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Friday, December 12, 2025

Dudley Government Study Committee launches resident survey

DUDLEY — Do Dudley residents believe their town government works and communicates well, their voices are heard, and the election process effectively places qualified individuals in key government positions?

The Dudley Government Study Committee is seeking input from residents to better understand how effectively local government communicates, how well the current governing structure is serving the community, and whether changes should be explored for the future.

The survey includes questions about communication, the town's form of government, possible areas for improvement, and residents' familiarity with options such as a Town Charter or alternative town meeting structures.

Residents' feedback is an important part of evaluating potential improvements to transparency, efficiency, and representation in town governance. Survey responses are anonymous and will help guide the Committee's discussions and decision-making moving forward.

Dudley residents are encouraged to take the short survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7WC25D9>

The Government Study Committee, appointed in June, was one of 16 recommendations made by the state Division of Local Services (DLS) following its audit of the town's financial management and operations.

The Board of Selectmen requested the independent state audit in response to repeated calls from residents for a third-party financial and operations review.

The state Department of Revenue Division of Local Services | Financial Management Resource Bureau conducted the audit, which encompassed Dudley's government structure, fiscal planning, financial policies, information technology, and operational practices.

The audit findings, published in December 2025, identified 16 areas of concern and made recommendations for changes to practices. The report emphasized that Dudley's decentralized government structure lacks essential coordination and communication, thereby hindering its ability to function effectively and efficiently.

One key DLS recommendation among the 16 was to create an independent Government Study Committee. Selectmen followed the recommendation by forming a committee of qualified individuals who possessed no predetermined agenda. The committee was tasked with objectively evaluating the town's government structure, in part by interviewing officials, surveying residents, and examining practices in other communities.

For more information about the committee, visit <https://www.dudleyma.gov/495/Government-Study-Committee>.

To view video recording of the committee meetings, visit <https://www.youtube.com/@TownofDudleyMassachusetts>.

All Saints Academy students answer the call



WEBSTER — Food insecurity does not have one face. Children, seniors, veterans, college students, and so many others may experience it at different points in their lives. Some individuals rely on assistance for long periods of time, while others only need temporary support to get through an unexpected challenge.

Many people who have always had food on their tables are surprised to learn that some families must choose between buying groceries and paying for essential expenses like housing, childcare, utilities, medical costs, and other basic needs. Lack of proper nourishment affects both mental and physical health, and for children it can weaken the immune system, hinder development, and make learning significantly more difficult.

So, what can be done to help local food banks?

At All Saints Academy, the answer came from our families. The All Saints Academy National Junior Honor Society hosted a themed food and hygiene drive during New England Catholic Schools Week — and our school community donated more than 1,100 items to support area food pantries (St. Vincent de

Paul, Buckley's Food Pantry, Thrive Food Pantry and some local families directly).

To make the week fun and engaging, NJHS introduced a daily theme and a special challenge to "hide the Knight," our school mascot, under the mountain of donations: Munchie Monday kicked off the week with over 100 snack items such as granola bars, peanut butter crackers, and nuts; Two-Can Tuesday brought in more than 300 canned goods; Wellness Wednesday added over 250 hygiene items, including toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodor-

ant, and soap; Thankful Thursday focused on Thanksgiving staples, collecting 286 items; Family Favorite Friday revealed that our students love pasta, macaroni & cheese, and peanut butter (greater than 165 items).

By the end of the week, we had successfully covered the ASA Knight — and even more importantly, students gained a deeper understanding of food insecurity, the challenges many families face, and the power they have to help. They also walked away with a renewed sense of gratitude for the food they enjoy every day.

High schoolers from Oxford set sights on Italy

OXFORD — In spring of 2027, a group of high school students have recently been approved by the Oxford School Committee to embark on a journey across Italy — visiting Venice, Florence, and Rome — as part of a school-sponsored trip organized through EF Educational Tours. The

Italian adventure aims to open students' eyes to new cultures, art, history, and the wider world.

Guiding the trip is teacher and longtime travel-advocate Lindsay Castonguay. Castonguay has led previous overseas journeys for Oxford students — including a 2023 trip to Germany,



Switzerland, and Austria, and a 2024 expedition through Spain and Portugal. Those travels came after her first experience on an international trip during high school — an EF tour to Spain and France the summer before her senior year. The experience stuck with her, expanding her sense of how large and varied the world is beyond central Massachusetts.

As she puts it: even a 10-day trip can "open your eyes" and create lifelong memories — and she's committed to giving Oxford students the same opportunity.

The planned itinerary draws on EF's "Venice, Florence & Rome" program, designed as a 10-day immersive experience combining history, art, culture, and everyday life. Students

will explore the canals and bridges of Venice, enjoy the Renaissance treasures of Florence, and walk in the footsteps of ancient Romans in Rome — with visits to iconic monuments, piazzas, and world-renowned museums. Highlights likely include guided tours, local-expert guides, cultural immersion, and — depending on timing — opportunities to experience local traditions, cuisine, and possibly even art exhibitions.

For many Oxford students — especially those who've never traveled far beyond Massachusetts — the Italy trip will offer a once-in-a-lifetime chance to experience a very different world. From navigating ancient Roman ruins to strolling across canals in Venice or admiring Renaissance mas-

terpieces in Florence, the journey will be as educational as it is transformative.

Beyond sightseeing, the trip is also about building global awareness, cultural appreciation, and personal

growth. As Castonguay and the EF program emphasize, immersion in a different country challenges students to step outside their comfort

Turn To ITALY page A14

Free health insurance enrollment help available at Auburn Mall

AUBURN — Enrollment for 2025 health insurance through the Massachusetts Health Connector is open now. On Dec. 13, certified Navigators will be onsite at Auburn Mall to help residents sign up for Health Connector plans. Navigators offer free, expert, in-person help comparing plans, understanding subsidies, and choosing licensed coverage that meets Massachusetts' Minimum Creditable Coverage requirements - protecting residents from unexpected medical bills and potential tax penalties.

Residents who want coverage starting Jan. 1 should complete enrollment by Dec. 23.

This year, getting covered is especially important. Starting in January 2026, more than 337,000 Massachusetts residents could face higher premium costs due to the loss of \$425 million in federal tax credits. With rising healthcare costs and growing uncertainty, the Health Connector continues to provide a trusted, affordable pathway to quality coverage for individuals and families across the Commonwealth.

Residents can stop by the Navigator table at Auburn Mall, visit MAhealthconnector.org, or call 1-877-623-6765 to explore their options. Assistance is provided in multiple languages. Many qualify for subsidies that keep coverage within reach. Protect your health. Protect your finances. Get covered.



Holidays make for early deadlines

The submission deadlines for our Dec. 26 and Jan. 2 editions will fall a bit earlier than usual in order to ensure that the paper arrives in subscribers' mail boxes prior to the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

Any press releases or letters to the Editor intended for publication the week of Dec. 26 should be submitted no later than 4 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 18.

For the week of Jan. 2, the submission deadline will be Friday, Dec. 26 at 4 p.m.

Submissions can be e-mailed to news@stonebridgepress.news.

Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation awards \$30,000 in grants to local schools

DUDLEY — The Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation (DCEF) Inc. awarded more than \$30,000 in grants to the Dudley-Charlton School District.

“We are humbled to have the opportunity to support our community in tangible ways that directly impact our schools and students,” says Sabrina Webb, president of the DCEF. “These grants will empower our teachers and staff to go above and beyond when it comes to the

student experience in and out of the classroom.”

Approximately 16 projects will receive funding. At the elementary level, funded initiatives include: a game show to strengthen math skills, a storytelling kit for English learners, LEGO therapy to support social-emotional development, LED light pads for literacy, math, and science instruction, an outdoor classroom and sensory path, and a math and science escape room.

Middle school projects include: a greenhouse initiative to create gifts for elderly residents, guest artist-in-residence Bren Bataclan, a jazz artist residency, student-run Grizzly Grind production materials, and the Champions of the Sea environmental education program.

At Shepherd Hill Regional High School, grants will support the creation of a wellness lounge for behavioral therapy, the purchase of modern Vernier equipment

to update the physics curriculum, and a cooking club aimed at building life skills.

“The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District extends its sincere appreciation to the Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation for their continued generosity and partnership, shares,” said Steven M. Lamarche, superintendent of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District. “Their grant program supports innovative ideas that fall outside our

operating budget but make a meaningful, positive impact on students’ experiences in every school. We are grateful for their commitment to empowering educators and enriching learning opportunities across the district.” Grants will be carried out in the 2025-26 school year.

Established in 2008, the Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation (DCEF) Inc. is a nonprofit corporation that unifies efforts among edu-

cators, parents, and community members to secure the highest advantages in public education. Recognizing that the quality of life in the Towns of Dudley and Charlton is directly related to the quality of our educational system, the DCEF is dedicated to the betterment of our communities. If you are looking for ways to support next year’s grants, please visit the DCEF website where you will find multiple ways to support our district.

DA urges participation in 24th Annual Worcester County Gun Buyback Program

WORCESTER — Worcester County District Attorney Joseph D. Early, Jr. is urging participation in the 24th annual Guns to Gardens program, an opportunity for members of the community to turn in unwanted firearms at participating police departments on Saturday, Dec. 13.

Since the program’s start in the City of Worcester in 2002, more than 4,000 guns have been voluntarily turned in across the county. This annual program encourages participants from all of Worcester County to turn in firearms at participating police department headquarters in Charlton, Fitchburg, Northborough, Milford, Worcester, or City Welding & Fabrication, 10 Arant St., Worcester.

Anyone who turns in an operable firearm will receive a gift card in exchange (\$50 for a rifle, \$100 for a pistol, and \$150 for an automatic or semi-automatic weapon). Free gun locks are also available, even if you are not turning in a firearm.

“By getting unwanted and unsecured firearms out of the house and safely disposed of, we can help prevent accidental tragedies, theft or misuse. This not only helps reduce

gun-related tragedies and save lives, but also avoid the high costs of medically treating gunshot victims,” said District Attorney Early. “I commend Worcester Division of Public Health Medical Director

Dr. Michael Hirsh, who started this program, and all our local police departments for their continued efforts to advocate for gun safety and protect our communities.”

“Every gun that we can get out of homes that are not safely secured or not in an environment where it is safe to keep them at home is a win for a peaceful holiday season in the Woo,” said Dr. Hirsh.

As in the past, Mr. Early will relax law enforcement of the law prohibiting the carrying of firearms for those participating in the program. Participants may bring firearms without any registration requirement, and anonymity is guaranteed for everyone. All weapons should be brought unloaded and wrapped up or in a bag. Replica guns and ammunition will also be accepted. Ammunition should be separately bagged. Residents are reminded to treat all firearms as though they are loaded and dangerous.

Participants can watch their weap-

ons be destroyed at the City Welding & Fabrication location. In recent years, these destroyed firearms have been turned into garden tools to be used in the UMass community garden, which is maintained by members of the UMass community and produces fresh produce that is donated to those in need.

Guns to Gardens is sponsored by the Worcester County District Attorney’s Office, UMass Memorial Medical Group, the City of Worcester, the Worcester Police Department, and the Worcester Department of Public Health.

Firearms can be turned in at the following locations during the specific hours:

- Charlton Police Department from 10 a.m. to noon
- Fitchburg Police Department from 10 a.m. to noon
- Milford Police Department from 10 a.m. to noon
- Northborough Police Department from 10 a.m. to noon
- Worcester Police Department from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Worcester City Welding & Fabrication (10 Arant St., Worcester) from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Oxford NJROTC closes out season with big win over Reading

OXFORD — The Oxford High School NJROTC team wrapped up their 2025 National Sporter Air Rifle League regular season in style, scoring a decisive 989899.9 victory over Reading MCJROTC in their final matchup of the year.

Led by Coach Ed Kay, Oxford’s cadets notched their fifth straight win to finish the season with a strong 51 record. Benjamin Francis was the star of the day with a top score of 262.6, supported by teammates Makliegh Boyle-Muniz, Paige Reynolds, and Joshua Friend. The team proudly ended the season third in the Elite Division of the NJROTC & CGJROTC Conference — a testament to their hard work and consistency all season long.

Oxford dominated from the start. After the kneeling portion of the three-position match, they had already built a 32.9-point lead. Their margin widened to 74.2 during the prone round, and they finished strong with an impressive standing segment, sealing the match with an 89.1-point advantage.

While Oxford NJROTC’s season ends with this win — and no postseason play

— the team can look back on a season of growth, camaraderie, and marksmanship excellence. Fans and family cheered them on through eight weeks of spirited competition against teams from across the country.

As the regular season wraps, all teams will enjoy a brief Thanksgiving break before preparations ramp up for the postseason, which begins December 1. Oxford’s cadets can celebrate a season well shot, friendships strengthened, and plenty of memories to carry into next year.

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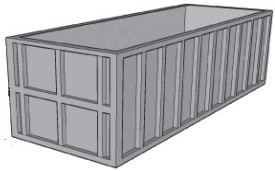


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To register for events or sign up for the news-letter go to www.crawfordlibrary.org or call 508-949-8021.

The library will be closed at noon on December 24th and all day on December 25th. The Library will be open 10-5 on December 26th.

Please join us in the month of December to celebrate local artist, Marilyn West. A variety of paintings are on display for your enjoyment in the Fels Room whenever the Library is open.

Gentle Yoga
Mondays in December
10:00-11:00
Join yoga instructor Patricia, for a traditional “on the mat” yoga class with chair yoga modifications. This truly is a one size fits all class.
Bring your own mat. Wear layers, do not eat heavily 1.5-2 hours before class.
Registration is Required.

Mahjong at the Pearle
Every Wednesday in December-NO SESSION
Wednesday, December 24th
10:00-12:30 Fels Community Room
The game consists of players competing to form distinct sets or pairs of tiles, similar to gin rummy. Everyone welcome, registration not required.

Quilting Group
Every Wednesday in December. NO SESSION
Wednesday, December 24th
1:30- 3:30
All quilters and would-be quilters are invited to join our new group. Bring your projects!

Knit & Crochet Group-NO SESSION Thursday, December 25th
Every Thursday 5:30-7:45 and Friday 10:00-12:00
All stitchers are welcome for this informal group.
Bring your project, enjoy the company

NEW to the Library-Pearle’s Genealogy Group
Monday, December 8th
4:00-5:30
Let’s regrow our genealogy group! Join us in the Local History Room on the second Monday of every month. Facilitated by professional genealogist Patricia St. Marie

Crawford Library Book Group
Thursday, December 18th
Burn by Peter Heller
6:00-7:30
Books are available at the circulation desk for checkout one month prior to discussion.
No Registration Required.

“Cook the Book” Book Club
Monday, December 22nd
6:00-7:00
Book: The Pioneer Woman Cooks-A Year of Holidays by Ree Drummond
Pick one recipe from the book selected for the month, the dishes don’t have to be complicated or fancy. Any recipe from the book is fair game, except alcoholic beverages-sorry! Prepare the recipe at home and share it at the library. We cannot reheat or keep food warm, so consider this when choosing your recipe.
You are responsible for bringing serving utensils. We will provide paper goods and utensils for eating.
There will be a place to include your recipe selection in the reservation form. Registration Required.

Celebrate the Season with the Magical Sound of the Harp with Solo Harpist Shelley Otis
Monday, December 8th
6:00-7:00
Celebrate the season with the magical sound of the harp. From elegant Christmas classics to upbeat contemporary covers and smooth holiday jazz, Shelley’s performances blend tradition and style. With a repertoire of over 500 songs — and a passion for creating custom arrangements — she brings festive spirit and artistry to every performance.

Rope Flow with Kate
Thursday, December 11th
6:00- 7:00
Rope flow is a low-impact movement practice where you spin a weighted rope in fluid, continuous patterns to improve mobility, coordination, and athletic timing, rather than jumping with it like a traditional jump rope. The practice involves using your whole body, particularly the spine and hips, to control the rope’s movement through a series of underhand and overhand figure-eights and other patterns, fostering a sense of play, rhythm, and a “flow state”. It serves as a form of full-body exercise and moving meditation, enhancing rotational strength and reducing stress. All equipment is supplied. Space limited to 10 people. Registration is required.
Ginger & Spice
Saturday, December 13th
10:00-12:00
When it comes to herbal kitchen medicine, ginger has a versatility that runs a close second to garlic. Come explore this powerful root (or rhizome), see why it helps issues from arthritis, nausea, helps fight colds and flu, and so much more! Taste some warm ginger-aide, help prepare a group batch of ginger-syrup, and even try your hand at making a simple ginger poultice that eases cramps or stomach tension! This program is sponsored by the Dudley Agricultural Commission & the Town of Dudley.
Presented by Christine Leo, M. Ed. Certified Traditional Herbalist and Dudley resident.
Registration is required.

Elf Trivia
Monday, December 15th
6:00-7:00
The best way to spread Christmas cheer is by

playing trivia loud for all to hear!
Wear your best holiday outfit and join us for Elf trivia. Ages 17+
Space is limited. Registration is required.

COA Book Group
The President’s Daughter
By James Patterson & Bill Clinton
Wednesday, December 17th 1:00-2:30

Baby Open Play
Fridays in December
10:00- 12:00
Open play for babies! Parents and caregivers can let babies play while getting to know others in the community. Come anytime between 10-12 or stay the whole time! No Registration Required

Pre-K Power
Tuesdays in December-NO SESSION
December 23rd & December 30th
10:00-10:45
For ages 3-5 and their caregiver (siblings always welcome!). Join us for stories, songs, fingerplays, scarves, shaker eggs, moving our bodies to music, activities, bubbles, a craft, and free play!
No Registration needed.

Toddler Storytime
Wednesdays in December-NO SESSION
December 24th & December 31st
10:00-10:45
Best for children 6 months - 36 months and their caregiver (siblings always welcome!). We’ll have fun with songs, fingerplays, a story, moving our bodies to music, shaker eggs, scarves, and bubbles! There will be time for free play and socialization, too.
No Registration needed.

Graphic Novel Book Club-8 Tiny Reindeer
Thursday, December 11th
6:00- 6:45
Do you love graphic novels? Join us for Graphic Novel Book Club! Each month we will meet to discuss the graphic novel of the month. Copies of the book will be located at the circulation desk in the Children’s Room. Best for ages 8 and up. Registration not required. This is not a drop off program.

Pokemon Club
Thursday, December 18th
6:00-6:45
Do you love everything Pokemon? Join us for Pokemon club! Each month we will have exciting crafts and activities! Best for ages 6 and up. No Registration Required. This is not a drop off program.

New! Yoga for Children
Friday, December 19th
10:00-10:45
Join certified Yoga instructor, Patricia (also known as Buffy), for a 45-minute yoga class for children ages 3-5 and their caregivers! Caregivers are encouraged to participate in the class, but it is not required. If you will be participating, please bring your own mat. (Yoga mats will be provided for the children.) Registration is required as space is limited.

Stuffie Sleepover Drop-off!
Saturday, December 13th
10:00-1:30
It’s time for a Stuffie Sleepover! Drop off your stuffie (only 1, please!) on Saturday, December 13th, anytime between 10:00 am and 1:30 pm. in the Storytime Room. (Please be sure you bring a stuffie that you can be without until Monday!)
While you’re here, you can make a special blanket for your stuffie and let us know everything they’ll need before bed. We’ll see what kind of mischief the stuffies got into after we check our security cameras! What do you think your stuffie will do?
You can pick up your stuffie on Monday, December 15th, between 10:00 am and 8:00 pm, or Tuesday, December 16th, between 11:00 am and 5:00 pm. Please don’t keep them waiting - they’ll miss you!

Family Movie-Arthur Christmas
Tuesday, December 23rd
1:30-3:30
Join us for a family movie to kick off your Christmas vacation! We’ll have Christmas cookies to munch on while we watch. **Please bring your own drink.**
No registration needed. This is not a drop-off event.
Learn to Play: Pokemon Trading Card Game with One Up Games
Tuesday, December 30th
1:00-4:00
One Up Games will be here to give registrants hands on instructions on how to play the Pokemon Trading Card Game, with a free Structure Deck for each player!
This program is for children ages 8 and up, and registration is required, as space is limited.
This is not a drop-off program.

Dungeons & Dragons Game
Thursdays in December-NO SESSION
December 25th
6:00-7:30
Ages 14-19
Are you looking to play a game that contains action, adventure, and drama?
Come play the world’s number one role playing game.

Snow House Luminaria for Teens
Thursday, December 18th
4:00-5:30
Join us as Pop Up Art teaches you to create a cozy winter scene that glows with warmth and creativity! Using mixed-media, you’ll create a charming snowy landscape with a glowing paper house and needle-felted woolen trees.
This program is for teens ages 12-17 ONLY, and registration is required as space is limited.

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Friends of the Library Winter Book Sale: December 8th-20th
Fill a bag of books for \$5 and then go wrap your books at our gift wrap station!

Gift Wrapping Pop-up: Monday-Thursday
Check the hours each day and come in to wrap your gifts away from prying eyes! We’ll provide the paper, tape, tags, and ribbons.

Adult Programming
Literacy Volunteers: ESL Classes – Tuesdays at 6:00pm
The Literacy Cafe is a free weekly English conversation class offered by Literacy Volunteers of South Central Massachusetts (LVSCM). This class is free to attend and is open to all adults. No pre-registration is required. For more information, email us at info@lvscm.org.

Library for All – First Two Mondays; Last Two Fridays 10AM (Chair Yoga or Craft)
This program includes one chair yoga class and one craft project that will be held on first two Mondays and the last two Fridays of the month. Either join Jess and Ompractice for a 45 minute relaxing Chair Yoga class or join us for our craft program. Check the online calendar to see which event is scheduled. No experience necessary. This program is for teens and adults of all abilities and their caregivers. Please call ahead if special accommodations or requirements are needed.

Yoga – Saturdays at 9:30am (no class on 12/13)
Join Julie or Lauren at the Gladys E. Kelly Library for a vinyasa yoga class for all levels. A typical class involves centering the mind with the breath, aromatherapy, movement of the body to release energetic blockages, and, finally, rest and relaxation. Classes are free. Funded by the Friends of the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library.

Computer Basics: EBooks and Audiobooks through Libby – Thursday, December 4th at 3:00pm
Interested in learning how to borrow eBooks and Audiobooks through Libby? Join Assistant Director, Evan Hale, and Adult Services Librarian, Jess Fontaine, to learn how to use the apps with your Gladys E. Kelly Library Card. Bring your phone or tablet!
Yoga Nidra with Jess – Fridays, December 12th and 19th at 8:15am
Join Adult Services Librarian Jess for a relaxing yoga nidra practice to start your day. Jess will guide participants through a few simple yoga asanas to release physical tension. Participants will then settle into a reclined position for a guided relaxation (yoga nidra). This program takes place before the library officially opens. Registration is required and Jess will meet you at the program door. If you have your own yoga mat, please bring it and be sure to dress in comfortable clothing.

Adult Book Group – Monday, December 15th at 6:30pm
An adult book discussion group. Each month there will be a new book to read and discuss! Meetings are held every 3rd Monday unless specified. The book for November is Behind the Beautiful Forevers by Katherine Boo.
Cozy Wednesdays: Silent Book Club – Wednesday, December 17th
Looking for a quiet escape? Join us for the first meeting of our Silent Book Club. The community room will be as cozy as it gets. Bring a book or borrow one from the library and enjoy an hour or two of silent reading. Quiet discussion is permitted. We’ll provide the tea and atmosphere, you choose your book!

Computer Basics: Hoopla and Kanopy – Thursday, December 18th at 3:00pm
Interested in learning how to borrow eBooks and Audiobooks through Hoopla or watching movies on Kanopy? Join Assistant Director, Evan Hale, and Adult Services Librarian, Jess Fontaine, to learn how to use the apps with your Gladys E. Kelly Library Card. Bring your phone or tablet! *Please note that these services are only available to Webster residents*

ZMakesBeads: Bead Therapy Workshop – Thursday, December 18th at 6:00pm
Join Zangar of ZMakesBeads for a bead therapy workshop. Bead Therapy is an expressive arts workshop that

teaches participants the basics of beaded jewelry making and the difference between semi-precious and precious stones. The materials used are semi-precious stones and other natural jewelry materials. Semi-precious stones have been appreciated for generations for their unique beauty and healing and grounding properties.

Programming for All Ages
Puzz Fest: Cozy Edition – Thursday, December 11th at 6:00pm
Assemble your team (up to 5 people!) and join us to see which team can complete their puzzle first. We’ll have snacks to keep you fueled as you tackle your 500 piece jigsaw. All teams will get to keep their puzzle. Registration is required.

Little Songbook Opera Winter Solstice – Saturday, December 13th at 11:30am
Let’s celebrate the winter season together! Little Songbook Opera is coming to Gladys E. Kelly Public Library with a heartwarming event that brings together music, creativity and community support. We will share winter-themed songs from a wide variety of genres that all ages can enjoy while participating in one of our winter craft stations! We hope to see you there! Little Songbook Opera is a Boston-based organization dedicated to making music fun, accessible, and meaningful. Founded by musicians, we specialize in bringing small-scale musical productions to communities like yours! Visit <https://www.littlesongbookopera.com/> to learn more about the organization and our founders.
Crafts with Kate: Intentional Letter Writing – Wednesday, December 17th at 6:00pm
Join Kate in an intentional letter writing workshop! Come in with a person in mind who will receive your letter. We’ll have all the materials you need to personalize your letter and envelope. You’ll have a little bit of time to write your letter but the bulk of the time will be spent decorating. Registration is required.

Children’s and Young Adult Programming
Play-Doh Storytime – Mondays at 10:30am
Join us for an engaging storytime filled with interactive stories and Play-Doh fun! Kids are invited to explore, squish and make new creations each week. This sensory-friendly program is perfect for young learners and their grown-ups.

Creators Club – Mondays from 4:00-5:30 PM
We will have a variety of craft materials available to put your creativity to the test! Come explore our newly rebranded Monday night program: Creators Club! December’s theme is Popsicle Sticks! Kids will use popsicles sticks to create fun and imaginative artwork. All creations left behind will be displayed in the Children’s program room for the rest of the month.

Tiny Groovers – Tuesdays at 10:30am
Join Miss Paige for a new storytime! Toddlers ages 2-5 and their caregivers will dance to popular kids’ tunes using while instruments and playful props, and enjoy an interactive story each week.

Toddler Playtime – Thursdays at 10:00am
Young kids are invited to get their wiggles out with various toys and new friends!

Busy Baby Storytime – Fridays at 10:30am
Join Miss Paige for Busy Baby Storytime! Babies and caregivers will enjoy rhymes, movement, and simple stories that build early literacy skills in a fun and playful way.

Snack Club – Tuesday, December 16th at 4:30pm
This month’s snack: Gingerbread houses! Due to limited supplies, this program requires registration.

Mini Chefs Club – Wednesday, 17th at 5:30pm
Welcome to Mini Chefs Club! This new food focused series offers kids 7-12 the opportunity to learn how to create easy, tasty meals right at home using simple ingredients and step-by-step guidance. Each class will require kids to use different kitchen tools. Due to limited supplies, registration is required. We’ll be making Pancakes!

Storytime with Santa and Mrs. Claus – Saturday, December 20th at 11:30am
Join us for a festive storytime with Santa and Mrs. Claus! We’ll enjoy a holiday story, sing some songs, take photos with the Clauses, and every child will receive a free book to take home. This program is designed for ages 3-7, but siblings are welcome. This program requires registration.

Reliant Foundation awards more than \$1 million in community grants to area nonprofits

WORCESTER — Reliant Foundation has announced that it is awarding \$1,065,000 in Community Grants to 59 nonprofits across Central and Metro West Massachusetts. This brings the Foundation’s 2025 grant total to \$1,125,000, marking the second consecutive year the Foundation has awarded more than \$1 million in Community Grants.

Reliant Foundation’s mission-driven grants program is focused on strengthening mental health and behavioral health resources for children and youth; helping individuals of all ages reach recovery from substance use; building the pipeline of professionals to provide mental health, behavioral health, and recovery services; and supporting initiatives to reduce stigma around mental health and substance use. Over the past

eight years, the Foundation has provided nearly \$6.6 million in funding to area nonprofits.

“Last year marked the first time in our history that we granted more than \$1 million; to be able to do it for a second consecutive year gives us an immense sense of pride and impact,” said Reliant Foundation president Kelsa Zereski. “As nonprofits everywhere are having to make difficult programming decisions, driven largely by funding constraints, we feel an even greater obligation to support their missions. Fortunately, our donors and volunteers continue to step up year-after-year to help us fundraise so we can provide this level of funding, and our Board of Trustees has remained steadfast in their commitment to expanding our impact.”

“Our grantees are doing

extraordinary work under increasingly precarious circumstances - facing rising community needs with fewer resources than ever before. Their resilience inspires us, but it also underscores just how essential sustained donor support is to the health of our non-profit ecosystem,” said Kristine Bostek, Reliant Foundation Board Chair. “Every contribution—large or small—helps ensure that vital services remain available to those who rely on them. On behalf of our entire board, I want to express our deepest gratitude to all who stand with us. Your generosity enables our mission, strengthens our partners, and brings hope to the communities we collectively serve.”

The following non-profits, located throughout Central, North Central, South Central and MetroWest Massachusetts,

are receiving grants from the Foundation this fall:

- 508 Cheers – Teen Trauma Tuesdays programming
- Abby’s House - Evidence-Based Support: Women’s Services Program
- African Community Education – Think/Give learning activities at Saturday Program
- Addiction Referral Center - Project B.R.A.V.E. (Building Recovery Accessibility through Validation)
- Adolescent Consultation Services - Youth Mental Health Services at Framingham Juvenile Court
- Advocates – Clinical mental and behavioral health care to uninsured and underinsured youth
- Anna Maria College – JOBS Initiative (pathway for training and student support)
- Bancroft School Worcester Partnership – Worcester Partnership Program with Elm Park School
- Behavioral Health Partners of MetroWest - MetroWest Care Connection Program
- Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Central MA and Metro West – Rise Together Mentoring Program at Girls Inc.
- Boston Bulldogs Running Club – Weekly Run program in Worcester to help individuals reach recovery from substance use disorder and reduce stigma around addiction
- Boys & Girls Club of MetroWest – Licensed social worker position at Framingham Clubhouse
- Boys & Girls Club of Webster-Dudley - Mental health and behavioral health programs
- Boys & Girls Club of Worcester – Mental health and behavioral health programs
- CASA Project Worcester - Shine the Light Initiative
- Center for Health Impact – Multilingual Recovery Coach training
- Community Harvest Project – Nutritious foods for Worcester’s residential recovery programs
- Community Healthlink – Programming at residential recovery homes, substance use disorder programs
- Dismas House - Substance use prevention Initiative
- Doc Wayne - Community Clinic for youth and families in the Metrowest region
- Edward Street – Master Teacher Coaching Program
- GAAMHA, Inc. – R.O.O.T.S. Therapeutic Farm Program at Evergreen Grove
- Genesis Club - Zero Stigma Project
- Girls Inc. of Worcester –

- Wellness Institute Program for Teen Girls
- Girls on the Run Worcester County - Mind & Motion: Building Resilience in Girls across Central MA
- Jeff’s Place – Children’s Bereavement Center
- Jeremiah’s Inn – Renovations for the new Edward Street Residential Recovery Program
- Latin American Health Alliance - Bilingual Recovery Coach Training
- Legendary Legacies – Legacy transport program
- MA Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children – Survivor services program for children and youth
- MARE (MA Adoption Resource Exchange) - Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) Caregiver Training Series and a TBRI Family Support Group
- Open Sky Community Services - Inner Voice Outer Change self-empowerment model at THE PLACE for Empowerment
- Our Bright Future - Our Bright Future SEL Coordinator
- Pernet Family Health Services - Pernet Youth Program
- Rainbow Child Development Center - Mental Health Program for Underserved Children
- Regional Environmental Council - YouthGROW Program
- Recovery Collaboration Project - Program support services including sober housing scholarships and outreach supplies
- Revive of the USA - Sustaining programs and services at Recovery homes in Leominster and Worcester for women and men
- RFK Community Alliance - Behavioral health services for children
- Ready Inspire Act – Sisters Leading Sisters Peer Support
- RISE Above - Pro-social opportunities that improve mental and physical health and build resiliency for children in foster care
- Riverside Community Care - Pediatric Behavioral Health Urgent Care (PBHUC) Program
- Safe Exit Initiative – Harbor Drop-in Center support
- Senior Connection Inc. - Carelink: Mobile Mental Health for Grandfamilies
- Seven Hills - Expansion and full implementation of a Social Disconnection Specialty Practice within the Seven Hills Behavioral Health system of care
- Spark Kindness - Addressing the Emotional Health and Resilience of Children, Youth and Families Project
- Spoonfuls - Food recovery and hunger relief work in MetroWest to Recovery homes

- Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services - Reducing barriers to clinical help for vulnerable populations
- Spoonfuls - MetroWest food rescue and distribution to recovery homes
- The Club: Lunenberg Teen Center - GROW SMART Initiative-gaining resilience and overall wellness through skills mastery and resilience training
- Veterans Inc. – Recovery Coach and Mobile Case Management Position
- Westborough Connects - Together We Thrive: connecting community to strengthen mental and behavioral health
- Whitin Community Center - WCC Youth Outreach and Social Skills Program
- Worcester Addresses Childhood Trauma - Trauma Training Tuesday Series
- Worcester RISE for Health - Ubuntu: RISE’s behavioral health program
- Worcester State University - Peer to Peer Healthy Minds Initiative for WSU Students
- YMCA of Central MA – Behavioral Health Clinician at the Montachusett YMCA
- Youth Villages Massachusetts - LifeSet program for young people aging out of foster care
- YWCA of Worcester - Social emotional health support in the early education and care center

For more information about Reliant Foundation, or about how you can make a difference in the lives and health of our community, visit reliantfoundation.org.

About Reliant Foundation
Established in 1988, Reliant Foundation is an independent public charity whose mission is to advance community health priorities through strategic philanthropy and collaboration. As a 501(c)3 charity, the Foundation offers grants to non-profit organizations within its service area for the purpose of supporting programs that battle critical community health issues like children’s and adolescent mental health, behavioral health, and substance use disorder. Our charity partners work with thousands of individuals in our community to provide life-saving mental health and behavioral health services, recovery coaching, and impactful education and initiatives to reduce the stigma around these issues. For more information, please visit www.reliantfoundation.org.

DUDLEY POLICE LOG

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

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on Nov. 7.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Nov. 10 for Assault & Battery on a Family or Household Member, Resisting Arrest, Disorderly Conduct, Vandalization of Property, and Possession of a Class B Drug (subsequent offense).

Jose Orlando Serrano Maldonado, age 39, of Webster was arrested on Nov. 11 for Possession of a Class B Drug and in connection with an out of agency warrant.

Jeffrey Peter Devault, age 56, of Dudley was arrested on Nov. 11 in connection with multiple warrants.

Richard Roy Rumrill, Jr., age 45, of Dudley was arrested on Nov. 12 in connection with an out of agency warrant.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Nov. 14 for Domestic Assault & Battery.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication as arrested on Nov. 14 for Assault & Battery on a Family or Household Member.

Pamela Ann Collins, age 69, of Dudley was arrested on Nov. 14 for Operating Under the Influence (Liquor), Failure to Stop or Yield, and Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on Nov. 22 for Violation of an Abuse Prevention Order.

OXFORD SENIOR CENTER

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

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

The Oxford Senior Center will be closing at 12:00pm on December 24th & will be closed on December 25th and January 1st

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

Weekly Activities:
Mondays and Fridays @ 10:00 am – Cribbage
Tuesdays @ 9:15am – Strength & Balance w/ Donna Freeland – Cost \$3.00 per class
Wednesdays @ 9:15am – Chair Yoga w/ Heidi Gambaccini – Cost \$3.00 per class
Tuesdays and Wednesday @ 10:15 am - Needleworkers (Knitting, Crocheting,

Needlepoint)
Bring your favorite project and come join the group for conversation and laughs.
Wednesdays @ 1:00 pm – Chair Volleyball – Lots of laughs and only two rules (1) stay seated (2) have fun!
Thursdays @ 10:00 am – 12:00 pm Dominoes

Monthly Activities:
Let’s Talk Oxford History – 2nd Tuesday of each month @ 1pm - Sponsored by the Oxford Historical Commission
Men’s Coffee Group – 2nd Wednesday of each month @ 10:30am – coffee and pastry are served.
Tri-Valley Inc. Options Counseling - 3rd Tuesday of each month from 12:30pm – 2:00pm. By appointment.
Book Club – 1st Friday of each month @ 12:45pm – reserve your book from the Oxford Public Library
Movie Matinee – 2nd Friday of each month @12:45pm– December movie- “The Family Man”
BEANO – 4th Friday of each month @ 12:45pm – arrive by 12:30pm to purchase your BEANO sheets.





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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
STONEBRIDGE PRESS PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Facing winter heating costs with local support

As colder nights settle in across the local community, many households are already feeling anxious about one of the most predictable burdens of a New England winter: the cost of keeping warm. Even in years when energy markets stabilize, heating oil, natural gas, and electricity remain significant expenses—especially for seniors, fixed-income households, and young families whose budgets have little room for fluctuation.

This year, Massachusetts energy officials note that while overall prices may not spike as sharply as in previous winters, they remain historically high. According to the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources, heating oil prices statewide have hovered between \$3.50 and \$4 per gallon as winter approaches. For many local families who rely on oil heat, a single fill-up can strain monthly budgets, and multiple deliveries are inevitable during long cold spells.

But there are resources that can help, and it is important for residents to be aware of them before the coldest months arrive.

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program—better known as LIHEAP—opened its 2024–2025 season on Nov. 1. Locally, households in Webster, Dudley, and Oxford apply through Worcester Community Action Council, which administers fuel-assistance benefits for southern Worcester County. The program helps eligible families pay a portion of their heating costs, whether they use oil, propane, kerosene, natural gas, or electric heat. Even households that believe they may be just above the income limit sometimes qualify due to allowable deductions, and applying does not require a long-term commitment.

For older residents, the need can be especially acute. Many seniors own homes but live on fixed incomes that do not rise with energy costs. The Massachusetts Councils on Aging have continued to remind communities that no one should attempt to “stretch” heating fuel by keeping homes dangerously cold. Exposure to low indoor temperatures exacerbates health conditions, increases fall risks, and creates avoidable emergencies.

Local governments and nonprofits are part of the solution as well. Several area oil companies offer budget plans that spread winter heating costs across the entire year, providing predictability during the coldest months. Some also maintain hardship funds or donation-supported accounts to help families in crisis. Public libraries and senior centers often serve as referral points, directing residents to programs they may not realize exist.

But while financial programs soften the impact, the larger truth remains: heating is not a luxury in New England. It is a basic necessity, and communities must continue to advocate for policies that recognize this reality. Long-term strategies—including home weatherization, efficiency upgrades, and access to energy-saving programs—are critical to reducing the burden on households year after year.

As we enter the heart of winter, let this be a moment of community awareness. If you or someone you know is struggling with heating costs, reach out early. If you are able to support local relief efforts, consider doing so. And if you simply notice a neighbor’s lights on later than usual, or a home that seems unusually dark or cold, take a moment to check in. Sometimes, a conversation is the first step toward connecting someone with the help they need.

No family should have to choose between warmth and other essentials this winter. We have the tools, programs, and community spirit to make sure they do not.

VIEWPOINT

Come and see

WISDOM FROM THE CORNELL LEGACY PROJECT AND THE GOSPEL

THE DEADLINE to submit letters to the editor and commentaries for next week’s newspaper is Friday at noon. **SEND ALL ITEMS** to Editor Brendan Berube at THE WEBSTER TIMES — news@stonebridgepress.news

Come and see. One of the simplest yet most profound invitations in all Scripture. Come and see. Two disciples approach Jesus, searching, longing, hoping for something and the Lord turns to Andrew and invites him: “Come and see.”

Those three words changed Andrew’s life. They change the life of anyone who accepts the invitation to the church. They can change the world. And they are spoken as an invitation to each of us today to change us.

We are all on a journey as seekers in one way or another. We seek purpose. We seek love. We seek healing. We seek meaning. Deep down, we seek our Creator, the Eternal One. And Christ responds to our searching and longing not with a lecture or a command but with a gentle, welcoming invitation – Come and See.

I think of this divine invitation and compare it to a podcast my daughter, Panayiota, recently put on our family chat about Karl Pillemer, a professor of gerontology at Cornell University and his Legacy Project. This 20-year research project interviewed more than 1000 people over their 70s and gathered their advice and wisdom for younger generations

“What do you regret? What do you wish you understood earlier? What advice would you give the next generation?”

What struck me was their answers were not complicated. They weren’t about success, money, achievements, or status. They offered simple and profoundly spiritual wisdom echoing almost exactly what our Orthodox Christian faith has taught for centuries. It is as if the accumulated experience of life brings a person right to the feet of Christ’s teachings, hearing again the invitation: “Come and see.”

I’ll share some of the wisdom from this Legacy Project and show the connection to the wisdom from our spiritual tradition.

Takeaway #1: “Relationships are everything.”

Toward the end of life, the elderly said nothing matters more than the relationships we have with people we love. Life’s deepest meaning doesn’t come from our careers, any awards we received, our status in society



BEYOND THE PEWS

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

or the material possessions we amass. Loving relationships form the center of life.

Isn’t that the central message of the Gospel? Andrew didn’t follow an idea but entered into a relationship, into communion with God Himself. And Christ emphasized the greatest commandments in life are to love God and to love our neighbor. Love forms the essence of life.

Takeaway #2: “Say the important things now.”

So many older people regretted not telling “the people I loved how much they meant to me. I wish I had expressed love more frequently, forgiven sooner and reconciled with one another when relationships were broken.”

To love, forgive, and reconcile makes up the Christian life. We are a faith of constant repentance, turning back toward God and one another in reconciliation, and offering unconditional love. “Now is the acceptable time,” the Apostle Paul highlights.

Takeaway #3: “Don’t waste your life worrying.”

One elder said, “If I could reclaim all the hours I wasted worrying, I’d live an extra lifetime.” ‘Of course, this reflects Jesus’ advice “Do not be anxious about tomorrow” or Saint Paul’s words “do not worry about anything but with prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your requests be known to God, and the peace of God that passes all understanding will reign in your heart.” Don’t waste years of your life worrying about things out of your control.

Takeaway #4: “Forgive. Resentment is poison.”

The elderly highlighted that one’s unwillingness to forgive shrinks one’s heart and wastes away your years. Resentment doesn’t hurt anyone but the one who holds on to their bitterness. Our faith teaches us to humbly turn to the one who has hurt us and offer words of forgiveness freely that will release us from the prison of resentment. Just as Christ called out from the Cross, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do,” we are to offer the same forgiveness

which will bring freedom, newness of life, and salvation.

Takeaway #5: “Choose meaningful work, not just money.”

The elderly reflected on the purpose of work and realized over the years one’s deepest satisfaction came not from work that simply made a lot of money but from work that offered meaning, purpose, service and help to others.

Our Orthodox calling is not toward wealth but toward holiness. A meaningful life is the beautiful life.

Takeaway #6: “Treasure the simple moments.”

The Legacy Project noted life’s beauty in ordinary things – meals with family, quiet conversations with friends, everyday acts of kindness.

This is profoundly Orthodox. God is present in the everyday here and now, in the humble and simple actions and people in front of us at the present moment.

Takeaway #7: “Always be grateful.”

Gratitude transforms everything. Gratitude toward everything, small and great, reflects the most important habit that leads toward happiness. Of course, our faith is eucharistic and our life should be one of continual thanksgiving. Gratitude opens up our eyes to the beauty of God all around us while ingratitude blinds us to God’s presence.

Takeaway #8: “Take advantage of opportunities by saying yes to life.”

The elderly said one of the things they regretted most was when they didn’t take advantage of the opportunities that life brought them. At the end of their life, they felt they didn’t do all they could have done.

The Apostle Andrew heard “Come and see,” and responded “yes.” The saints’ lives are full of holy risks – hearing God’s invitation, trusting Him while stepping out of our comfort zone, and pursuing virtue and truth boldly.

Takeaway #9: “Serving others brings the greatest joy.”

Over and over again, the elderly repeated that serving others brought the deepest joy and greatest purpose in life. Life isn’t about focusing on oneself but on others. Of course, Christ taught how it is more blessed to give than to receive. Our Orthodox life is one of self-emptying, sacrificing, and serving others. Remember, we follow the One who washed the feet of His followers.

Takeaway #10: “It’s never too

late to change or try something new.”

Even in their 80s and 90s, people told the researchers, “Some of the most important growth in my life happened at this latter stage of life.” They suggested that someone is never too old to learn and grow.

Of course, our faith teaches us that we are on a never-ending journey into union with our Infinite God. We never stay the same in a life of faith. God has given us His Divine imprint, and we can never say we have fully arrived. Thus, positive change is always possible and desirable till the end of our lives.

Let me share a story from the Legacy Project that captures this beautifully. A woman in her 90s told the interviewers: “I spent the first 70 years of my life thinking the purpose of life was achievement. I worked, I saved, I climbed the ladder, I checked all the boxes. And then my husband died suddenly. And I sat at the kitchen table alone, realizing I had built a life full on the outside and empty on the inside. I had time but I had no relationships. I had money but I had no purpose.

So, at age 70, I changed. I started volunteering. I visited people who were sick or lonely. I joined a church. I started praying. I started forgiving. I began saying yes to life. And now, at 90, I am more alive than I ever was.”

Then she said something stunning: “If I could speak to my younger self, I would say: Come and see what truly matters.”

That sure sounds like Christ speaking through her. That’s St. Andrew’s words echoing in her story. That’s the Gospel revealed through human experience.

Come and see what life is when relationships are treasured. Come and see what love can do when forgiveness is given freely. Come and see how gratitude can transform your heart. Come and see how serving others fills your soul with joy. Come and see that it is not too late to change, to grow, to become holy. Come and see that Christ Himself is the meaning of life.

May each of us respond with the same and simple YES to Christ’s invitation to come and see, allowing Him to reveal to us all the wisdom that these elderly offered in the Legacy Project, and not wait until the end of our lives to live life to its fullest and deepest meaning!

A forgotten graveyard

BY HELEN POIRIER
AUBURN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The first European settlers brought their burial customs with them to this country. These early graveyards, also known as burying grounds, were very simple and basic. The markers sometimes were just field-stones instead of engraved markers like we have today. These first markers were temporary and would be reused. They also disappeared over time, some to nearby foundations for houses. In the 17th century graves were placed near churches, meetinghouses or within the settlement to keep them close to the community rather than have them fancy. That came later in cemetery history.

Auburn has three cemeteries/burial grounds that may be known to most in town, Hillside Cemetery on Central St, Auburn Center Burial Ground near the Congregational Church, and the West Auburn Burial Ground at the corner of Southbridge Street and Waterman Road. There is another one that is on Prospect Street that was a private family burial ground, Clark-Cudworth dated 1750.

The obelisk, with the name Cudworth at the base, is the only readable marker in the area, though there are several very small headstones around it. Also, on the obelisk itself is “Abigail Cudworth Died Nov. 1, 1870, AE 86 yr 6 ms. I am the Resurrection and the Life.” This burial ground has been the subject of several news articles done by the Auburn News in the past that dealt with ground-penetrating radar technology to determine how many bodies were buried there. Past town historians, Ken Ethier and John Hartwell were also involved with the hunt for graves. It was determined that there were about 16 bodies buried in that area.

This article will look at Abigail and her family and speculate who else might be buried in that graveyard. According to Ken

Ethier, the Cudworths were one of the original settlers on Prospect Hill and came around 1730s. Cudworth was a large family, and some members being found in Oxford where there is Old Cudworth Rd. and Cudworth Rd. which is near an exit off I-395.

Abigail’s maiden name was Drinkwater. She was the daughter of Samuel and Dorothy [Josselyn] Drinkwater. According to the family biography, Samuel was 2nd generation in the colonies and was the seventh son and child of Thomas and Elizabeth Haskell. Elizabeth was related to a passenger on the Mayflower, Patience Soule.

Samuel moved to Dighton in Bristol County when he married Dorothy Josselyn in 1734. They had 10 children all born in Dighton, 8 girls and 2 boys. Five of the daughters married 4 Cudworth brothers, David, Charles, Nathaniel, and Paul, plus Edward a cousin. Both of Samuel’s sons married Payne/Paine sisters.

According to Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors who served in the Revolutionary War, Samuel Drinkwater served as a private in the Revolutionary War, in Captain George Rogers’s Company which was part of the 2nd Cumberland Company Regiment. He served 4 days with Colonel Jonathan Mitchel on the fort at Falmouth in November 1775: Samuel was also on a list of men belonging to the militia of North Yarmouth, Cumberland Co. raised to reinforce the Continental Army, as returned to Brigadier Samuel Thompson, dated North Yarmouth Dec. 3, 1776.

There is not much information on the Josselyn side of the family. Dorothy was born about 1716 in Hingham and died, 1789, in Dighton at the age of 75. Her parents were Charles Josselyn [1682-1749] and Dorothy Paul [1693 -?] from Bristol County, Mass Bay Colony.

Edward Cudworth was the son of James [1697-1751] and Sybil [Chase] Cudworth [1717- aft. 1752] from Freetown. Edward

had six siblings (Sibyl, Deliverance, James, Lydia, John and Walter). Edward and James did service in the Revolutionary War. Both were in Captain Benjamin Reed’s [Freetown] Company in Colonel Pope’s Regiment. Both marched Dec. 10, 1776, and served 16 days on an alarm in Rhode Island. Brother James was a Sergeant and Edward was a corporal. James also marched Dec. 8, 1776, and was in service 24 days on the alarm in Rhode Island. He also is listed with Captain Ebenezer Paul’s company, Col. Dagget’s regiment entering service Aug. 25, 1778 discharged Sept. 1, 1778, service nine days at Rhode Island.

After the war, the only mention of Edward in town affairs is in 1781, when he was listed as the Highway Surveyor in the town report. The state census had the family in town until after 1850. In the state census of 1865, Abigail was listed living in Dudley with a Bradford and Johanna Corbin and was still there when the census was taken, probably in the spring. She died in November of that year and was buried back in Auburn on the old homestead. What connection she had with the Corbin family was not shown in Abigail’s genealogy tree, nor was there a Clark. It is probably safe to say that Cudworth family members are buried in that area, but why the burial ground is called Clark-Cudworth is a matter that’s still being researched to write another article in the future about the Clark connection.

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

JUNIORS NAMED TO BAY PATH HONOR ROLL

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical School congratulates the following students in grade 11 on being named to the honor roll for the first quarter of the 2025-2026 school year.

High Honors
Anais Annette Alamo-Abad, Boden Richard Barrell, Kayleigh Rose Bissell, Sagesse Mpolo Budimbu, Olivia Raychal Burgos, Clara Mae Burlingame, Jenna Lynne Cianci, Naomi Natania Cooper, Brianna Nyarkoa Dwomoah, Adrian Dariusz Golemo, Liam Reed Greenwood, Emma Grace Harrington, Owen John Kennedy, Owen David Lemansky, Jared Thomas Magnusson, Julie-Anna Marie Marchetti, Ava June McKellick, Jayden Anthony Minardi, Miles Joseph Moriarty, Johnny Ly Nhan, Anastasia Marie Nieuwenhoff, Devin Matthew Robinson, Autumn-Rayne Rondeau, Owen Wajer Sanford, Kayla Lynn Schroeder, Isabella Christina Sepulveda, Travis Jacob Tong, Payton Cailee Ziemski

Honors
Monica Jelis Alvarez-Rivera, Lacie Rose Andrews, Lillian Lauren Araujo, Winifred Donna Aucoin, Collin William Bachand, Kennadie Taylor Balcunas, Vincent Louis Balducci, Nolan Scott Barton, Benjamin Whitman Bassett, Samantha Mackenzie Belanger, Brett Julius Beltzer, Alexandria Helene Blanchard, Alyssa Rose Brown, Dominic Francis Carofaniello, Michaela Sarah Carter, Evalynn Rose Cedillo, Dominic William Cincotta, Leianna Marie Collins, Liam Zachary Colon, Madelyn Lily Creelman, Trinity Chevelle Crompton, Benjamin Jackson Cryan, Liam Michael Cunniff, Destiny Love Fortunata Daviau, Eric Murphy Day, Hunter William Defosse, Livia Cassandra Deluca, Nathan Stephan Donnelly, Molly Elizabeth Dwyer, Jackson Christopher Edwards, Ava Lila Erkoc, Elias Noah Erraihani, Samantha Lynn Fleck, Aria Faith Fournier, Brooke Nicole Fuller, Aliyah Marie Gauvin, Julia Abigail Holton, Dominik Ignatovich, Vkram Kanchan Jha, Kelsey Rose Karlowicz, Finnian John Keefe, Jayme Douglas Kenney, Alexander James Kowalski, Filip Tadeusz Kulma, Benjamin Mitchell Labbe, Sangey Dawa Lama, Maximilian Thomas Lapriore, Evan Anthony Latuga, Ethan Michael Lemire, Bret Robert Leonardi, Damon James Libby, Perry Khai Lima, Emily Arlene Maliua, Christopher Warren Martin, Aaron Robert Mazur, Finn McDaniel, Colin Archak McIlvaine, Nicholas Isaac Meneguzzo, Alexis Kayla Moore,

Samantha Jean Morley, Miguel Angel Mosqueda, Nathaniel Thomas Munson, Kaiya Rowan Murphy, Thomas Andrew Nault, Daniel Anthony Nowlan, Corey Amoako Ntim, Jacey Okyere-Tawiah, Izabella Grace Paquin, Matthew Dean Parmenter, Kiley Marie Paronto, Mayli Ann Pedersen, Iban Alexander Pelaez, Jacob Jan Perry, Kyla Carmen Farai Pierre, Katie Ann Putnam, Sophia Morrigan Ramirez-Murphy, Ava Marie Rennie, Jayliana Rivera, Evan Mitchell Roberts, Dani Roemer, Jake Albert Roemer, Leilani Marie Rohena Torres, Trevor Anthony Rose, Jordyn Alexandra Sabotka, Eziajah Gianni Santiago, Isaijah Omar Santiago, Logan James Schoff, Ella Lanmei Schofield, Michael Ryan Scott, Zachary Stephen Sirard, Addisyn Theresa Skeates, Allison Marie Smith, Brady Patrick Smith, Duane Caden Stephens, Sean Michael Francis Sullivan, Marley Ray Talbot, Eskil John Tranes, Nicholas Aiden Tremblay, Kara Marie Trevarthan, Timothy Nicholas Tripp, Brady Matthew Weeks, Dashiell Robert Williams, Jazzelle Gia Wolferson, Nico Anthony Yacavace, Lucy Vivian Zaleski

Principal's List
Trevor Riley Amaral, Benjamin Russell Boulmetis, Braiden Corey Chumsae, Aidan Connor Clyne, Madisson Clara Drewry, Nicholas George Erickson, Tobias Michael Falco-Foreman, Jacob Paul Ferguson, Hailey Savannah Ferrara, Michael Conner Fitzpatrick, Luciana Isabel Flores, Corbin Vance Fredette, Ely Eric Gemboski, Jinnette Lynn Goguen, Jady Marie Goodwin, Emma Lynn Grensavitch, Kaebrielle Amberleigh Hammond, Brady Nicholas Johnson, Cameron Joseph-Michael Kittredge, Abena Kwartemaa Kwarteng, Jaxon David Kevin Leoanrd, Andrew Tadeusz Levitzky, Winters Aleksei Levitzky, Apollo Ridge Logan, Michael Joseph Loverro, Jack Moriarty Maroney, Kiya Isabella McCart, Shaun Kenneth McGrath, Joshua Daniel McLaughlin, Johannys Marie Melendez, Alexander Joseph Morales, Melany Tuyet Ngo, Kiera Ashley Pederson, Isabella Lynn Richard, Gianna Kaylee Rosario, Jaelynn Elizabeth Royea, Benjamin Michael Rucho, Anthony Mark Savasta, Jannessa Ellie Sepuka, Lucas Clement Silva, Julia Rose Simpson, Tiano Joseph Caole Sousa, Hadleigh Anne Splaine, Alexander Gregory St. Jacques, Logan Frederick Stake, Nicholas Ryan Thebeau, Ryan James Ugrinow, Annabelle Lilly Ustinovich, Isabella Anna Vangel, Bryce Joseph Vautour, Sophia Ann Vigeant

ALL SAINTS ACADEMY ANNOUNCES HONOR ROLL

WEBSTER — All Saints Academy has released its honor roll for the first quarter of the 2025-2026 school year.

Grade 8
High Honors: Noah Beaudette, Samantha Gardner, Sophia Martocci, Gianna Monticelli, Connor Shelburne
First Honors: Kallie Fales, Maggie Keegan, Dominic Kistner, Alanna Yelu-Attigah
Recognition: Caleb Latino, Benjamin Mukuha

Grade 7
Head of School: Cristian Cruz
High Honors: Lydia Burke, Raegan Duquette, Lucy Messenger, Fiona Radcliffe, Keon Yelu-Attigah
First Honors: Jackson Dunkley, Emma Healy, Nathan Ruiz, Charlotte Wentworth

Grade 6
Head of School: Norah Healy, Graceanne Troiano
High Honors: Mia Beaudette, Rozlyn Rekowski, Felicity Sweetland, Francesca Zicaro
First Honors: Angelo Bageris, Bennett Drew, Aleena Peterson, Camden Trainor, Lila Turner, Olive Wilson
Recognition: Julia Hansen

Grade 5
High Honors: Aryianna Botelho, Sydney Duquette
First Honors: Nayvalee Ruiz, Isabella Wester
Recognition: Landon McGrail, Brayden Shelburne, Lydia Vienneau

Free admission for kids at Samuel Slater Experience on holiday weekends

WEBSTER — Kids up to age 17 will be admitted free of charge at the Samuel Slater Experience the weekends of Dec. 26-28 and Jan. 2-4, when accompanied by a paying adult.
Samuel Slater Experience uses immersive videography, interactive exhibits, scents, and motion to tell the story of the American Industrial Revolution. Visitors experience the impact of technological innovation, child labor, mill village life, immigration, and industrialization as colonial life moves from the farm to towns in the 19th century.
Museum hours are Fridays and Saturdays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sundays noon to 4 p.m. Last admission is at 3 p.m. Purchase tickets online at <https://samuelslaterexperience.org> or at the box office.

Samuel Slater Experience is at 31 Ray St., Webster. For more information, go to <https://samuelslaterexperience.org>.

Lanterns Along Main Street

The first real snow of winter always seems to arrive with a lesson attached. It is rarely the deep, postcard snow that shows up on calendars and greeting cards. More often, it is the practical kind. The kind that needs shoveling. The kind that turns a five-minute errand into a twenty-minute production. The kind that reminds us, gently but firmly, that winter is no longer theoretical.

In small Massachusetts towns, that first snowfall sets off a familiar chain reaction. Plow trucks rumble through neighborhoods long before dawn, their orange lights blinking patiently as they inch along narrow streets. Driveways develop neat piles at the ends just after you finish clearing them. Sidewalks become unofficial obstacle courses, with patches of careful walking between the salt.

It is easy to grumble about all of this. Most of us do, at least once. But alongside the annoyance, there is a quieter awareness that kicks in this time of year. A sense that things are happening as they are supposed to.

Snow brings out the unspoken systems that keep a town functioning. Someone is already awake, clearing roads before most people have hit the snooze button. Someone else is scraping the town hall steps. Somewhere, a contractor is answering a call about a furnace that chose the wrong night to quit. None of these tasks come with applause, but they matter more than most of what we talk about on a regular basis.

I've noticed that winter has a way of slowing conversations down, too. People linger a little longer at the post office counter. A neighbor checks in across the driveway, shovel paused mid-task. Even brief exchange

es seem more intentional when the cold presses everyone closer to shared routines. We are reminded that help is often nearby, even if we do not always need it.

There is also something clarifying about snow. It erases the clutter temporarily, covering lawns, curbs, and roadside distractions in the same clean layer. Familiar places look different, not because they have changed, but because we are seeing them stripped down. A simple line of houses. A quiet town common. A road leading somewhere familiar, just softened at the edges.

For children, the first snowfall still carries a certain magic. Even now, you can feel it in the air. Will school be canceled? Will there be enough for sledding? Can snowmen be built before the sun dulls the edges? For adults, the magic may be quieter, but it has not disappeared. It shows up in the first footprints across an untouched yard, or in the sound of snow falling late at night when the world feels temporarily hushed.

Winter also sharpens our awareness of the margins. We notice which steps are icy. Which homes have lights on late. Which businesses stay open even when foot traffic slows. The season quietly reminds us that not everyone experiences it the same way. That awareness does not always translate into action, but it should at least translate into attention.

Massachusetts towns have lived with winter for a long time. The older houses were built to face it. Main streets developed ways of adapting to it long before anyone used the phrase "winter preparedness." There is no drama in how communities respond. Just repetition, experience, and a steady sense of responsibility.

As the season settles in, snow will become less novel. The complaints will get louder. The novelty will wear thin. But beneath all of that is a structure that works because people make it work, day after cold day. The plow driver. The public works crew. The neighbor with an extra shovel. The shop owner who keeps the lights on even when the street is quiet.

Winter does not ask us to be heroic. It asks us to be steady. To show up. To do what needs doing. Our towns manage that reasonably well most years, not because of grand gestures, but because of ordinary ones repeated often.

When you hear the plow go by tonight, or step carefully across a salted sidewalk tomorrow morning, you are seeing that quiet agreement in action. It is not celebrated, but it is dependable. And in winter, dependability counts for a great deal.

LANTERNS
ALONG
MAIN
STREET
By CHIPPY

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.



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Giving thanks, giving back: A Thanksgiving tradition at Saint Joseph School

WEBSTER — As Saint Joseph School students, faculty, and staff began the holiday week, they gathered in prayer for the school’s annual Thanksgiving Prayer Service—an opportunity to thank God for the many blessings of the past year while also remembering neighbors in need. Organized by Religion Instructor, Sr. Mary Ann Papiez and the Grade 6 students, the service reminded everyone that gratitude is more than a feeling; it is an invitation to respond with generosity, compassion, and love.

A cherished part of this tradition is Saint Joseph School’s ongoing support of the Webster-Dudley Food Share. Each year, the school community unites around the belief that no family should face the holidays without the basic necessities—and that even the smallest contributions, offered with great love, can make a meaningful difference.

In the days leading up to the prayer service, students participated in the Spare Change, Big Hearts! Thanksgiving Coin Drive. Families were invited to send in spare change from home, and students were encouraged to “do good to give good” by completing kind deeds and helpful chores—serving siblings, assisting parents/guardians, and finding simple ways to bring joy to others. Through this effort, students learned that generosity begins in the heart and grows through everyday acts of service.

During the Prayer

Service offertory, representatives from each class—from PreK-3 through Grade 8—processed forward to present containers filled with the spare change they had collected throughout the week. The sight of students of all ages bringing forward their gifts was both moving and joyful, a powerful reminder that everyone has something to give and that they are strongest when they act together as one school family.

Adding to the excitement was the class challenge: the class that collected the most spare change earned a fun celebration of ice cream sundaes and extra recess with Assistant Principal, Mr. Richard Skrocki. Congratulations to the Saint Joseph School Kindergarten class for collecting the most “spare” change – contributing \$399.84 to the overall school total of \$1,937.96. While the students certainly enjoyed the friendly competition, the lasting message was clear—their gifts are most meaningful when they offer to help others.

Saint Joseph School is grateful to every family that supported this initiative and helped make this tradition possible. Through the leadership of Sr. Mary Ann Papiez and the Grade 6 students, this year’s Thanksgiving Prayer Service beautifully reflected the mission of Saint Joseph



Courtesy
Saint Joseph School Kindergarten teacher Mrs. Alicia Maurer assists student Sadie Dejordy as she carries the kindergarten class’s jar of “spare change” to the offertory during the Annual Thanksgiving Prayer Service. The donations were collected during the school’s “Spare Change, Big Hearts!” Thanksgiving Coin Drive supporting the Webster-Dudley Food Share.

School, and the Gospel values the students strive to live each day. It is a reminder that as they enter the holiday season and prepare their hearts for Advent, they do so with renewed gratitude for God’s blessings—and a deeper commitment to share His love with others, especially those most in need.

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Courtesy
Oxford Middle School recognizes students each month who exemplify our Be The 3 goals of Respect, Responsibility, and Safety as well as showing that attendance matters, displaying citizenship, and showing growth in a variety of ways. This month, OMS celebrates Liam Huambachano, Shea Dunlavy, Ashton O'Malley, and Aislyn White as our November Students of the Month.

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Friends of the Gladys E. Kelly Library announce winter book sale

WEBSTER — The Friends of the Gladys E. Kelly Library are excited to announce their Winter Book Sale!

Do your shopping at the library! Paperback and hardcover books, CD's, DVD's and audio-books, all just \$5 a bag!

Sale runs from Monday, Dec. 8 until Saturday, Dec. 20.

Come to the Gladys E. Kelly winter book sale and pick up a bag of books for just \$5 a bag!

Santa pet photo shoot a success!

BY JIMMY FALZONE
FOCAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHARLTON — Saturday, Dec. 6 was a great day for the annual Santa Pet Photo Shoot sponsored by FOCAS (Friends of Charlton Animal Shelter) and the Cornerstone Bank Charlton branch. The parking lot of their Route 20 location in Charlton was busy with four legged friends, children, and adults alike. All were

very anxious to have their picture taken with Santa. Friends of Charlton Animal Shelter (FOCAS) have been putting this event on for more than 14 years now. Cornerstone Bank's Charlton branch has partnered with FOCAS on this event for so many years that customers now regularly ask manager Julia Westwell ahead of time for the date, which is typically the first Saturday in December each year, so they can put

it on their calendars. The lobby was filled with excitement of children waiting to see Santa. Parents and animal owners were all smiling as each took turns for a photo with Santa on his sled or his chair. All you can hear is the sound of squeaky toys trying to get the dogs' attention for the perfect photo. The photo shoot yielded 33 dogs, 1 cat and many children and adults. Focas is grateful for

Cornerstone Banks continued dedication to the people of the community for helping in sponsoring this event. If you would like more information on what FOCAS does for the community visits its website at www.focascharlton.org to read all the amazing things Focas has done and if you would like to donate funds so we may continue to help the animals at the Charlton Animal Shelter from our community.



Courtesy

TCA IS PROUD!

Trinity Catholic Academy is incredibly proud of our fifth grade and NJHS students for making the needs of others a priority. At the recent Vendor Fair, our fifth graders sold handmade jewelry, cards, and birdhouses, raising over \$400. Just a few days later, our NJHS members collected much needed personal care items to fill backpacks for the homeless. All donations were delivered to St. Luke's Guesthouse in Southbridge. At TCA, we strive to teach our students not only strong academics but also the importance of compassion, service, and caring for those who are less fortunate. Their efforts are a beautiful example of faith in action.

Worcester County Sheriff's Office warms communities with annual winter coat distribution



Courtesy

Sheriff Low Evangelidis and Staff from the WCSO Webster Regional Resource Center pose for a photo with AJ Alkire, Webster Dudley Food Share Director.

REGION — Throughout November, Worcester County Sheriff Low Evangelidis and staff from the Worcester County Sheriff's Office visited Webster Dudley Food Share (Webster), Reconciliation House (Webster), Tradewinds Clubhouse (Southbridge), House of Destiny (Southbridge), the Milford Police Department (Milford), and several other local nonprofits to deliver hundreds of brand-new winter coats for community members in need.

These Southern Worcester County visits were part of the Sheriff's Office Annual Winter Coat Drive, which included more than thirty stops countywide. The Sheriff's Office distributed 4,000 winter jackets during November. All jackets were purchased by the Worcester County Reserve Deputy Sheriff's Association, a nonprofit that raises funds year-round to support the coat drive and other community-focused programs.

"Many of our residents have little social support and are working to regain stability. The Sheriff's winter coat drive not only meets a practical need for warm coats but also shows them community support they often don't expect, and it is deeply appreciated," commented Jose Vazquez, House Director at Reconciliation House, Inc.

"We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the Sheriff's Department for their generous donation of winter coats to the Tradewinds Clubhouse," commented Christine Regan, Clubhouse Director. "This act of kindness made a meaningful impact on our members, many of whom expressed relief and gratitude knowing they will be warm and prepared for the colder months ahead. Moments like this strengthen the

sense of belonging and dignity that is central to the Clubhouse model."

"Handing out these coats each year is truly a joy," said Sheriff Evangelidis. "They represent far more than a warm layer for winter. They reflect a community and law enforcement organization that cares. The individuals who receive these jackets are always grateful, and this drive gives our department a special opportunity to connect with the communities we serve."

This year's initiative was made possible thanks to the generosity of many community partners, including Saint Francis Community Health Care, The Gun Parlor, Mercadante Funeral Home, Cliff & Susan Rucker Foundation, The Krock Family & Commerce Associates, CareOne at Millbury, The Overlook, Diamond Auto Group, KAL Construction & Remodeling, Chop Chop Convenience, Falcone Enterprises, NEPBA Local 550 Worcester County Correction Officers, Pat's Service Center, Quality Companies, Rockland Trust Bank, and Pam Massad in memory of 'Duddie' and Bette Massad, along with numerous additional supporters.

"The level of support we receive each year is remarkable," added Sheriff Evangelidis. "Every contribution directly helps make our communities stronger and safer."

Beyond their stops in South County, Sheriff Evangelidis and his team delivered coats to nonprofits in the greater Worcester area and Northern Worcester County, ensuring residents across the region have access to warm winter apparel as the cold weather approaches.

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Docket No. WO25P4010EA
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE
Estate Of:
Terrence Joseph Greenlief
Also Known As:
Terrence Greenlief
Date of Death: February 13, 2025

To All persons interested in the above-captioned estate, by Petition of **Nicholas A. Greenlief of Dudley MA** **Nicholas A. Greenlief of Dudley MA** has been informally appointed as Personal Representative of said estate to serve without surety on the bond. The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
December 12, 2025

PUBLIC NOTICE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
WATERWAYS REGULATION PROGRAM
22-WW-PRE-0098-APP
Notice of Simplified License Application pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 91
NOTIFICATION DATE: 12/12/2025
PERMITTEE: Richard Todd Whitehouse
PROJECT SITE ADDRESS: 62 West Point Road, Webster, MA 01570
Public notice is hereby given of the application for a Chapter 91 Simplified License by **Richard Todd Whitehouse** to construct/maintain a seasonal residential dock in the waters of Webster Lake at **62 West Point Road, Webster,** Worcester County.
The Department will consider all written comments on this Waterways application received by within 30 days of

the “Notification Date”. Failure of any aggrieved person or group of ten citizens or more to submit written comments to the Waterways Regulation Program will result in the waiver of any right to an adjudicatory hearing in accordance with 310 CMR 9.13(4)(c). The group of citizens must include at least five citizens who are residents of the municipality in which the proposed project is located. Project plans for this Waterways application are on file for public viewing electronically, by request to dep.waterways@mass.gov. If you do not have access to email, please leave a voicemail at (617) 292-5929 and you will be contacted with information on alternative options. It is recommended that public comments be filed electronically with dep.waterways@mass.gov when possible. Alternatively, comments may be mailed to the Waterways Regulation Program at: 1 Winter Street, 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02108.
December 12, 2025

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 Jeffrey A. Patterson, Melissa A. Patterson to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for First Horizon Home Loans, a division of First Tennessee Bank, N.A., dated November 12, 2007 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 42107, Page 356, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, by assignment from: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for First Horizon Home Loans, a division of First Tennessee Bank N.A., its successors and assigns to Nationstar Mortgage LLC, recorded on February 24, 2023, in Book No. 68857, at Page 395
Nationstar Mortgage LLC to US BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS OWNER TRUSTEE FOR VRMTG ASSET TRUST, recorded on December 18, 2024, in Book No. 71432, at Page 39
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 December 26, 2025, on the mortgaged premises located at 8 1/2 Sutton Avenue a/k/a 8.5 Sutton Avenue, Oxford, Worcester County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,
TO WIT:
JEFFREY A. PATTERSON AND MELISSA A. PATTERSON, HUSBAND AND WIFE, AS TENANTS BY THE

ENTIRETY
A CERTAIN PARCEL OF LAND WITH THE BUILDINGS SITUATED THEREON OFF THE NORTHERLY LINE OF SUTTON AVE., OXFORD, WORCESTER COUNTY, BEING SHOWN ON PLAT OF LAND OXFORD PREPARED FOR STANFORD SEED COMPANY, DATED JANUARY 30, 1991 AND RECORDED N PLAN BOOK 647, PLAN 121 BOUNDED AND DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING AT A POINT ALONG THE DIRT DRIVE AS SHOWN ON SAID PLAN, WHICH POINT IS THE NORTHEASTERLY CORNER OF THE 15,183 SQUARE FOOT PARCEL OF LAND SHOWN ON SAID PLAN; THENCE N. 83 DEGREES 27 MINUTES 41 SECONDS W. 71.35 FEET BY SAID PARCEL OF LAND IDENTIFIED ON SAID PLAN CONTAINING 15,183 SQUARE FEET; THENCE N. 6 DEGREES 10 MINUTES 05 SECONDS E. 62.30 FEET BY LAND OF PROVIDENCE AND WORCESTER RAILROAD TO THE MOST NORTHWESTERLY CORNER; THENCES S. 82 DEGREES 59 MINUTES 56 SECONDS E. 131.34 FEET BY LAND NOW OR FORMERLY OWNED BY BARRE; THENCE S. 8 DEGREES 14 MINUTES 00 SECONDS W. 139.26 FEET BY LAND NOW OR FORMERLY OWNED BY MILLER; THENCE N. 82 DEGREES 59 MINUTES 56 SECONDS W. 57.75 FEET BY LAND NOW OR FORMERLY OWNED BY C. PARISEAU AND SAID DIRT DRIVE; THENCE N. 8 DEGREES 14 MINUTES 00 SECONDS E. 77.52 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. SAID PARCEL CONTAINING 12,533 SQUARE FEET, MORE OR LESS. BEING THE SAME PREMISES CONVEYED TO THE GRANTORS BY DEED OF HERITAGE EQUITY RESOURCES, INC. DATED APRIL 7, 1993 AND RECORDED WITH THE WORCESTER DISTRICT REGISTRY OF DEEDS BOOK 15077, PAGE 389. SUBJECT TO RESTRICTIONS, RESERVATIONS, EASEMENTS, COVENANTS, OIL, GAS OR MINERAL RIGHTS OF RECORD, IF ANY. MAP: 34C; LOT: E28
For mortgagor’s(s’) title see deed recorded with Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 19484, Page 253.
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 Ten Thousand (\$10,000.00) 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.
US BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS OWNER TRUSTEE FOR VRMTG ASSET TRUST
Present holder of said mortgage
By its Attorneys,
HARMON LAW OFFICES, P.C.
150 California St.
Newton, MA 02458
(617)558-0500
23228
November 28, 2025
December 5, 2025
December 12, 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. WO25P4126EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate Of:
Paul Michael Roulier
Date of Death:08/18/2025

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Joshua Paul Roulier of Mansfield MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: **Joshua Paul Roulier of Mansfield MA** and **Lisa Anne O’Neill of Mansfield 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 12/23/2025.** This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.
UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)
A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.
WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: November 26, 2025
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
December 12, 2025

Town of Dudley
Notice of Public Hearing
Order for Joint or Identical Pole Locations
National Grid and Verizon New England, Inc.
In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L Chapter 166, § 22, a Public Hearing will be held on **Monday, December 15, 2025 beginning at 6:35pm** at the Dudley Municipal Complex, 71 West Main Street, Dudley, MA in Room 321A The Purpose of this Hearing: To Act on a National Grid and Verizon New England Pole Petition No.31143328
Deary Lane – National Grid to install 1 JO Pole on Deary Lane beginning at a point approximately 255’ feet west of the centerline of the intersection of Elizabeth Street. National Grid to install one new 40 foot pole, numbered P1-2-50, on Deary Lane to provide additional power to a customer. This will require a heavier wire with a shorter span length hence the need for a mid-span pole. Also for permission to lay and maintain underground laterals, cables and wires in the above or intersecting public ways for the purpose of making connections with such poles and building as each of said petitioners may desire for distributing purposes. Anyone wishing to be heard should appear at the date and times specified or forward concerns in writing.
Jana Deschenes, Chair
Dudley Board of Selectmen
December 12, 2025

🌿🌿🌿

Friday’s Child

🌿🌿🌿



Shakespeare
Age 15
Registration #7384

Shay is a sweet, polite, and lovable young girl with a warm, engaging personality. Her social worker describes her as imaginative, funny, and incredibly kind. Shay has an empathetic nature that draws people to her, and she’s well-liked by all the adults in her life. She has a creative spark and loves music, singing, and making fun videos. Shay also enjoys playing volleyball, experimenting with makeup, and getting her hair done. Active and confident, she even played on her middle school basketball team—showing both her team spirit and determination.

<https://www.mareinc.org/child/22536707877>

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

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

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LOCAL FOOD PANTRIES

BROOKFIELD
Brookfield Ecumenical Food Pantry
St. Mary's Church
4 Howard Street, Brookfield, MA 01506
Distribution: Wednesday 9:30 AM-11 AM:
Saturday 9:30 AM-11AM

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

St. Joseph's Church, Charlton
Tuesday 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Wednesday 9-11 a.m.
Everyone is welcome.

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.

OXFORD
Oxford Ecumenical Food Shelf
Oxford Community Center
4 Maple Road
Oxford, MA 01540
Distribution: Thursday 4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

ROCHDALE
The Lord's Cupboard Food Pantry
Greenville Baptist Church
674 Pleasant St.
Rochdale, MA
Distribution: Every Monday from 12:00 -
2:00 p.m. Open to everyone.

SOUTHBRIDGE
St. John Paul II Parish Food Pantry
279 Hamilton St., Southbridge
Tuesday 3-5 p.m., Wednesday 9-11 a.m.
(508) 765-0245

Southbridge Food Share
Located at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church,
lower level
446 Hamilton St,
Southbridge, MA 01550
Email:
Southbridgefoodshare.org@gmail.com
Phone: 508-764-6583
Open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday,
from 10:00 am to 11:15 am.

**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,
Located in the St. Anne Church basement,
16 Church Street, Fiskdale, MA 01518
Stocked by donations
Contact: 508-347-6398

WEBSTER
Webster-Dudley Food Share
4 Church St #2
Webster, MA 0570
Distribution: Tuesday and Thursday from
8:30 -11:00 am. Open to Webster and
Dudley residents.
Please call ahead: 508-943-9171

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

Holiday shopping tips
you can't afford to miss

(544 words, US, UK,
CAN)

The festive and fun nature of the holiday season can make it easy to forget the benefits of being frugal. Many people go overboard on holiday spending, making this time of year costly for consumers.

Sales between the beginning of November 2023 and Christmas Eve 2023 climbed 3.1 percent from the year earlier, according to the Mastercard SpendingPulse. The National Retail Federation reported in November 2023 that holiday spending was expected to reach between \$957 and \$966 billion. Trading Economics, a financial market indicator and forecast provider, said personal spending in the United States only rose 0.2 percent in May 2024 from the previous month, which marked the lowest increase since January 2024.

Shoppers who want to spend less and stick to a budget for holiday entertaining and gifting can keep these budgeting tips in mind.

- Set a value to gift recipients. It may sound harsh, but certain people on holiday shopping lists may be assigned a higher value than others. For example, you wouldn't necessarily spend the same amount on a gift for a child's teacher as you would for a grandmother. Putting a dollar figure next to each name on the shop-



ping list helps you identify your expected spending and where you can cut back, if necessary.

- Establish your overall budget. Once you have an idea of your potential holiday expenditures, set a firm budget. Avoid the temptation of impulse buys, which can make it easy to go over budget.
- Begin shopping early. Start scouring ads and looking for deals prior to Thanksgiving or Black

Friday. Keep a running list of gift ideas and when the price is right, purchase those items.

- Price check "perfect gifts." If you've spotted the perfect gift for someone but it's beyond budget, see if you can find a better price elsewhere, says Better Money Habits. There are apps that allow users to scan barcodes and check items across various retailers. Many stores also have price-match policies that can

save shoppers money.

- Look for deals all of the time. Many people get hung up on perceived deep discounts from Black Friday and Cyber Monday offers. However, industry experts say there often isn't a huge difference in markdowns between these promotions and those during other sales. Some retailers even increase prices on goods only to mark them down for Black Friday to make it appear that there is a discount. Only by knowing the average price for items can you know if a sale is legitimate.

- Sign up for store rewards. If you don't want your regular email inbox inundated with offers, set up a separate email account for in-store and online shopping. Then you can sign up for the rewards programs at checkout. Utilize the coupon codes and advertisements for sales to save money without having your primary email data shared with other marketers.

- Track spending carefully. If you don't know how much you're spending, then you cannot possibly stick to a budget. After each purchase, keep a running tally of all holiday spending to see how far you are from the finish line.

The holidays can be expensive, but with smart budgeting and dedication to savvy shopping, it's possible to stay out of financial trouble.

Why you should shop local
for the holidays and beyond



Various components come together to make the holiday season a festive time of year. There is a lot to get done in a short amount of time during the holiday season, and part of that includes shopping for all of the family members and friends on your shopping list. Shopping can be a complicated process that involves identifying which stores will be the best places to shop. Local retailers make the perfect place to shop for holiday items.

According to the American Express Business Economic Impact Study, more than two-thirds of every dollar spent with a local business stays in the community. Indeed, shopping local benefits consumer and community alike. The following are some of the many perks to shopping locally throughout the holiday season.

- Personalized attention: Small businesses are known for their personalized customer service and owners and staff are often lauded for taking the time to interact and learn about their customers, a dynamic that is impossible at larger retailers.
- Meet and interact with people: Shopping in-person at local stores, you'll see faces from your community and become better known in the local area.
- Shorter lines: Local stores are bound to have

smaller crowds and thus shorter lines. That translates to less stress and hassle when it comes to getting in and out with holiday gifts.

- Smaller carbon footprint: Pollution, traffic congestion, habitat loss, and resource depletion may not occur on the same levels when shopping locally compared to patronizing big box stores. That's because local retailers tend to create or source their products locally, whereas many big box stores secure their goods overseas.
- Easier parking: This goes hand-in-hand with smaller crowds, as shopping locally does not typically require driving up and down endless

aisles at malls or standalone retail stores in an effort to find a parking spot. Local retailers in town may have on-street parking or closed lots that are convenient to shoppers.

- Small batch shopping experience: Consumers can secure items in small businesses that are not carbon copies of those found across the country at major retail chains. When seeking a unique, thoughtful gift, shopping locally is the way to go.

Shopping locally this holiday season provides an array of benefits to consumers, and helps to solidify a strong Main Street in communities.



Unique places for holiday shopping

Although the holiday season is a relatively brief period, it still can consume months of time in regard to preparation, shopping and hosting. According to a SWNS Digital survey of 2,000 adults in the United States, the average American spends six weeks preparing for the holiday season. Five weeks are devoted to planning presents, meals and other essentials, while an entire week is just for decorating.

Shopping for presents can consume a lot of time, especially for those who aren't quite sure what to get. Thinking outside of the typical retail box may help with inspiration, and shoppers may encounter smaller crowds and find better deals. Here are some unique places to shop to grab great holiday gifts.

- **Pharmacies:** While you're picking up your prescription or medicine cabinet essentials, take a spin around the store to see what else might be available. Typically, pharmacies have entire aisles dedicated to seasonal merchandise, so you might be able to find holiday decorations, gift wrap, candles, pampering items, and even food-related items and gift baskets.
- **Farmer's market:** Farmer's markets pop up in



towns on set days of the week. Although plenty of farm-related produce and plants are available, these markets also attract many other small businesses. You can find craftsmen, jewelry makers, niche food sellers, and so much more.

- **School (or church) bazaar:** In an effort to raise funds for the PTA or other organizations, schools and churches often host holi-

day fairs and bazaars right before the holidays. Area businesses rent table space and set up booths with an array of different products for sale. This is a great spot to grab interesting finds all under one roof. Plus, you're supporting the local community in the process.

- **Home improvement retailer:** Plenty of people will appreciate practical gifts that they can use in and

around the home. A visit to a hardware store or home improvement retailer offers up aisles of essentials for the do-it-yourselfer. While new shelving for the garage or a set of flashlights may not be the most glamorous gifts, these items can come in handy.

- **Craft store:** Cater to recipients' favorite hobbies by ensuring they'll be flush with plenty of supplies.

Craft stores have a bevy of items for every interest imaginable. They're also surprisingly good places to grab deals on picture frames, housewares, food-making supplies, and decorative items.

- **Specialty food store:** Head to small specialty food stores to load up on unique items larger supermarkets might not carry. Ethnic markets may have flavorful

and interesting ingredients to group together in a food basket that makes an ideal gift for transplants missing the flavors of home.

Before a person logs on to the internet for online shopping or heads to the nearest strip mall, he or she can explore various unique places to shop for holiday gifts.

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Double Word Puzzle

Unscramble the individual words to reveal letters for the phrase.

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6

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B

335

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

DEC

10

1768: The first edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica is published.

1817: Mississippi becomes the 20th U.S. state.

1901: The first Nobel Prize ceremony is held in Stockholm on the fifth anniversary of Alfred Nobel's death.

NEW WORD

SYNOPSIS

a brief summary of something

Book FACT:

This term refers to reading texts quickly but not completely.

Answer: Skim

Answer: Read a book

How they say that in...

English:

Cover (book)

Spanish:

Forro

Italian:

Copertina

French:

Couverture

German:

Umschlag

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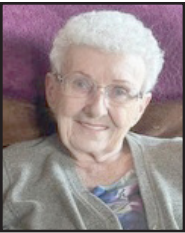


Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Little Free Library

OBITUARIES

Betty Latour, 93



WEBSTER- Betty Latour, age 93, died Tuesday, December 2, 2025 at Webster Manor. Mrs. Latour was born October 22, 1932 in Dudley, MA. She is the daughter of the late Stephen and the late Metabeth (Quals) Balta. She is survived by one daughter: Pam Belanger of Webster, MA and one son: Paul Latour and his wife Melissa of Webster, one Sister Linda Smalarz Loving grandmother to 7 Grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great grandchildren . Her Former daughter in-law Jane Krawczyk . Predeceased by her Husband Raymond Latour, Son Robert Raymond Latour and A

sister Barbara Gadoury She was employed by Webster Five Cent Savings Bank as a Customer Service Representative. She enjoyed her dog and treasured time spent with her family. She resided several years at Christopher Heights in Webster . A communicant of St. Anthony of Padua Church in Dudley. A memorial service will be held at 11 AM on Wednesday, December 10 at Bartel Funeral Home, 33 Schofield Avenue, Dudley, MA A graveside service will follow at Sacred Heart Of Jesus Cemetery, Old Worcester Rd., Webster, MA. Calling hours will be Wednesday, December 10 from 10 AM to 11 AM at Bartel Funeral Home, 33 Schofield Avenue, Dudley, MA.

Emile L Pelletier, 99



Emile L Pelletier of Webster died at age 99 on Sunday, November 30, 2025 at Overlook Masonic Health Center in Charlton, MA. Emile was born December 26, 1925 in Webster, MA. He is the son of the late Alexander and the late Gracia (Guillmette) Pelletier. Predeceased by brothers Herve Pelletier, Alfred Pelletier, Ernest Pelletier, Gerald Pelletier and Leon Pelletier, and sisters Yvonne Ayotte, Grace Pelletier, and Sr. Anita Pelletier S.S.A. He is survived by one son, Ronald Pelletier and his wife Suzanne of Charlton, MA; one daughter, Jeanne Pelletier and her husband Andres Diaz of Mountain View, CA and two grandchildren and five great grandchildren. He served in the Navy during World War II from 1944 to 1946. He was employed by Wright Line and Worcester Press Steel as a machinist. He enjoyed camping, hiking, and

photography. A Mass of Christian burial will be held at 11:00 AM on Thursday, December 11 at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 16 East Main St., Webster, MA. Burial will follow in Sacred Heart Cemetery with Military Honors provided by the Webster/Dudley Veterans Council Honor Guard. Calling hours will be Thursday, December 11 from 9:30-10:30 at Bartel Funeral Home, 33 Schofield Avenue, Dudley, MA. The Pelletier family is grateful to the caregivers at Overlook Manor who cared for Emile so well. Because Emile loved the outdoors and hiking the family asks to consider a donation to the Appalachian Mountain Club (<https://www.outdoors.org/donate/donate-form/>) in lieu of flowers. online guest book at www.bartelfuneral-home.com



Dennis R. Wasielewski, 67



WEBSTER – Dennis Raymond Wasielewski, 67, passed away on December 4, 2025. He is survived by 2 sisters, Dianne T. Wasielewski, and Marcia R. Azzaoui and her husband Mohammed, all of Webster; 2 brothers, Mark E. Wasielewski and his wife Jeri of Ellington, CT, and Matthew J. Wasielewski and his wife Cathy of South Portland, ME ; 5 nephews, Jeffrey, Zachery, Samir, Ahmed and Noah; 4 nieces, Kristen, Hannah, Molly and Amy; 2 great-nieces, Callan and Soli; and many cousins. He was born in Webster on January 10, 1958, a son of the late Edward A. and Rita A. (Prokopowicz) Wasielewski and graduated from Bay Pay Regional High School in Charlton in 1976. He was a lifelong resident. He worked as a salesman at Spag's, Gatzke Hardware, Grossman's and finally at Home Depot, retiring 5 years ago due to

illness. He was a communicant of Saint Joseph Basilica and a member and past grand knight of the Saint Joseph Knights of Columbus Council #12980 which recently merged with the Webster-Dudley Council #228. A 4th degree knight, he belonged to the John Cardinal Wright Assembly #1924 in Oxford. He was also an associate member of the PAV in Webster/Dudley. He enjoyed doing carpentry work. He had been the recipient of the Partners in Education Award from Saint Joseph School. His funeral will be held Thursday, December 11, from the Sitkowski, Malboeuf & Hickey Funeral Home, 340 School Street, with a Mass at 10:00 AM in Saint Joseph Basilica, 53 Whitcomb Street. Burial will be in Saint Joseph Garden of Peace. Visitation will be held from 4:00 to 7:00 PM in the funeral home on Wednesday, December 10. Donations in his name may be made to Saint Joseph Elementary School, 47 Whitcomb Street, Webster, MA 01570 or to a charity of the donor's choice. www.websterfunerals.com

Kevin J. Ducharme, 68 In Remembrance of Kevin J. Ducharme



Kevin J. Ducharme, a lifelong resident of Webster, gifted craftsman, and local entrepreneur, passed away on Sunday, November 23, 2025, at the age of 68. Born in Worcester on April 12, 1957, to the late Ernest W. and Vivian R. (Kuszewski) Ducharme, Kevin was a graduate of the Bartlett High School class of 1975. To those who knew him well, he was a man of many talents. In his younger years, he was known for his goofy sense of humor, and he possessed a remarkable ability to solve any mechanical puzzle placed before him. This natural skill for understanding how things worked defined much of his life. He channeled this talent into his career, becoming the owner and operator of Creative Marine and Creative Fireplace in North Oxford. For many years, he applied his strong work ethic to these ventures, which he ran until his retirement in 2022. He was the person called in an emergency, ready to help when it mattered most.

Kevin had a deep appreciation for Webster Lake and was an avid sportsman who enjoyed boating, fishing, and the thrill of snowmobiling. Though he faced significant struggles with physical illness in his later years, he continued to work for the things he was passionate about. He is survived by his wife of 41 years, Elizabeth M. (Marc) Ducharme; his two daughters, Jennifer M. Ducharme (John Tel Butler) of Chicago, and Julie A. Ortega (James) of Boston; and his nephews and nieces. He was preceded in death by his parents, his brother Ronald, and his sister Janice. A memorial Mass will be held on Saturday, December 13th at 11am at Saint Louis Church, Webster, MA, 14 Lake Street. The family will receive friends and relatives in the church before the Mass, beginning at 10:30 AM. We would be grateful if you shared your memories on the Facebook memorial page, where we can hold onto them and read them during quieter moments (<https://facebook.com/kevin.ducharme.718884>) Arrangements are under the direction of Scanlon Funeral Service.

ITALY
continued from page A1

zones — a valuable lesson whether for travel, academics, or future careers. As planning continues, more details will emerge — exact travel dates, student enrollment procedures, fundraising and payment plans, and pre-trip orientations. But for now, excitement is building among students and families. For many, 2027 may mark their first passport stamps. If all goes as planned, Oxford's high-schoolers will return in late spring 2027, not just with souvenirs, but with broadened horizons, new perspectives, and memories that last a lifetime.

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The Spencer Housing Authority has an opening for a Full-Time Maintenance Laborer

The Spencer Housing Authority is seeking a qualified full-time Maintenance Laborer. The individual hired for this position must have general knowledge of property maintenance, carpentry, floor repairs, minor plumbing, and electrical repairs. Applicant should also have experience with painting, cleaning, plowing, shoveling, and snow removal. Individuals must be available for rotating on-call shifts as well as being available for any weather-related emergencies. Must be able to lift 50 pounds or more. General knowledge of maintenance systems, building equipment and small tools a plus. This is a full time (40 hours) benefited position. Retirement is through the Worcester County Retirement Office. Must possess a valid driver's license and be insurable under Housing Authority insurance. The selected applicant must be able to pass a criminal background check (CORI), and pre-employment physical. Base wage rate is determined by the current Department of Labor (DOL) wage rates in effect at the time of hire. Additional compensation is paid for on-call and after-hours' service. Incumbents will be required to obtain a valid Pesticide Certification/License within one year of hire. The Spencer Housing Authority offers a generous benefits package including health, dental and vision insurance.

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 December 19, 2025. Spencer Housing Authority is an equal Opportunity Employer

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Webster Lake -
302 Killdeer Island
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Renovated + move-in ready lakefront home w/1,700+/- sq ft. Open kitchen/dining/living w/ cathedral ceilings + wall of windows. Primary suite w/private bath! 2 add'l bedrooms, 2nd Full bath. Lower level family room w/walkout to water. Wraparound deck, new vinyl railings, terraced yard, sandy beach, professional landscaping. Many updates.
\$775,000



WEBSTER - 19 FIRST STREET

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Bring an open mind to this unique property & let your creative design ideas flow! This one level 1,040 sf, 3 BR home is reminiscent of an English Country Cottage! It evokes a cozy, rustic, lived-in vibe. The overall aesthetic is one of practical comfort, collected charm and a relaxed, slightly whimsical atmosphere. Key characteristics include spacious rooms, hardwood floors, a primary BR with sliders to a very private deck, retractable awnings, replacement windows, etc. Move right in!
\$304,900



WEBSTER - 24 COOPER RD
NEW CONSTRUCTION Craftsman Style Home! Tucked away on Cooper Rd, Webster Lake w/Access at Lakeside Beach/ Boat Ramp. 3rd of 4 Homes being built at this Site. Offers 2,155 SF+/- of Living Area, 7 Rms, 4 BRs, 2-1/2 Baths, 9' Ceilings. Wood Flooring Throughout w/Ceramic Tile Floors in the Baths. Spacious Main BR Suite w/Walk-in Closet & Private Full Bathr, Double-Sink Vanity! Finished Lower level walkout w/Slider. Basement-rough plumbed Central AC! Garage \$649,900.



WATERFORD CT - 20 AVERY LN.

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WEBSTER LAKE WATERFRONT LISTING! KILLDEER RD

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Webster Lake Waterfront - 31 Bayview!!

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Webster Lake - 53 Colonial Rd

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Webster Lake Waterfront 8 Long Island

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Saint Joseph School Student Council President Mycheal Jones and Vice President Tenleigh Dowd present a commemorative plaque to Retired Webster Fire Chief Brian Hickey, honoring his 43 years of dedicated service and steadfast commitment to the safety of the Saint Joseph School community.

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Saint Joseph School celebrates annual Thanksgiving feast, honors retired Fire Chief

WEBSTER — On Tuesday, Nov. 25, Saint Joseph School gathered as one faith-filled family for its annual Thanksgiving Feast—one of the most cherished traditions of the school year. For the occasion, the school gymnasium was transformed into a warm and welcoming dining area, complete with two buffet lines to serve more than 300 students, faculty, staff, and guests.

Principal Mrs. Beth Boudreau opened the celebration by welcoming students, guests, and the many parent volunteers whose generosity and teamwork made the day possible. Mrs. Boudreau also offered heartfelt thanks to school chef Mr. Keith Lukasek, who spent hours preparing a delicious turkey dinner for the entire community.

The feast was made even more special by the presence of honored guests, including benefactors John and Jane Gogolinski, Dr. John Kalinowski, and Mrs. Marilyn Fels. Members of the Saint Joseph School Consultative Board were also in attendance, including Chairwoman Mrs. Catherine Kabala and her husband Stanley, and Vice Chairperson Mr. Donald Cushing. The Parish Council was represented by Mrs. Nancy Dowgiewicz and her husband Mark, and Mrs. Gosia Kicilinski and Robert Wojcik. Co-Chairperson Krystal Kolesnik represented the SJS Home and School Association. Saint Joseph School also welcomed community safety partners from the Webster Fire Department including Chief Brian Hickey, Chief Jeffrey Saad, and several firefighters.

Following introductions, Pastor and Headmaster Fr. Richard Polek led the community in a meaningful Thanksgiving Prayer, encouraging gratitude for God's gifts and awareness of those in need. Afterward, parent volunteers served a traditional meal of turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, stuffing, and butternut squash, with 8th graders delivering plates to guests and students, exemplifying leadership and service.

After dinner, the assembly continued with a heartfelt presentation honoring retired Fire Chief Brian Hickey for his 43 years of dedicated service to the Town of Webster. Student Council President Mycheal Jones and Vice President Tenleigh Dowd expressed gratitude on behalf of the entire community, recognizing Chief Hickey's steadfast commitment to protecting and caring for their school family.

They presented a plaque to Chief Hickey, inscribed with the following: "In grateful recognition of 43 years of dedicated service and steadfast commitment to the safety of the Saint Joseph School community. With heartfelt thanks from the students, faculty, and staff of Saint Joseph School. May God richly bless you in your retirement and always."

The celebration concluded on a joyful note, as the Saint Joseph School Choir led the community in song with "Trading My Sorrows"—a spirited reminder of faith, gratitude, and the strength found in togetherness.

Courtesy

The Webster/Dudley/Oxford/Southbridge/Charlton DAV chapter 53 donated \$3,000 to the W/D Food Share and \$1,000 to the Oxford food bank in appreciation to Oxford and their staff as well as A.J. and his crew at W/D food share. These people help all needy veterans, as well as all needy people of our communities. It is our honor to help these people.

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