Tuesday, March 25, at 7 p.m. at the Publick House. Along with the routine business items of financials, membership, officer elections & annual report & calendar, new this year is the rollout of our online dues payment process, a redesigned Sturbridge Trails website with a page devoted to FrOST including a link to the recently released video on our trails and volunteer program entitled “The Sturbridge Trails: Pathways to Community,” and our own email address, Froststurbridge@gmail.com.

We will also be presenting our special David

Barnicle Founders Award to Rich Paradise and Denise LaChapelle a couple who are longtime supporters and volunteers of our trail program and in the community. The David Barnicle Founders Award, our previous Pinnacle Award, was renamed last year in honor of David, the founder of FrOST who passed away two years ago. A presentation of the David Barnicle Founders Award is made only upon a recommendation and agreement by the FrOST officers and is not an annual award.

Also, as a part of our annual meeting, a special volunteer recognition program will be held. If you have ever volunteered to help the trail committee in any way, please plan on attending to be recognized as a part of this special volunteer appreciation presentation. Last year (2024) our trail volunteers put in an amazing 2500+ hours in construction and maintenance totaling some \$ 124,000 in value! Achievements well

worth celebrating!

The guide to Sturbridge trails, trail brochures of the Leadmine, Heins and Riverlands properties, will also be available.

The friends’ group is open to anyone who would like to support trails in Sturbridge. If you cannot make the March 25 meeting, and have questions or wanting to help in the organizational effort please email us directly at: Froststurbridge@gmail.com.

More information on FrOST or to “like us” can be found on our Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-Sturbridge-Trails-476149822433894/> and the Sturbridge Trails Web site: <http://www.treksturbridge.org/>.

Membership forms/online renewal to join FrOST will be available that night.

SOUTHBRIDGE POLICE LOG

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of March 3-10.

Eric Xavier Gonzalez Pizarro, age 32, of Southbridge was arrested on March 3 in connection with a warrant for operating an Unregistered Motor Vehicle.

A 23-year-old male from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on March 5 for Violation of a Harassment Order.

A 28-year-old female from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on March 6 for Nighttime Felony Breaking & Entering into a Building and Destruction of Property (window).

Anita Michelle Fortier, age 29, of Southbridge was arrested on March 6 in connection with a warrant for Credit Card Fraud in an amount less than \$1,200.

A 30-year-old male from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on March 7 for Intimidation of a Witness and Domestic Assault and Battery (Intimate Relationship).

A 37-year-old male from Southbridge was taken into protective custody on March 8.

A 36-year-old male from Southbridge received a summons in lieu of arrest on March 9 for Failure to Stop or Yield, a Motor Vehicle Lights Violation, Refusal by the Operator of a Motor Vehicle to Identify Themselves, Failure to Stop for Police, and Operating a Motor Vehicle after Suspension of License.

A 41-year-old female from Worcester received a summons in lieu of arrest on March 9 for Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle, and operating an Unregistered and Uninsured Motor Vehicle.



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THIS DAY IN HISTORY



1912: The Girl Guides (later the Girl Scouts) are founded in the United States.

1918: Moscow becomes the capital of Russia again.

2003: The World Health Organization releases a global warning about SARS outbreaks.

Money FACT:

Lenders and other people use this as a way to judge if a person is financially responsible.

Answer: Credit score

Double Word Puzzle

Unscramble the words to reveal the sentence.

NMOYE

12

NVTSEI

34

DCERTI

5

BNKA

6

M

U

G

432416524

Answer: Time to budget

NEW WORD

BORROW

take and use money with the promise to pay it back

How they say that in...

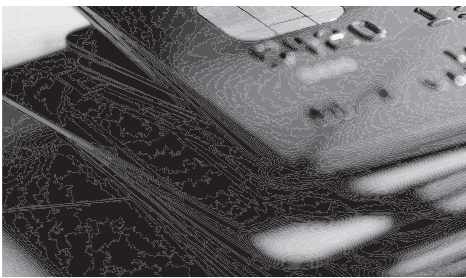
- English: Credit
- Spanish: Abonar
- Italian: Accreditare
- French: Créditer
- German: Etwas einzahlen

Did You Know?

Checking your credit will not adversely affect it. Checking the score can show if something is not right and needs to be corrected.



Get the PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Credit cards

⊙ * ✎ ☺ ☼ ~ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ⑪ ⑫ ⑬ ⑭ ⑮ ⑯ ⑰ ⑱ ⑲ ⑳ ㉑ ㉒ ㉓ ㉔ ㉕ ㉖ ㉗ ㉘ ㉙ ㉚ ㉛ ㉜ ㉝ ㉞ ㉟ ㊱ ㊲ ㊳ ㊴ ㊵ ㊶ ㊷ ㊸ ㊹ ㊺ ㊻ ㊼ ㊽ ㊾ ㊿

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

CRYPTO FUN

☼ ☺ ㉑ * ㉒ ☼ ☺ ~ ✎ ①

Solve the code to discover words related to agriculture.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 22 = O)

- A.

5182010

Clue: Growing operation
- B.

32018632220

Clue: Farm equipment
- C.

31764112226221221

Clue: Scientific tools
- D.

620221914

Clue: Plants

Answers: A. farm B. tractor C. technology D. crops

SUDOKU

8	6		4					9
			9					
	1	3	8			4		
		1						
	9				3		5	7
3	8							1
			5		7	9		
5					1	6		
	4	7	2					

Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

3	5	9	8	2	7	4	6	1
8	6	1	3	4	9	2	5	7
2	4	7	6	9	3	8	1	5
1	3	8	5	6	7	9	4	2
6	1	9	4	2	6	1	3	8
7	5	8	3	1	2	6	9	4
4	9	6	1	2	3	8	5	7
2	7	1	6	5	8	3	9	4
9	1	3	8	7	6	4	2	5
7	5	4	9	3	2	1	8	6
8	6	2	4	1	5	7	3	9

ANSWER:

Jacob Edwards Library hosting Latino poetry presentation with Magdalena Gómez



Magdalena Gómez

SOUTHBIDGE —The Jacob Edwards Library is pleased to present the second part of Latino Poetry: Places We Call Home Thursday, March 27 from 6-7:30 p.m.

This program is presented as part of a major public humanities initiative taking place across the nation in 2024 and 2025, directed by Library of America and funded with generous support from the National Endowment for the Humanities and Emerson Collective. This evening's event will be led by Magdalena Gómez who will read some of her poetry and with musical interludes provided by Gian Carlo Buscaglia. The audience is invited to participate in the program and read their poetry at the event, as well. Please note the earlier start time of 6 p.m. The event will close at 7:30 p.m. Magdalena Gómez, Poet Laureate of Springfield (2019-2022) and an Academy of American Poets Laureate Fellow (2021-2022) has been a cultural worker since 1976. Her memoir noir, *Mi'ja*, received the 2024 International Latino Book Award, in the autobiography category. In 2019 she received the Latinas 50 Plus Literature Award at Fordham University and the Latinx Excellence on the Hill Award from the Black and Latino Legislative Caucus of MA at the State House. Her solo play on iconoclastic Puerto Rican labor leader, activist, feminist and journalist Luisa Capetillo, (Oct. 28, 1879 – April 10, 1922) is included in *The Routledge Companion to Latine Theatre and Performance* (2024).

Ms. Gómez has been a

volunteer writer for *An African American Point of View* for over fourteen years. She was the Co-founder and Artistic Director of Springfield's first intergenerational Latinx theater, Teatro V!da and the youth open mic series, *Ign!te the M!c* - from 2006 - 2020. She also initiated and helped launch the first public LGBTQIA2S+ open mic series in Western Massachusetts at the Bing Arts Center. She is currently working on the sequel to her memoir, a new collection of poetry, and a new multimedia solo show based on her memoir. Ms. Gómez is currently a Commissioner with the Massachusetts Commission in the Status of Women for Hampden County and a Trustee with the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts. You can learn more at www.mijamemoir.com or www.latinapoet.com. This is a participatory event, and there will be an opportunity for poets in the audience to share their work too! Please feel invited to bring your poetry to read at the event. Music by Gian Carlo Buscaglia on guitar. A recognized troubadour who travels in the New England states, as well as having established residencies in Boston and Providence. For nearly five centuries, the rich tapestry of Latino poetry has been woven from a wealth of languages and cultures. With distinctive rhythms, lyricism, and candor, and nuanced understandings of place, history, and origin, Latino poets have brought dazzling insight to what it means to make a home in America. Recognition of the beau-

ty and power of this tradition has grown in recent years, with Latino poets receiving two national and twelve state Poet Laureate-ships, two Pulitzer Prizes, and three National Book Awards. At the same time, the perennial questions confronted by Latino poets—of exile and belonging, language and identity, struggle and solidarity, and labor and landscape—have become ever more urgent.

What does Latino poetry reveal about America? How might it help us imagine a more just, joyful, and capacious future? *Places We Call Home* seeks to foster nationwide conversation on this vital literature through a groundbreaking new anthology edited by Rigoberto González, events around the country, an online media archive, and a wealth of library resources meant to spur in-depth reflection and discussion on key figures and themes. Funded with generous support from the National Endowment for the Humanities and Emerson Collective, *Places We Call Home* is directed by Library of America and presented in partnership with the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures; the Academy of American Poets; Cave Canem; Poetry Society of America; and the National Book Foundation, among others. Library of America is a nonprofit organization that champions our nation's cultural heritage by publishing America's greatest writing in authoritative new editions and providing resources for readers to explore this rich, living legacy.

LOCAL FOOD PANTRIES BROOKFIELD

Brookfield Ecumenical Food Pantry
St. Mary's Church
4 Howard Street, Brookfield, MA 01506
Distribution: Wednesday 9 AM-11 AM:
Saturday 9AM-11AM

CHARLTON

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

LEICESTER

Leicester Food Pantry
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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.

ROCHDALE

The Lord's Cupboard Food Pantry
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Rochdale, MA
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SOUTHBIDGE

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

Southbridge Food Share
446 Hamilton St.
(508) 764-6583
M,W,F 10-11:15 a.m.

SPENCER- EAST BROOKFIELD - RESIDENTS ONLY

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

STURBRIDGE

Saint Vincent de Paul Society Food Pantry
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Fiskdale, MA 01518
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16 Church Street, Fiskdale, MA 01518.
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Open to the public by appointment.
Contact: Business Office, 508-347-7339,
stannestpatoffice@gmail.com

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



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DCRSD continued from page A1

in helping narrow down a plan that will help maintain and build on the district's commitment to its students while also meeting contractual obligations in the process.

"Your commitment to ensuring that our students and educators have the resources they need to succeed has been instrumental in shaping this year's budget that reflects our shared priorities. With your deep understanding of the challenges before us, we have developed a balanced budget that maintains fiscal responsibility with our efforts to provide high quality education for all of our students," said Lamarche.

"This year, the budget represents not just an investment in our schools, but in the future of our community. The partnership between our district, local officials, and the school committee had been invaluable. Together we are making strategic decision that will support student achievement, enhance educational programs, and

maintain the financial stability of our district."

The budget as approved on March 5 shows an increase of \$1.6 million for Charlton and \$316,394 for Dudley over the current fiscal year. The plan assumes the continuation of minimum Chapter 70 funds and that Excess & Deficiency, and School Choice and Charter Assessments remain stable and level funding for supplies and technology. Reimbursements remained in question as of the March 5 meeting.

The budgets will now be sent to the towns to be incorporated into their individual spending plans as Dudley and Charlton enter their respective budget debates. The school assessments will be addressed along with the town budgets at each town's annual town meeting which, for the second consecutive year, will be held on the same night, May 19. A copy of the approved budget proposal has been made available as part of the March 5 School Committee meeting agenda on the district's Web site.

Assessments				
	FY25	FY26	\$ Change	% Change
DCRSD	\$ 59,885,638	\$ 62,219,434	\$ 2,333,796	3.90%
Charlton (53.79%)				
Minimum	13,953,628	15,494,647	1,541,019	11.04%
Transportation	1,116,704	1,158,776	42,072	3.77%
Additional	3,148,490	3,289,061	140,571	4.46%
Subtotal Operating	18,218,822	19,942,484	1,723,662	9.46%
Capital				
Sewer Charges	25,776	25,776	-	-
Shepherd Hill Field (Debt Excl)	68,904	58,639	(10,265)	-
Sept. 2022 Capital (Voluntary)	-	-	-	-
July 2024 Capital-Bond	272,467	230,050	(42,417)	-
Subtotal Capital	367,147	314,465	(52,682)	-14.35%
Total Assessment	18,585,969	20,256,949	1,670,980	8.99%
Dudley (46.21%)				
Minimum	8,077,755	8,359,805	281,850	3.49%
Transportation	978,819	995,484	16,665	1.70%
Additional	2,759,729	2,825,571	65,842	2.39%
Subtotal Operating	11,816,303	12,180,660	364,357	3.08%
Capital				
Sewer Charges	9,224	9,224	-	-
Shepherd Hill Field (Debt Excl)	64,039	64,039	-	-
July 2024 Capital-Bond	351,313	303,350	(47,963)	-13.65%
Subtotal Capital	424,576	376,613	(47,963)	-11.30%
Total Assessment	12,240,879	12,557,273	316,394	2.58%
Total Assessment	30,826,848	32,814,222	1,987,374	6.45%

Courtesy

The proposed FY 2026 Dudley-Charlton Regional School District budget as presented and approved on March 5.

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and activities provide an in-depth look at the life and times of people through their art.

These programs are free and open to the public. Registration is requested but not required. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Charlton Cultural Council, a local

agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Charlton Public Library is located at 40 Main Street.

WOMEN continued from page A1

Web site (seeinghistory.org), Martha's specialty presentations related to specific periods, artists,

LIBRARY continued from page A1

was ready to pass the putter on to Kadion.

"I wanted to give kudos to Leila for all her help along the way with instructions and support

for showing me what was needed to run the tournament," Phillips adds.

The Friends of the Joshua Hyde Public Library is the fundraising organization that supports the library.

The money raised will be used for programs for all of the community to enjoy including: book discussion groups, movie series, speakers, craft programs, children's events, the Summer Reading Program, and

much more. The group is currently in the middle of it's annual Membership Drive. Go to: <https://www.sturbridgelibraryfriends.org/get-involved> to become a member.

DCRSD avoiding controversial material promoted by MTA

BY JASON BLEAU CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY/CHARLTON — A recent controversy involving the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA) has led officials at the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District to clarify its stance on the situation after a local town official brought the matter to the table during a recent school committee meeting.

The MTA, which represents around 117,000 educators across the Commonwealth, including in the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District, has come under fire over the last month for posting materials in a members-only section of its Web site geared towards helping educators discuss the conflict between Israel and Hamas. A link on the page contained what some state officials considered potentially offensive images and controversial material regarding the conflict. The content has sparked outcries of potential antisemitism, and caused David Singer of Charlton to approach the school committee. Singer's concerns were shared during the public comment segment of the school committee's March 5 meeting where he wanted the district's assurance that local teachers were not utilizing the con-

troversial materials recommended by the MTA.

"The MTA got caught putting out pro-terrorist, antisemitic propaganda for the teachers to use as teaching materials to teach the teachers to teach the kids. They got caught, the backlash was swift, they had a public presser, they said they were going to take it down. The problem with this is the damage was already done. They put the propaganda out there. Once you've already put it out there and the teachers have all seen the materials, you can't just take it down," said Singer.

Dudley-Charlton Superintendent Steve Lamarche put Singer's worries at ease explaining that the district was aware of the situation and that while they are affiliated with the MTA, their teachers work independently and are not required to embrace the MTA's recommendations.

"They use some of their resources, but Dudley-Charlton has this unique thing where we're independent and there isn't this over-investment in what MTA produces for them to try to incorporate for us within our district," said Lamarche. "We've learned our lesson over the past couple of years, including myself personally as the Superintendent, that there are certain topics that are very important to this community, to Dudley and Charlton, and there are certain topics that we should not be addressing. I'm happy to say we weren't impacted by that because we weren't using those resources. That was not something that our association or our teachers or our educators brought into our schools and said, 'we've got to do this.'"

Singer said he was pleased by the response but hoped that the district would take a harder stance on the matter and provide an

official statement to the teachers that the district is "no place for hate." Lamarche did not provide a clear answer to how he would proceed with that request simply responding "understood."

The MTA came under fire in February after controversial images were displayed during a hearing before the Special Commission on Combatting Antisemitism. These images were reportedly not posted on the MTA Web site but rather accessible through a link on the site's members-only resource page. The material was intended to help provide educators with resources to help discuss the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas with their students, a conflict that has gained international attention and proven to be one of the most controversial wars of its time sparking increased concerns and reports of antisemitism against both Israelis and Palestinians. The co-chairs of the committee showed concern about the content including its lack of diversity and its promotion of stereotypes.

Although the MTA stated in a press release on Feb. 19 that they felt the hearing was used for "political grandstanding" and that the resources were "manipulated" to make the union appear to promote antisemitism, they promised to remove the links from their Web site.

"The Massachusetts Teachers Association vigorously defends the right of all students and teachers to feel supported and included in our classrooms and unequivocally condemns antisemitism and Islamophobia and all other forms of hatred and discrimination," the statement read. "We recognize that the conflict in the Middle East is complex and nuanced with long-standing historical, political, economic and cultural roots. We strive to help our members foster critical conversations and understanding with each other and with their students as they wrestle with the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East."

As of this writing there were conflicting reports among news agencies about if the material had, indeed, been removed.

Local students named to Holy Cross Dean's List

WORCESTER — More than 1,700 students were named to the College of the Holy Cross' Dean's List for outstanding academic achievement during the Fall semester of the 2024-25 academic year. The following local students made the list:

Erin Moran of Charlton, class of 2026

Alexandra Matheson of Sturbridge, Class of 2028

To qualify for the Dean's List, students must pass four or more letter-graded courses with no failing grades during the semester and earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

About Holy Cross

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14th Annual Al DiPetro Memorial Golf Tournament sponsored by Southbridge Lions Club

SOUTHBRIDGE — Please join the Southbridge Lions Club Friday, May 16 at Heritage Country Club in Charlton for the 14th Annual Al DiPetro Memorial Golf Tournament.

The tournament follows an A, B, C, D scramble format with four-player teams competing for prizes awarded to the top three finishers. The entry fee is \$125 per player, and includes greens fees, golf cart, lunch, refreshments, prizes, and a steak or chicken dinner. Advance registration is required, and forms are available from any Southbridge Lions Club member or by contacting Gary Fontaine at 774-230-1412 or Steve Blanchard at 774-318-0486.

Check-in begins at 7 a.m., with a shotgun start at 8:30 a.m. Golfers of all skill levels are welcome to join us for a great day on the course while supporting a worthy cause. Enjoy a fun, relaxed atmosphere and take a shot at winning outrageous raffle prizes. Don't miss out!

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The Spencer Housing Authority is seeking a qualified full-time Administrative Assistant to assist with a variety of tasks including, but not limited to, processing applications, maintaining waitlists, calculating rent determinations, and general reception duties including answering phones, entering work orders, filing and assisting the public. This is a full time (40 hours) benefited position. Retirement is through the Worcester County Retirement Office. Successful candidates must have excellent written and verbal communication skills and be proficient in computer skills. Working knowledge of EOHLC, CHAMP, or PHA-Net software. The selected applicant must be able to pass a criminal background check (CORI). The full job description can be found on the SHA website. Pay: \$20.00 per hour

Applicants should submit a cover letter and resume to:

Spencer Housing Authority 13 McDonald Street Spencer, MA 01562

Attn: Kimberly Hurlbrink

You may also email cover letter and resumes to Kimberly Hurlbrink: kim.hurlbrink@spencerhousing.org

Resumes will be accepted until 2:00PM on March 21, 2025

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Female creativity highlighted at library art show



Margaret Morrissey gets a closeup of Simone Germain's "Sun-kissed."

Gus Steeves

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

S O U T H B R I D G E — March is women's art month at Jacob Edwards Library.

Last week, several local female artists presented some of their creativity in paint, stitchery, multimedia and other forms.

"What's nice about this is it is a group show, and everything's different," Library Director Margaret Morrissey observed, noting all of the participants live within about 10 miles of town.

Some are locally well known, some not, but maybe soon will be.

One of the former, Simone Germain, kicked things off by talking about her piece "Sun-kissed," a very colorful and texturally complex marriage of the sun and moon.

"I've enjoyed art for the majority of my life," she said, recalling that she'd "make a picture with stones on the ground" as a little girl. Over time, Germain has probably used every possible medium – including jewelry, clay,

paint, ice sculpture, metal, drawing and fabric – and, as many know from her Art Center classes, she often uses recycled materials in her pieces. For example, she was wearing shoes she'd painted with swirls to the show. (She was also wearing a kerchief made by another presenter who wasn't there.)

"There probably isn't a surface I haven't tried to paint on," Germain added, noting she particularly finds painting outdoors "exhilarating."

The outdoors, in fact, is a common theme of many of the show's pieces, with various formats used to present birds, trees, flowers, bears and more. One of those was Megan Garlie's "Love Lake Loon," a painting based on a photo she took at her family's Wisconsin cabin.

"In the right sunlight, you can see the many different hues in the (bird's) head," she said, noting her favorite topics are "mostly nature-based paintings, landscapes and birds," when asked why she favored that, she simply

said, "It's so beautiful and all around you."

Unlike Germain, Garlie came to art relatively late. She said she was self-taught during Covid, while she was in graduate school, and this is just her third show, with this painting only a month old. Two were group shows, one her own here at the library, where people might recall she worked for a couple years. (She's now at Harvard's museum library.)

Another bird was around the corner from Garlie – Deb Tracy's "Canada Goose." Although you could easily see a goose in the same setting as a loon, Tracy's interpretation couldn't look much different, since she did it in needlepoint back in the 1990s.

"I believe needlepoint began as far back as the Egyptians," she said.

She said she started with sewing at her grandmother's treadle machine and still enjoys that. But eyesight has pushed her to focus on watercolors in recent years.

To do needlepoint, "you have to have good



Deb Tracy talks about her "Canada Goose" needlepoint work.



Some of this month's artists are, left to right: Deb Tracy, Simone Germain, Laura Cenedella, Megan Garlie and Maureen Doyle.

eyesight," but it's gotten "hard to do tha intense work," she admitted. Watercolor, by contrast, is "a freer type of art" and "an escape. It's a quick medium (the paints) dry quickly," she said.

On the show's other end is Laura Cenedella's depiction of a birch forest. To her, art is "very peaceful, good for your mind. ... You get in the zone and don't hear anything around you."

Like Germain, she's been an artist since childhood. She was largely self-taught, but has taken various workshops and now teaches at Bay Path. These days, she's creating about 100 pieces for a solo show at the Art Center that will highlight her life's journey, including aspects of dealing with MS.

"I consider myself to be an outdoor artist, but can't always paint the way I'd like to" because of her disability, she said. But, she adds, "If it's not perfectly straight, it's OK. ... To make me feel better, I paint to go into another space and not feel the pain."

To Maureen Doyle, "versatility" of art materials and ideas is what matters. Her submission "Beary," is a fuzzy take-off on a pattern she'd found called "Lamby," but in a color she thought seemed more like a bear. Like Germain, she feels recycling materials is important; among her other projects

has been making carrying bags out of large chicken and other animal food bags. Her piece is in the glass case, alongside several other smaller works, most of them knitted fabric.

The show's largest piece, an untitled work by Shelley Klein, also showcased nature in a different way. In it, flowers stick out of a "vase" that's also quite obviously anatomical, seen from behind. She wasn't at the show to discuss her creative process.

The show will be up through the month.

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