

WEBSTER TIMES

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

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©2025, Issue #8

Friday, February 21, 2025



Courtesy

Dudley Middle School congratulates its Students of The Month. 5th Grade - Colin Barnes, London Hogan, Mason Cahill, & Austin Cazeault; 6th Grade - Benjamin Moisan, Ivy St. Laurent, & Ava Hortance (Not shown); 7th Grade - Richie Soto, Madison Labbe, & Carter Paquin (not shown); 8th Grade - Lilly Connor, Connor Stackpole, & Caroline Fuentes.

Lafond sees “major overhaul” needed for Town Hall

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

WEBSTER — A fair amount of the short Feb. 10 selectmen’s meeting focused on facilities concerns, mostly brought up during Administrator Rick Lafond’s regular report.

“The condition of this overall facility is a little bit concerning,” he said regarding Town Hall.

Specifically, Lafond was talking about the cable committee’s plan to renovate the selectmen’s meeting room for better sound quality. That’ll cost around \$30,000 to baffle the walls and ceiling, but it could require reinforcing the room’s ceiling. He said people went into the attic “to get a sense of what’s above this” and estimate “how much weight this [ceiling] can hold.”

It’s just one of a few ongoing projects in Town Hall. Another’s renovating the treasurer/collector’s office, which he noted “looked like an 1842 western post office” and another voice dubbed it “a jail cell.”

A potential big change is still in limbo – the request for proposals to renovate the auditorium. That received no proposals, and Lafond said he has some concerns about “how feasible this could ultimately be,” cost-wise.

The idea was floated last fall by Slater Museum owner Chris Robert as a potential place to do a wide range of public events. But a major stumbling block is that the cost of such a project could trigger state laws requiring the entire Town Hall be renovated to meet current building code.

Indeed, Lafond said “a major overhaul” of the whole site needs to be on the radar screen several years from now. To plan for it, he urged the board “to think about a feasibility study for Town Hall.” Another person compared the situation to that of the old library before it was renovated and expanded a few years ago.

“This iconic building, the view, the structure – that has to be saved, obviously,” Lafond

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Dudley voters deny PFAS funding for second time

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY — Dudley residents have once again voted against funding requests to continue PFAS mitigation despite the urging of officials who warned the town could face legal action without an appropriation.

A special town meeting on Feb. 10 presented two articles seeking funding to cover continued PFAS mitigation costs for the Eagle Drive and Fairview Avenue area of town through the rest of the fiscal year and the remainder of the calendar year respectively. A previous article failed in a special town meeting in October. Town officials scheduled the February town meeting with hopes of a better result as failure to approve the funding could result in the town being unable to pay the bills violating contracts which could put the town in violation of an order by the

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP).

Mitigation of PFAS, has been mandated by the MassDEP since detection became a consistent issue in the Eagle Drive and Fairview Avenue area dating back to 2021. Dudley’s capped landfill and local company Gentex Optics have been deemed responsible for the contamination and have struck an agreement to jointly pay for mitigation. A “final solution” of adding a town water line to the impacted areas is still in the works, but in the meantime Dudley is required to do its part to maintain Point of Entry Treatment (POET) Systems, testing and other mitigation efforts through its contract with Gentex and orders by MassDEP.

Articles 2 of the Feb. 10 meeting sought \$312,750 to cover costs incurred from

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Oxford School Committee looks askance at town-requested budget changes

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

OXFORD — The School Committee continued to address budget issues at its Feb. 10 meeting, among other things.

Business Manager Matt Bobola started by summarizing the recently-released state aid figures. He said Oxford will only see its Chapter 70 aid increase by \$114,000, but he’d drafted the budget expecting \$293,000. To make up the difference, he said he cut the proposed budget increase from 3.5 percent to 3.1 percent, but the town has requested it be cut further to 2.5 percent (another \$110,000).

That didn’t sit well with committee members.

Dave Cornacchioli said a 2.5 percent hike is “just the cost of doing business” and would only cover contractual increases, bills and the like. But the district’s seeking the

extra 1 percent to meet the needs of “our needy population,” having taken no extra hike (above that in state aid) last year. He noted it has been putting positions into the budget that had been cut during and before covid (many of them funded by grants that have since expired) and wants “to keep moving forward.”

Later, Todd Proctor agreed, saying the budget’s seeking new part-time support staff “our teachers so desperately need.” To him, it’s hard to ask the teachers to do more, and the districts needs support from the community and parents, so it should stay at 3.1 percent above last year.

Bobola said his plan at the moment is to fund some of the additions with school choice funds, which amount to \$284,000 now and he projected bringing in another \$215,000

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Dudley’s Nguyen named All-America awardee

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The United Soccer Coaches announced the organization’s 2024 NCAA Division III All-America Teams on Thursday, and Kenyon College’s Matt Nguyen was named among the awardees. The seniors award followed an All-Region nod just two days prior, adding another accomplishment to Nguyen’s stellar career. The United Soccer Coaches named four All-America teams, and Nguyen secured a spot on the Second Team. The All-America ledger included 50 student-athletes, and Nguyen was among the 38 student-athletes named first-time All-Americans. The other dozen players were two-time awardees. The First Team included 11 student-athletes, while the Second Team, Third, and Fourth Teams were each composed of 13 players. Nguyen has been one of Kenyon’s most consistent presences on the field over his three years with the program. The defender started all 64 of the Owls’ games over his time in Gambier after transferring to Kenyon. In addition to playing every game, Nguyen played nearly every minute for the Owls, racking up 5,370 minutes as a key part



Graham Stokes

of Kenyon’s back line. He led this year’s squad with 1,806 minutes and led all position players in minutes in both 2023 (1,829) and 2022 (1,735). This season, Nguyen helped the Owls compile a 13-3-5 overall record and make a run to the ‘Sweet 16’ of the NCAA Tournament. The Dudley native and Kenyon’s defense held opponents to 1.05 goals and 9.0 shots per game and secured four shutouts. With Nguyen on the field for three seasons, Kenyon teams have

posted per-game averages of 0.875 goals and 8.59 shots allowed while racking up 27 shutouts and a .805 winning percentage (48-9-7). In addition to his defensive efforts, Nguyen has also stepped up to help on offense. This season, he added one goal and two assists, bringing his career totals to seven scores and three helpers. Nguyen is Kenyon’s first men’s soccer All-American since 2022, and his honor marks the 34th All-America

award in program history. The national recognition caps a career that included three straight All-North Coast Athletic Conference selections and this season’s All-Region First Team spot. Nguyen and the rest of this year’s All-Americans were recognized for their accomplishments at the United Soccer Coaches All-America Ceremony on Saturday, Jan. 11 in Chicago, Ill., in conjunction with the United Soccer Coaches Convention.

Local talent to perform in fairy tale double header at Hanover Conservatory

WORCESTER—Under the direction of Jennifer Agbay, The Hanover Conservatory's Youth Ballet Company will bring story book pages to the grand stage in a free performance on March 6 at 6 p.m.

Generously sponsored by TJX, catch this entrancing adaptation of the classics, "The Stories of Hansel and Gretel" and "Peter and the Wolf" with a fantastic cast of characters including many inspired by the famous Brothers Grimm. The narration and music for Hansel and Gretel is by Larry Thomas Bell while "Peter and the Wolf" features music by original composer and creator Sergei Prokofiev.

RSVP today! Performers include Katherine Totman of

Charlton as Mother/Witch and Cat, Mikel Roth as Father and Wolf, Elle Angarita as Black Cat and Wolf, Adrianna Cook as Hansel and Peter, Casey Reid as Gretel and Bird, Elli Kradetska as White Cat and Hunter, Sarah O'Donnell of Charlton as Snowbird and Hunter, Emily Pulsifer as Snowbird and Hunter, Stella Seney of Killingly (last seen as Clara in "The Nutcracker") as White Duck and Duck, Sam Gagnon as Grandfather along with a wonderful ensemble featuring Penelope Dolan, Clementine Doyle-Bouvier, Aerla Kodra, Zoe Lavigne, Claire Reid-Eriksen, Claire Angarita, Kira Boitchenko of Sturbridge, Nina Browning of Dudley, Wyatt Jenkins,

Jacqueline Murphy of Auburn, Sarah Newhall, Oliana Prado Gleckel, Kathryn Rosenthal of Auburn, and Sophia Shliapa.

Based on choreography by Mark Harootian with adaptations by Jennifer Agbay, Jamie

Brown, and Ana Luisa Thompson, the creative team also includes Director Jennifer Agbay and Producer Meghan Montaner, Scenic Designer Christine Peters, Lighting Designer Matt Chrostowski, Ballet Mistress Ana Luisa

Thompson, with Stage Management by Kim Pheymannic, Audio Engineer Nick Joyce, along with Costumers Freda Bromberg, Beth Laperle and Perri Sylvester. The show run-time is approxi-

mately 80 minutes. Reserve your free tickets today! Seating is general admission. Please contact the box office at 877-571-7469 or visit TheHanoverTheatre.org for additional information.

Home Depot volunteers partner with SWCEC for hands-on workshop

DUDLEY — Lynn McKiernan and her fellow Auburn Home Depot Volunteers joined educators and students at the Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative (SWCEC) Dudley Campus for a hands-on workshop building flower picture frame decorations. This event brought together students from the Collaborative's Specialized Developmental Program, ranging in age from 9 to 21, who have a variety of specialized needs.

The event was made possible through the efforts of Carol Bernardone, a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant at SWCEC for nearly 30 years. The workshop marked a renewal of a long-standing partnership between SWCEC and Team Depot, the Home Depot's associate volunteer force, which had been a staple of the Collaborative's programming before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Team Depot, in collaboration with the Home Depot Foundation, supports communities and improves the lives of veterans through hands-on volunteer initiatives. In 2023 alone, more than 54,000 Home Depot associates completed more than 2,200 community projects across the country.

During the workshop, students in the Specialized Developmental Program received hands-on guidance from McKiernan and her team, along with their teachers and specialists. Also participating were students from the SWCEC GROW Middle/High School. The event built upon a similar workshop held on Oct. 18 for students at the GROW Elementary School in Southbridge, also organized by McKiernan and Bernardone.

The Home Depot Volunteer Team is greatly appreciated by the SWCEC community, and everyone looks forward to continuing these workshops in the future. These hands-on sessions provide invaluable opportunities for students to develop woodworking skills while engaging in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)-based activities.

Auburn Public Library is now fine-free!

AUBURN — Starting Feb. 11, the Auburn Public Library will no longer be charging late fees for the overwhelming majority of its items if they are returned overdue. As long as you return a book, DVD, music CD, etc. undamaged, there will be no overdue fee charged no matter how late the item is. Not only that, but we'll be waiving any old overdue fines that still remain on patron accounts. Have you been hesitating to use the library because of an ancient fine on your account? Feel free to swing by the library and we'll be happy to wipe the slate clean!

- What will no longer result in a fine?
 - Returning a book late
 - Returning a DVD or Blu-ray late
 - Returning a music CD or audiobook CD late
 - Returning a magazine late
 - Returning items borrowed from other libraries late (as long as they are returned at Auburn)
 - What may still result in a fine?
 - Returning a museum pass late
 - Returning a Library of Things item late
 - Returning a library item damaged or missing a piece
 - Losing/failing to ever return a library item
- Even though the Auburn Public Library is no longer charging fines, please do try to return items on time so that other patrons can enjoy them.

DWC's Pocketbook Bingo fundraiser returns March 23

WEBSTER — The Dudley Woman's Club most popular fundraiser is back! Pocketbook Bingo will be held Sunday, March 23 at the PACC, 37 Harris St. in Webster. Doors open at 1 p.m., with Bingo starting at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$35 per person for this fun afternoon of Bingo with the gals, plus the chance to win 10 designer handbags! Lots of laughs, giveaways and raffles. The DWC's voluntary Giving Project for this event will be pet foods for the Webster-Dudley Food Share. Tickets online at www.dudleywomansclub.org/pocketbookbingo.

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REAL ESTATE

AUBURN

\$450,000, 426 Leicester St, Lasalle, Suely, to Scuoteguazza, Kyle B, and Czybora, Taylor M.
\$275,000, 15 Eddy St, Valentine, Jacob M, and Hevy, Amanda L, to Benton, Zachary, and Gorum, Suzanne.

DUDLEY

\$435,000, 43 Airport Rd, Cashes Marlene P Est, and Shaw, Michael J, to Levesque, Stephanie, and Lafrance, Joshua T.

OXFORD

None

WEBSTER

\$487,500, 75 Klebart Ave, Mason, Breanna, and Mason, Joseph, to Daoust, Christine.
\$290,000, 6 Blueberry Ln, Broden Alan G Est, and Broden, Frances, to Schofield, Mary, and Schofield, Charles.
\$155,000, 557 School St, Huard, Minnie E, and Freedom Mortgage Corp, to V&j LLC.

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DUDLEY TOWN HALL (508) 949-8000
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Tuesday-Thursday: 8:00 AM-4:00 PM, Friday: 8:00 AM-12:00 PM.
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DUDLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT (949-8040)
Monday-Sunday 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

OXFORD

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Board of Selectmen and Town Clerk Hours:
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Wednesday 9 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Friday 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

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CLUES ACROSS

- Tropical Asian plant
- Yankees' slugger Judge
- Helps to preserve food
- Plant disease
- One who predicts
- Equally
- Burundian franc
- Pouch
- Arizona city
- Surround
- Hard, heavy timber
- Witnessed
- They ___
- French river
- A way to drink
- Small constellation
- Peruse a written work
- Type of hound
- Plant of the goosefoot family
- Evade or escape
- A way to confine
- Volcanic crater
- Weekday
- Women's service organization (abbr.)
- Local area network
- Sensory receptor
- Posted
- Tibetan pastry
- Licensed for Wall Street
- Very willing
- Golf score
- Consume
- Touchdown
- Tends to remind
- In a way, smoothed
- Poke holes in the ground
- Herbaceous plants
- Taiwanese river

CLUES DOWN

- Body art
- Boxing's GOAT
- Film for posterity (abbr.)
- Prayer
- Calculating machine
- Keyboard key
- Outburst
- Man-eating giants
- New Hampshire
- Type of sword
- Counting
- Pants style
- Political action committee
- U.S. government legislative branch
- Civil Rights Act component
- Contractors take one
- Spanish soldier
- A person's brother or sister
- Expressed pleasurer
- Song of praise
- Shock treatment
- Patti Hearst's captors
- Counteract
- Goes over again
- Popular Dodge truck
- Male adult
- A part of a river where the current is very fast
- Rope used to lasso
- Become less intense
- Subway rodent
- Lead alloy
- Japanese honorific title
- Advise someone
- Famous NYC museum
- Ocean
- Cathode-ray tube
- Cologne
- It starts with these two

PUZZLE SOLUTION

Enrollment forms for Dudley's municipal energy program mailing Feb. 14

DUDLEY — The Town of Dudley is launching its Community Choice Power Supply Program this spring to provide an energy program that will lower electricity costs for our residents and businesses, while offering environmental benefits.

The 18-month contract with First Point Power will begin in April 2025 and offers three products with varying amounts of renewable energy content.

"We are excited to offer three options in our electricity program, allowing Dudley rate-payers greater control over the energy they use along with lower and more stable pricing," Town Administrator Jonathan Ruda said. Product

	Renewable Energy Content	Program Rate (per kWh)	National Grid Rate* (per kWh)	% Savings	Est Monthly Savings
Standard (default)	Meets MA renewable energy requirements	\$0.12826	\$0.14672	13%	\$11
Optional Green	100% renewable. Includes 37% National Wind RECs.	\$0.12992	\$0.14672	11%	\$10
Optional Green 5	5% MA Class I RECs above minimum state requirements	\$0.13031	\$0.14672	11%	\$10

National Grid's Residential Basic Service meets MA renewable energy requirements and is in effect from Feb. 1-July 31. Assuming usage of 600 kilowatt hours of electricity per month, residents can expect to see an average savings for that period.

The Dudley Community Choice Power Supply Program is a municipal aggregation which, according to Massachusetts law (M.G.L. c. 164, § 134), enables local governments to combine the purchasing power of its residents and businesses to provide them with an alternative electricity supply.

Approximately 190 Massachusetts communities have chosen to develop community choice electricity programs to benefit their residents and small business owners.

Residents in the program will not notice any change in their electricity service. The only discernible difference will be that First Point Power will be printed under "Supply Services" on National Grid's monthly bills starting in May 2025. Residents and business owners will continue to receive one bill from National Grid for payment. There will be no interruption in billing, power, or customer service.

No action is required to participate in this cost-saving program. The Program will be operated on an opt-out basis, meaning that all Dudley residential and business customers currently on National Grid's Basic Service will be automatically enrolled into the Program unless they choose to opt-out.

There are no enrollment, early termination, or cancellation fees in this program. Residents who choose to opt-out can also opt-in at a later date at no cost. However, anyone switching from a contract with a third-party supplier may be subject to penalties or early termination fees charged by that supplier. Ratepayers should verify the terms of their present supplier before switching.

Basic Service rates change twice a year or more. As a result, the aggregation rate may not always be lower than the Basic Service rate. The goal of the aggregation is to deliver savings over the life of the program against National Grid's Basic Service. However, future savings cannot be guaranteed.

Residents or business owners with a supplier block on their account must contact National Grid to request that the block be removed if they want to participate in Dudley's electricity program.

National Grid has several programs to help income-eligible families and customers needing special assistance meet their energy needs. To learn more visit nationalgridus.com/MA-Home/Bill-Help/Payment-Assistance-Programs.

Information sessions to answer questions about Dudley's Community Choice Power Supply Program will be held by the Town and representatives of Colonial Power Group as follows:

Thursday, March 6, at 12:30 p.m. at the Dudley Senior Center, 71 West Main St.

Monday, March 10, at 6:30 p.m. at the Board of Selectmen Meeting, 71 West Main St.

Residents may also visit colonialpowergroup.com/dudley or call (866) 485-5858 ext. 1 to learn more about Dudley's Community Choice Power Supply Program, to opt-in or opt-out, or to change your product selection.

For answers to Frequently Asked Questions and more, visit <https://www.dudleyma.gov/town-administrators-office/pages/municipal-energy-aggregate>

Renowned appraiser to visit area

NEW BRAINTREE — Area residents are invited to dust off their treasures and prepare for a fascinating appraisal event.

Set for March 22 from 1-3 p.m., the program will take place at the New Braintree Historical Society museum (10 Utley Rd., New Braintree).

Renowned appraiser and auctioneer Kenneth Van Blarcom, of South Natick, will conduct an individual appraisal and history of your item. Guests in attendance will be able to learn about the item and its historical significance.

"The Society is thrilled to have Mr. Van Blarcom's expertise here in New Braintree. His impressive credentials include antique appraisal positions with Shreve, Crump and Low, Co. and a Boston Directorship at the fine art and antique company of Skinner Auctions," read a statement released to promote the event.

Over his 40-year career, Van Blarcom has conducted more than 850 auctions.

For the March 22 program, each guest will have a limit of two items for appraisal (no jewelry). The cost per appraisal is \$5.

Refreshments will be served at the event. For more information, visit <https://newbraintreehistorical-society.org/> or call 508-867-3324.

UTampa student Hannah Swenson f Auburn earns Dean's List honors

TAMPA, Fla. — Hannah Swenson, of Auburn, earned dean's list honors at University of Tampa for the Fall 2024 semester. Swenson is a Junior majoring in Marketing BS. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.75 or higher to be eligible for the dean's list.

The University of Tampa is a private, comprehensive university located on 110 acres on the riverfront in downtown Tampa. Known for academic excellence, personal attention and real-world experience in its undergraduate and graduate programs, the University has about 200 programs of study and serves more than 11,000 students from 50 states and most of the world's countries.

TAX PREPARATION

Michael Jarominski
Certified Public Accountant
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Team Mass Boys & Girls
Aau Basketball Tryouts

Cost: \$30 Covers both tryouts (players get t-shirt)
Aau card \$25 (purchase on our website, we'll pull them)

Tryout # 1: February 22, 2025
Location: Tantasqua Jr High School(320 Brookfield Rd Fiskdale Ma)

- **Boys Grades 4th-6th** 8:30am-9:40am
- **Boys Grades 7th & 8th** 9:45am-10:55 am
- **Boys Grades 9th-12th** 11 am-12:10 pm
- **Girls Grades 4th-6th** 12:15 pm- 1:25 pm
- **Girls Grades 7th-8th** 1:30 pm-2:40 pm
- **Girls Grades 9th-12th** 2:45 pm- 4 pm

Tryout # 2: March 1, 2025
Location: Oxford High School(100 Carbuncle Dr Oxford Ma)

- **Boys Grades & Girls Grades 4th-6th** (9am-10:25 am)
- **Boys & Girls Grades 7th & 8th** (10:30 am-11:55 am)
- **Boys and Girls Grades 9th-12th** (12 pm-1:30 pm)

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Job change?

Whether retiring or changing jobs, you'll want to know your retirement account options.

There are four potential options for your 401(k) when leaving an employer:

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

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

Dennis Antonopoulos
Financial Advisor

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Adult Programming
YOGA – Saturdays at 9:30 AM **No Class on Saturday, February 15th**

Join Julie or Lauren at the Gladys E. Kelly Library for a vinyasa yoga class for all levels. In Sanskrit, Vinyasa yoga translates to the “uniting of movement with breath.” 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.

NEW GENRE BOOK CLUB – Tuesday, February 18th 6:00-7:30PM

Starting in February, join us for a genre book club. February’s book is a romance: *Before I Let Go* by Kennedy Ryan. Email Jess to add your name to the list: jfontaine@cwmar.org. March will be a sci-fi book!

ADULT BOOK GROUP – Monday, February 24th 6:30PM

Join us in the Community Room as we discuss *Imprisoned: The*

Betrayal of Japanese Americans During World War II by Martin W. Sandler.

The Nest: Leading with Listening – Monday, February 24th 6:00PM

Join Andrew Morrison of Real Custom Training for an engaging session to boost your leadership, improve communication, and enhance your business and team performance!

WINTER FEET RETREAT – Tuesday, February 25th 6:00PM

Join Lorri Ducharme of Prestige Nails as she teaches tips and pointers on how to care for your dry winter feet. Proper nail trimming and filing, soothing foot soak, and more! Participants will leave with footcare product samples. Registration Required

COMPUTER BASICS: eBooks and Audiobooks – Thursday, February 27th 5:30PM

Interested in learning how to borrow eBooks and Audiobooks through Libby and Hoopla? 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!

Children’s and Young Adult Programming

Scavenger Hunt – All Month Long

What’s more exciting than a scavenger hunt? Come upstairs to the Children’s room to pick up a list of things to find all

around the library. Once you’ve completed the scavenger hunt, check in with the Children’s Librarian to redeem a prize.

TAKE AND MAKE CRAFT – All month long

Take and Make craft kits are available for pick up upstairs in the Children’s Room. Each month will feature a different craft to create and instructions will be provided with the supplies. New Take and Make kits will be available for pick up on the 1st of every month, while supplies last, and are limited to one per patron.

PLAY-DOH PLAYTIME – MONDAYS at 10:00AM

Drop-in to our Children’s Program Room every Monday morning to play, make, and build with our collection of colorful Play-Doh, sculpting tools, and various sets. This is a fun, sensory playtime to foster creativity and exploration. Perfect for ages 2-6. Siblings are welcome.

MAKER MONDAYS – MONDAYS from 3:30-4:30 PM

Feeling artistic? We will have a variety of craft materials available to put your creativity to the test! In February we’re doing Origami.

TODDLERPLAYTIME – TUESDAYS at 10:00 AM

Kids 0 to 6 are invited to get their wiggles out with weekly obstacle course and fun.

STUFFED ANIMAL STORYTIME – WEDNESDAYS at 10:00AM

Join Youth Services Librarian Andrew for stories, songs, and fun with our plush pals! This storytime is geared toward ages birth to 3, but siblings are welcome.

STEM BEGINNINGS: YOUNG SCIENTISTS – WEDNESDAYS at 10:00AM

Children, ages 3-6, with a parent/caregiver will learn STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) concepts

through hands-on activities, story time, challenges and simple experiments in this weekly STEM series. Registration through the YFCP website.

ME AND MY MINI – THURSDAYS at 10:00AM

A creative movement group for ages 0 through 2.5. Get groovy to upbeat music with fun props and a story.

TEEN VIDEO GAME – THURSDAYS at 3:00PM

Teens are invited to play games on our Nintendo Switch!

BEGINNER ORIGAMI – FRIDAYS at 3:45PM

Come explore the art of origami making! A creative and meditative craft. Open to kids of all ages.

MESSY ART STORYTIME – FRIDAY, February 28th at 10:00AM

Come explore different art mediums through stories and fun creations! This program is perfect for ages 2-5 and will have your little one creating messy art weekly. Please wear art-appropriate clothing.

PUZZ FEST – Thursday, February 20th 5:00-7:00PM

Our very first puzzle race! Assemble your team (up to 5 people!) and join us in the Community Room to see which team can complete their puzzle first. We’ll have popcorn to keep you fueled as you tackle your 500 piece jigsaw. All teams will get to keep their puzzle. Registration required.

PIGEON STORYTIME – Friday, February 21st at 10am

Mo Willem’s Pigeon will be joining us for a story, craft, and photos!

STUFFED ANIMAL SLEEPOVER – Friday, February 21st 3:00PM

We are inviting you and your favorite stuffed animal for an evening movie in the Community Room! Come watch a family-friendly movie, snack on some popcorn, and then say goodnight to your friend as they get ready to spend the night at the library! Pick up will be the following morning, and you can see your friends’ adventures on our social media pages. Movie will begin promptly at 3:00 PM

SNOW MUCH FUN – SATURDAYS at 11:30AM

We’ll be featuring several fun activities on Saturdays this winter. Elsa and Anna will be visiting for a magical storytime and sing-a-long on Saturday, February 22nd and R.I. Pirate Guy’s Pirate Adventure will be here for pirate skills and adventure on Saturday, March 1st.

WEBSTER SENIOR CENTER

5 Church St.
(508) 949-3845
Email: SeniorCenter@Webster-MA.gov
Senior Center hours are Monday- Friday 9 a.m.- 4 p.m., with every first Thursday 9 a.m.- 7 p.m.

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

Tri-Valley Lunches are served Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 11:30 am. Please call (508) 949-3845 at least two business days in advance to reserve or cancel your meal. A \$3.00 donation for 65 and up, and \$5 for 55- 64 is appreciated. All meals include milk, bread, and fruit or dessert. This week’s menu: Tuesday, 2/25, Meatballs w/ Onion Gravy, bowtie pasta, country blend vegetables. Wednesday, 2/26, Banh Mi Pork Riblet w/ Sauce, carrots, coleslaw. Thursday, 2/27, Vegetable Cheese Bake, red bliss potatoes, green beans. Friday, 2/28, Soup du Jour: ham salad sandwich, macaroni salad.

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

FUEL ASSISTANCE has returned to the Senior Center. WCAC will be here every other Thursday from 9:30 am- 2:30 pm. Please call WCAC for an appointment 508-754-1176.

Fraud Seminar- Webster Five Cents Savings Bank, and the Webster Police Department will be presenting a two-part seminar on recognizing scams and combatting fraud in 2025 and beyond. Both parts will be held at the Webster Senior Center on Thursday, March 20th and Thursday, March 27th from 12:25PM- 1:00PM. No registration required.

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

We are now offering MOVIE MATINEES every Wednesday at 1:00 pm! Popcorn is provided. No registration needed. The movie for February 26th is *The Six Triple Eight*, March 5th is *My Old Ass*, March 12th is *Rambo*, March 19th is *The Legend of Longwood*, and March 26th is *Walk the Line*.

The first Thursday of every month we will be open until 7:00 pm with entertainment starting at 5:45 pm. For March 6th, we will be singing along to our favorite crooners with Steven Lyon.

COA Meetings are the first Thursday of the month, and are open to the public. The Next meeting will be Monday, March 3rd @ 10:00 am.

Friend’s Meetings are the second Wednesday of the month, and are open to the public. The Next meeting will be Wednesday, March 12th @ 10:00 am.

Chair Dancing Exercise classes with Forty Arroyo are the perfect workout for any fitness ability! The cost is a recommended \$3.00 donation per class. Classes are on Mondays, and Wednesdays at 9:30 am.

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

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

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

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

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

The Worcester County Sheriff’s Office House Numbering Program will create a custom wooden sign with your house number free of charge. One sign per senior household. Please contact the Webster Senior Center at (508) 949-3845, if you are interested in having a house number sign made for you.

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

We are partnering up with the Charlton and Southbridge Senior Centers and the Overlook to offer a Day in Maine with a Clambake on Sunday, July 20, 2025.

This trip includes a stop for freshly baked breads at When Pigs Fly, and a visit to Nubble Lighthouse. Your bake includes New England clam chowder, freshly dug Maine clams, mussels, Maine lobster, corn on the cob, red bliss potatoes, and blueberry crumb cake with your choice of coffee, iced tea, or lemonade. In place of lobster, there is BBQ chicken, or a vegetarian option. After your clambake, if time allows, you will stop at Stonewall Kitchen for jams and jellies, and Yummie’s candy store. The price for this trip is \$109.00 per person and includes transportation, clambake, driver, and escort gratuities. There is a \$25 registration fee, and the last day to sign up is June 20, 2025. If you have questions please contact Webster Senior Center 508-949-3845.

PET of the WEEK





BAYPATH HUMANE SOCIETY OF HOPKINTON
Small Shelter Big Heart

Penny

With a heart as golden as her years, Penny is searching for a loving home where she can spend her days soaking up affection and companionship. This sweet, easy-going senior may be a bit of a couch potato, but she has endless love to give! She greets everyone with gentle enthusiasm and never turns down a belly rub. Penny is the perfect blend of independent yet affectionate, enjoying life’s simple pleasures—short neighborhood strolls, plenty of sniffing breaks, and relaxing with her favorite humans. She’s calm, house-trained, and well-behaved, making her an ideal low-maintenance companion. Penny has been diagnosed with Degenerative Mitral Valve Disease (DMVD) and takes daily medication to support her heart health, but don’t worry - this lovely lady remains happy, content, and full of love! Penny’s perfect match? A calm, loving home that appreciates her relaxed nature, short walks, and cozy cuddle sessions. She’s the ultimate Valentine’s Day sweet-heart, ready to fill your heart and home with love. Could you be the one to make Penny’s golden years truly special?

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Milford Federal Bank is proud to sponsor Baypath Humane Society’s Pet of the Week!

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Friday’s Child



Jaxen
Age 9
Registration # 8388

<https://adopt.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/child/8388>

Hi! My name is Jaxen and I have a fabulous smile and laugh!

Jaxen is very active and happy! He enjoys playing catch, riding in golf carts, and rocking in outdoor gliders. When Jaxen wants to relax, he is very cuddly. Jaxen loves Disney music, especially the soundtracks from *Trolls* and *The Greatest Showman*.

Can I Adopt?

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

The process to adopt a child from foster care includes training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you. These steps will help match you with a child or sibling group that your family will fit well with.

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

Chinese antiques



In this column, I'll be discussing Chinese antiques, which came in at number 9 on my recently updated top 10 antiques and collectibles list.

Chinese time periods are referenced according to dynasties, indicating a succession of rulers from the same family. Some of the earliest are the Xia (Hsia) Dynasty from 2100-1600 BCE and the Shang Dynasty circa 1600-1050 BCE. Some more recent ones are the Ming Dynasty from 1368-1644 and the Qing

(Ch'ing) Dynasty from 1644-1912. Chinese antiques are referred to by the century in which they were made or the dynasty when they were produced. For example, a vase from 1500 would be referred to as a Ming vase. China's dynasties lasted until 1912. The Republic Period took place from 1912-1949 and it has been the People's Republic of China from 1949 through the present.

Since 2007, China has had a policy that antiquities being exported must be from 1912 or later, when dynasties no longer ruled. There is also a requirement that exported pieces can't be "cultural property." As a result of the policies, I haven't found anything particularly valuable in collections of Chinese memorabilia that were obtained in the last 18 years.

However, there are plenty of Chinese antiques that came to America before the stricter regulations went into effect. For example, jade pieces have been selling very well. In 2023, we auctioned a jade incense burner that brought \$700. An 18-karat gold and jade ring went for \$800 in 2021. Three small jade figures, including one with a gold chain, fetched \$2,100 last year. We sold a Chinese silk tapestry with dragon designs for \$1,800 last year. Over a decade ago, we sold a 17th century bronze figure (pictured in



ANTIQUES,
COLLECTIBLES
& ESTATES
.....
WAYNE TUISKULA

the accompanying photo) for several thousands of dollars.

I've reported on some major finds of Chinese antiquities in past columns. I previously wrote about a \$35 Connecticut yard sale find of a 15th century Chinese bowl that brought over \$700,000 in a 2023 auction.

There are many other stories of Chinese items bringing astronomical results with even post-1911 items sometimes bringing high figures. A 1968 stamp from China's Cultural Revolution depicted China in red. The government destroyed the stamps because they didn't include Taiwan in red. A few copies escaped destruction, and one sold for \$2 million in 2018, according to the South China Post and other sources. Artist Qi Baishi's "Twelve Landscape Screens," that was painted in 1925 became the first Chinese artwork to top \$100 million, selling for \$140.8 million at a 2017 Beijing auction.

Older pieces can bring some jaw-dropping figures. A 17th century bronze bowl with Phoenix head handles and gold accents sold for \$4.9 million in 2019. The family had been storing tennis balls in the bowl when an auctioneer spotted it, according to CNN.

A UK Daily Mail article published last month described the sale of a family heirloom vase that took place over a

decade ago. During the 1970s, a family brought the vase to an appraiser on a British Broadcasting Corporation show called "Going for a Song." The appraiser believed it to be a "clever reproduction" worth £800 (slightly over \$1,000). The family later brought the piece to another auctioneer who told them that it was "either the best replica in the world, or it's worth millions." When it was auctioned in 2010, it ended up reaching £53 million (\$66.75 million). The family described as "not having a lot" was overwhelmed with the mother brought to tears. The story didn't end there, though, because the buyer backed out. Fortunately, the sale was negotiated with another buyer. Thankfully, this family hadn't been storing their tennis balls in the fragile vase.

We are still working on a large one consignor Civil War memorabilia auction, Beacon Hill estate auction, and a comic book, sports memorabilia, and collectibles auction. We are always accepting consignments of quality pieces for future auctions. Please visit our website <https://centralmassauctions.com> for links to upcoming events.

Contact us to consign items or for auction information at: Wayne Tuiskula Auctioneer/Appraiser Central Mass Auctions for Antique, Collectibles Auctions and Appraisal Services info@centralmassauctions.com or (508-612-6111).

What goes up must come down—or does it?

BY CHRISTOPHER MALLON
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, PROGRAM MANAGER
LPL REGISTERED PRINCIPAL, THE CAPSTONE
PLANNING GROUP
LOCATED AT CORNERSTONE BANK

Most of us have visited an amusement park and been on a rollercoaster at some point in our lives. Some people love these fast paced, stomach dropping, thrill rides—while others prefer to keep their feet planted firmly on the ground. Imagine for a moment you are buckled in, slowly ascending a rollercoaster's giant peak. As you steadily climb higher and higher, your heart rate and nerves start to increase. Why? Going up the hill isn't scary—but the inevitable drop back down is.

When it comes to investing your money, the same emotional scenario can play out. Seeing your account value climb higher over time isn't scary... it's great! But the fear of a big drop can be terrifying. Sadly, for some people that fear can become so paralyzing they avoid investing all together and forgo potential growth.

Is there any way to eliminate those potential drops? Is it possible for an account value to go up... but not back down? The short answer is yes. Certain products have been created for that specific purpose.

Most investors understand that traditional long-only investment products like stocks, mutual funds, and ETFs, offer upside growth potential. They also understand these investments can be volatile. Volatility is defined as "the potential to change rapidly and unpredictably". In other words, values can go up... and values can go down. A la the rollercoaster.

Insurance companies realized investors were looking for alternatives to the scenario above. If they could create a vehicle which provided upside potential and eliminated the "drops", they'd have a powerful product with lots of demand. Enter stage right: fixed-indexed annuities.

A fixed indexed annuity (FIA) is a long-term investment that combines growth potential with protection from market downturns. If you're an investor willing to give up "a portion" of the market's upside, the insurance company will in-return guarantee to protect your principal from loss.

While not all FIAs are alike, here are some of their common features:

Fixed term: to structure these products insurance companies typically require a term of 5 years or more. If you need to make a withdrawal, many allow for 10% free withdrawals per year (without penalty)

Principal protection: when your contract ends, you are guaranteed to receive at least 100% of your initial investment back

Earnings: potential earnings are paid at the end of each year and based on the performance of an underlying index. Earnings are usually "capped" at a certain level. For this example, let's assume your cap rate is 10 percent based on the S&P500's performance.

If the S&P500 was up +7 percent: you would be credited +7 percent for the year

If the S&P500 was up +15 percent: you would be credited +10 percent for the year (remember the 10 percent cap)

If the S&P500 was down -20 percent: you would receive zero earnings for the year...but experience no loss!

Tax deferral: FIAs have tax-deferred status which allows you to benefit from compounded growth

Should investors have all their money in a fixed-indexed annuity? Absolutely not. But when used appropriately, they can be a powerful tool for some of your assets. This is particularly true for individuals in or around retirement that do not want to experience the potential

"drops" of the stock market. FIAs can be a great compliment to traditional portfolios of stocks, bonds, and mutual funds -- and help to smooth out their overall volatility.

To determine if a FIA is appropriate for you, it is important to analyze your individual financial situation and goals. Working with a qualified financial planner that is also insurance licensed can be helpful in this process. He or she can help educate you on the pros and cons of different options, and how they may or may not be suitable for your needs.

Apparently not "everything that goes up has to come down" after all.

About The Capstone Planning Group
The Capstone Planning Group is an experienced wealth management team conveniently located at Cornerstone Bank. The team offers comprehensive financial planning, asset management,

and insurance. To learn more about the team and schedule a courtesy consultation please visit www.thecapstone.com group or call 508-764-0046

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Fixed Indexed Annuities (FIA) are not suitable for all investors. FIAs permit investors to participate in only a stated percentage of an increase in an index (participation rate) and may impose a maximum annual account value percentage increase. FIAs typically do not allow for participation in dividends accumulated on the securities represented by the index. Annuities are long-term, tax-deferred investment vehicles designed for retirement purposes. Withdrawals prior to 59 ½ may result in an IRS penalty, and surrender charges may apply. Guarantees are based on the claims-paying ability of the issuing insurance company.

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BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Baby, it's cold outside

Newsflash: it's cold. Our little neck of the woods here has finally hit frigid sub-zero temperatures. Folks may be running low on fuel, or even running empty, causing frozen pipes to burst. Fuel companies are scheduled two weeks out in some cases, and several customers are feeling stressed due to the financial burden this cold weather brings. Our only advice is to hold on tight and think about how toasty things will be when temperatures soar into the teens and low 20s again.

The winter solstice on Dec. 21 has passed, and the days are getting longer...and, we hope, sunnier. One perk to this post-New Year's time is that, well, the holidays are over. The hustle and bustle starts in late November and doesn't calm down until the week following New Year's. Is it overrated? Maybe. We hope you are all able to relax in the days ahead.

When weather hits sub-zero, it's hard to remember why we live here. We live in New England because winter, for the most part, is fun and manageable. We love our snow sports, the smell of wood stoves cranking and the beauty of the snow-capped mountains.

Some of you may think of our ancestors who had to cut chords of wood by hand all year long just to prepare for the harsh New England winters. Houses way back when had no insulation or the walls were stuffed with straw and mud. Common houses were much smaller, therefore easier to keep heated with one wood stove. The fireplace was the focal point of a colonial home and was the place where family members would talk and work on small projects during the evening. The average size of a house according to today's standards is about 2,600 square feet. A home of that size hundreds of years ago was often occupied by the wealthy, who were able to afford to put a wood stove in each room of the house. Children of-ten slept in lofts where the heat would rise and often shared a bed with siblings, using body heat to keep warm.

In days of old, people used thick curtains and down comforters to keep the heat in. Before bedtime, many would use a bed warmer, which was a brass pan with a long handle that was filled with hot rocks. Foot warmers were popular as well. These fancy contraptions were made of a wood framed tin box also with heated rocks that would be placed by the feet under the comforter. This heating method was used for trips in the horse and buggy as well. Church goers would bring their own boxes of heat and blankets to keep warm during a Sunday service.

Important to note is the fact that over the years humans have increasingly adapted to warmer weather as a result of modern technology. Our ancestors were able to withstand much colder temperatures and remain more comfortable in colder temperatures than we do today. All of that aside, we are pretty lucky to have the conveniences we do during these cold blasts.

Since winter is not nearly over, here are a few tips with regard to winter survival. Avoid frost bite and frost nip at all costs. When the water molecules in your skin cells freeze, they die. Once this happens, they can cause damage to your muscular and nervous systems. Exposed skin can develop frostbite within 30 minutes with winds of 10 mph and a temperature of -5 degrees. If you are outside and find your hands freezing, the warmest place for them to go is under your armpits, the warmest part of your body.

Another culprit is hypothermia. When your body hits 95 degrees you're entering the danger zone. When your organs start to drop in temperature they begin to shut down. If you notice yourself shivering or lacking coordination, it's time to get warm fast. Other more severe symptoms include low energy, difficulty speaking, a weak pulse and the cessation of the shivers. It's important to stay well nourished during any time spent outside, as your body needs that energy to stay warm. Always have a Snickers bar or something similar handy just in case. Staying hydrated is a must as you need water to keep your nervous system running properly. One rule of thumb is to never eat snow while trying to survive in frigid temperatures. Your body will be forced to warm it from the inside which wastes energy and can cause hypoglycemia. Try to keep your heart rate up as cold temperatures cause your heart rate to decrease. A higher heart rate will generate heat within your body however be sure not to do so much that you start to sweat, cold and sweat are never a good combination.

We hope none of you ever find yourselves in a situation where you need to implement any of the information above, however knowledge is power. Stay warm, summertime is just about six months away, where we will of course crank the air conditioning and complain about the heat and humidity.

VIEWPOINT

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

My spiritual mentor

Every person in front of you is the most important person and the most important time in now. Archbishop Anastasios Yannoulatos of Albania, my spiritual father and mentor who recently passed on to eternal life, reflected this worldview. He had the charismatic gift to make whoever he was speaking with feel cherished and loved. He saw the image of God in whomever he encountered and responded to them in the present moment with love.

One of many fond memories I have of the Archbishop is when my wife had a medical emergency in Albania in 1996. The post-communist medical system in Albania was a broken mess and my wife needed emergency surgery. As young American missionaries, we were idealistic about our mission, yet in this unexpected crisis we were afraid and uncertain. In walks Archbishop Anastasios to visit us. His compassion and concern radiate from his smile and gentle words. Not only does he bring his comforting presence, but he is carrying clean sheets and a pillow for the hospital bed. He thought about a basic necessity that we didn't know we even needed. He then made arrangements to fly us out early the next morning so that we could have the surgery done in Athens.

This is the compassionate and caring spirit of Archbishop Anastasios. I remember driving him to remote villages in Western Kenya as well as traveling with him in the mountain villages of Albania. Whomever he met, even the most simple and illiterate villager, he embraced and made feel special. Years later, I traveled with the Archbishop to London and New York when he met world renown leaders and wealthy power brokers. I noticed how he treated these influential people the same way he treated the African or Albanian villagers. He showed no partiality to the rich or powerful but treated whoever he meets in a way that made each person feel special and loved. Each person is a child of God and he saw that beauty in everyone.

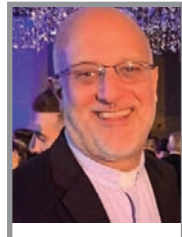
The direction of my life changed when I met Archbishop Anastasios in Nairobi, Kenya during the summer of 1987. I was in my last year at university studying mathematics when I went on the first Orthodox Christian mission trip from the United States. The Archbishop creatively invited a group of 25 young adults to build a church in the bush country of Kenya. My life would never be the same.

I lived with Archbishop Anastasios serving in the Church of East Africa for one year, and then my wife and I served for ten and a half years in post-communist Albania during the most difficult years of this mission. I witnessed the amazing miracles that Archbishop Anastasios did throughout his life.

When I was a young man reflecting on the meaning of life, the Archbishop challenged me by asking, "Is this Gospel of Jesus Christ really something that can be lived? This is the question many skeptics ask today. Yet, missionaries offer an answer. The ontological question is to be, not to do. The witness of our life is what is most important. This is what we offer to the world."

Well, I saw how the Archbishop offered his life to the world. One of the greatest lessons he taught me was that "the opposite of love is the ego." The ego is inward turned and tries to keep the focus on oneself. Divine Love goes outward and embraces everyone – the stranger, the foreigner, the sinner, the lost. The ego uses fear to separate us from the other. Divine Love helps us see God's image and likeness in every person and compels us to love them. This egocentric worldview can be individual as well as communal. The Archbishop challenged the Church when it acted in an inward-turned manner, only concerned about itself and its own people. "A Church without mission is not the Church."

Another lesson was that "the oil of religion should never be used to ignite the fires of hatred but should be used to sooth and heal the wounds of others." During the Kosovo War, when the world tried to portray the violence of that region as a religious conflict between Serbian Orthodox Christians and Albanian Muslims, the Archbishop showed how the Church needs to be a voice of peace that seeks to heal the wounds of others. He mobilized the Orthodox Church to set up refugee camps for the half million, mostly Muslim refugees who flooded into the country. He highlighted that we always need to help those who are suffering, regardless of who they may be. He even



BEYOND THE PEWS

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

offered to the Islamic community in Kosovo \$300,000 to rebuild one of the mosques that had been destroyed by the Serbians, while he also offered another \$300,000 to rebuild one of the Serbian Orthodox churches that had been destroyed by the Albanians.

During that war, he told me to take students from our Resurrection of Christ Theological Academy to offer whatever help we could in the refugee camps. One student asked him, "Should we wear our crosses to show these Muslim refugees we are Christian?" To which the Archbishop responded, "Wear your cross under your shirt but reflect the life of the cross to the refugees – a life of sacrificial love and service." Thus, we reached out and became friends with many Muslim refugees, and they saw the witness of true Christian love. One refugee, with the name Ramadan, told me after the war that despite all the horrible violence he experienced, he had hope for the future for Albanians and Serbians, for Muslims and Christians, because of the love he witnessed in the refugee camp of our Church.

Archbishop Anastasios preached, "A Christian should never have enemies. The Church has no enemies. Never call someone a bad communist, a bad atheist, a bad 'whatever.'" All people have the image of God in them. They are all children of God and thus they are our brothers and sisters. We must love them all."

When violence and chaos engulfed Albania in 1997 and the entire country fell into anarchy, all the foreign embassies evacuated their citizens. Yet, the Archbishop, and some of us, stayed knowing that we could not leave the people in the midst of this terrible crisis. Even though the Archbishop's life was threatened, he never feared. He trusted in God. And in the midst of that chaos, the Church responded with aid to tens of thousands of families who suffered during the months of this turmoil.

Archbishop Anastasios would often recall the lesson he learned when he was a deacon, on retreat in the monastery of Saint John the Divine on Patmos, right before his ordination to the priesthood. Back then, he wrestled with the decision to go to Africa as a missionary or to stay in Greece. Although most people were telling him he must stay in Greece, he learned to trust in God's Providence. "God is enough! Or is God enough? What God do we believe in if we think He is not enough? Is it the God who created the universe, who has intervened throughout history, who became incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ? If this is the God we believe in, then He is enough for every situation and difficulty of life. We can trust Him. If God is enough, then go to Africa. If God is not enough, then what God do we believe in?"

The Archbishop applied this lesson throughout his life. When he was 62 years old and asked to go to Albania after the dark years of communism, at a time when others think of retirement, the Archbishop accepted his greatest challenge – to go to the only country in the world where all religion was forbidden for 23 years and resurrect an ancient Church. He preached to a generation of people who knew nothing about any religion. God would be enough.

Another important lesson I learned was to always remain humble. When the young Anastasios became a bishop and professor in 1972, he realized the danger of two prestigious positions in Greece. He vowed, however, to always remain a deacon who serves others and a student who is constantly learning. "There is always something to learn, no matter where we go, and no matter with whom we meet. From Africa, I learned an important lesson for Albania. Respect all that is good wherever you go, and don't think you know better than others. Don't try to impose your own culture on others. Offer what is best from one's own culture, but respect and learn from what is good from theirs."

Cross and Resurrection summarize the life and ministry of Archbishop Anastasios. He accepted whatever cross God gives him in life and lived in the light and hope of our Jesus Christ's Resurrection every day. The first words he learned in Albanian were "Krishti u Ngjall," (Christ is Risen!) And everything he did in Albania, and throughout his life, was to bring the light and hope of the Good News of Jesus Christ to a dark world.

Consider these moves when considering a career transition



FINANCIAL FOCUS

DENNIS ANTONOPOULOS

If you are navigating a career transition, what financial moves should you consider? Here are five things you need to know before making a move.

Know the money involved. If your transition is due to a layoff or early retirement package, you need to understand how much money you'll receive and for how long. Will the money stop if you accept a new role, will you accrue sick leave and vacation time during your transition and will you be paid for unused leave at your final resignation date. You should also investigate if you qualify for any programs that would support you during your transition.

Know your benefits package. Many companies and organizations offer extended benefit packages for those transitioning into retirement or being laid off. For example, the Federal government may offer coverage under the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program, or you can research programs like the Temporary Continuation of Coverage, which can last up to 18 months for separating employees. Regardless of your situation, doing your research and asking questions about understanding what programs and support is available to you is key.

Know your retirement plan options. Many Americans have retirement savings in 401ks and similar programs. Government employees use the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). You should work with a financial professional who can explain how you'll be taxed on withdrawals from these accounts, should you need them. In some cases, you can qualify for early retirement and can avoid the 10 percent early withdrawal penalties. If you're transitioning to a new role, you may have the option to transfer past accounts like your TSP to a new employer's 401(k) if the plan accepts transfers. Finally, you could roll over your existing savings plan into an IRA allowing you to avoid immediate taxes and potentially providing you with some attractive investment options.

Review your finances and budget. What sources of income can you count on during this transition? If you have built an emergency fund containing several months' worth of living expenses, you may need to tap into it. If you were already nearing retirement age, you might start drawing on Social Security, even if it's earlier than you planned. If you aren't near retirement age, you may be able to find some part-time work until you land your next full-time job. At the same time, you may want to closely examine your budget to find areas in which you can cut back. One of the many free budgeting apps available online can prove useful in this area.

Get some answers — and some help. You may want to consult with a financial professional, who can provide advice and guidance and help you work toward your short- and long-term goals.

This can unquestionably be a challenging time for you. But by looking at all your options, drawing on all your resources and getting some financial advice and guidance, you can make decisions that can help you be prepared for whatever life throws at you.

Edward Jones, its employees, and financial advisors cannot provide tax or legal advice. You should consult your attorney or qualified tax advisor regarding your situation.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Dennis Antonopoulos, your local Edward Jones Advisor at 5 Albert St., Auburn, MA 01501 Tel: 508-832-5385 or dennis.antonopoulos@edwardjones.com.

Celebrating Garlic's Greatness!

A recent bout with the cold/flu virus that is going around prompted me to rediscover the healing benefits of garlic. The truth is, I didn't have the energy, time or patience to wait half a day at the doctor's office to get checked out, so I took matters (and a bunch of garlic bulbs) into my own hands. The result? I was feeling "practically perfect in every way" (to quote Mary Poppins) in about four days!

While garlic isn't meant as a substitute for medical attention, the inexpensive and tasty herb can be a good first step in warding off a cold or flu. Read on for some old fashioned garlic home remedies, several of which have appeared in previous columns through the years.

Note: Garlic is a natural herb so please check with your physician before eating large amounts of garlic or while on any medication.

Did you know centuries ago, the bubonic plague killed one in three Europeans, but garlic vendors (who wore garlic braids around their necks) were among those who were largely spared? The belief back then was that the plague was spread by vampires; thus the legend that vampires are afraid of garlic was born. Today, we know that raw garlic contains a

natural immune boosting compound. The more garlic you eat (and apparently the vendors ate plenty) the stronger the hike to your immune system.

Garlic is praised as an antibacterial, antiviral and antifungal remedy, and in fact, scientific studies reveal that people who eat garlic regularly suffer less from colds than those who don't. In addition, research shows taking garlic at the onset of a cold can reduce the time taken to recover. But it's important to know that garlic must be fresh for optimal benefits. Garlic's active ingredient, allicin, is destroyed within an hour of smashing the clove. So eat fresh garlic, or run it through a juicer in a vegetable drink for best results.

Garlic was once called Poor Man's Penicillin, and it's no wonder. According to Tanushree Podder, author of "You are what you Eat," an average clove of garlic contains substances equivalent to 100,000 units of penicillin (about 1/5 the average dose), without its side effects! Research even indicates garlic may be efficient in preventing heart disease and cancer. More studies show garlic reduces cholesterol and high blood pressure, and may even help regulate blood sugar for pre-diabetics.



TAKE
THE
HINT
KAREN
TRAINOR

But here's the kicker: to reap most of these long term health benefits you need to eat one to three fresh cloves per day for at least three months before positive results are seen.

The book, "The Healing Power of Garlic," suggests garlic nose drops can kill the viruses that cause cold or flu. Here are the book's instructions on concocting the drops: Crush some garlic to obtain juice, and add ten parts water and mix well. Apply as you would regular nose drops.

According to a home remedy published long ago, if you place a clove of garlic on each side of the mouth between the teeth and cheek, a cold will disappear within a day. It's worth a try!

Colds and flu are often accompanied by congestion. Users of this generations-old homemade expectorant claim it works better than costly commercial brands.

Ingredients: one white onion, chopped;

three cloves garlic, chopped; sugar to cover. Directions: Place onion in a deep bowl. Cover with sugar, and allow mixture to set for at least an hour. A syrupy juice will result. Take a spoonful or two of the mixture to relieve congestion.

According to Prevention magazine garlic is among the top nine "power foods" that best boost immunity. They are: Yogurt; Oats and Barley; Garlic; Fish; Chicken Soup; Tea; Beef; Sweet Potatoes and Mushrooms.

Did you know garlic is quick and easy to grow? It can even be grown on a windowsill indoors! And the garlic plant does not give off an odor, so plant away!

To do: Save a clove from a garlic bulb and remove all the skin. Plant point end up in a container with soil to which you've added a layer of pebbles for drainage. Feed with fish emulsion every couple of weeks. Keep the soil moist and in a sunny area, and in about four weeks your plant will be nearly a foot tall!

Spicy foods such as garlic may be the weapon to battling mucus. Studies show foods such as chili peppers, horseradish and garlic help reduce congestion by driving out

mucus. How? The same agent that induces tears also helps thin out excess mucus.

The combination of hot, steaming chicken broth with a dash of garlic and hot pepper has proven especially beneficial to thin mucus. As a bonus, garlic has antibiotic properties that aid the immune system.

Did you know? Garlic is an herb that has a reputation for igniting romance. Long ago, Tibetan monks were forbidden to enter the monastery if they had been eating garlic, due to the belief it stirs up passion. The Greeks and the Egyptians also used to hail garlic's aphrodisiac properties.

Garlic has also been hailed as a natural tick repellent. A natural spray for grass and garden can be made by pureeing in a blender three peeled cloves of water and about two cups of water. Strain out the garlic and then dilute it with enough water to make a gallon. Add a couple of drops of liquid dish detergent to help it dispense. Spray the grass and foliage where people congregate and along wooded borders.

Some folks are also convinced eating garlic during the summer

months helps prevent mosquitoes and ticks from biting them!

Win a Three Course Dinner for Two at the Publick House

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

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I have no regrets for my vote

To the Editor:

This letter is in response to Mr. Frank Magiera.

I have read other articles you have written, and usually end up using the paper as fire starter, or lining for our birdcage. This one however, I had to figure out where to start.

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.

EV's. Our now President is not discouraging the production. Simply trying to slow down the mandates, giving people a choice, which is what supposedly free countries do. Mandate, in basic terms, is an order to follow. Remember the Covid mandates? Orders then-President Biden gave to receive injections of vaccine that is still is not fully approved, but rather put into emergency use? Basically, an experimental drug, with people as the test subjects. Mandated because he stood in front of the world and said anyone who received the shots would never get Covid. That, of course, would be untrue, as he himself has had Covid several times, that we've been told. People from all walks of life lost their careers and were fired from their jobs for not wanting to be a human test subject. Add mandates on cooking equipment, heating equipment, among other things, and it sounds like Joe Biden was the Nazi, not giving a choice, but mandates instead.

EVs, by the way, require mining for the metals used in the batteries, which has a large carbon footprint. The smelting process which abstracts the metals from the ores, which releases sulfur oxide among other things into the atmosphere. Batteries which can be recycled upon their end of use, but only 5 percent from around the world actually are, leaving a mountain of hazardous

waste seeping into the ground, water, and wildlife. EVs which in comparison, are heavier than our ICE cars, meaning bridges, tunnels, parking garages that are not built for all the extra weight would begin to crumble, killing people in the process if we all did what you want and start driving them next week.

As far as the Constitution and the 14th Amendment, I'll agree with you, Donald Trump can't just change it himself, like Joe Biden tried to do when he wanted a Beureau of Misinformation. Who exactly would have decided that? Anyone who disagreed would have had their First Amendment rights to freedom of speech suspended. Or his last couple days in office, when he tried to single-handedly add a 28th Amendment. If that makes Trump a Nazi, so is Joe.

USAID, a long list of wasteful spending has been finally revealed. If you enjoy wasting your money on ridiculous things, please stop by my house, put cash in my hand every day, week, month, your choice, and I will gladly find something ridiculous to spend it on. USAID — which, by the way, is an organization created by executive order in 1961 by John F. Kennedy. If it was created by order, it can be shut by order. Nothing against the law with that.

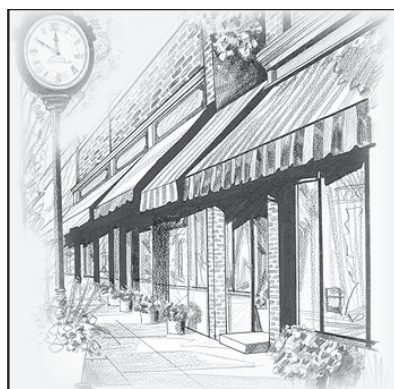
Deportation and agriculture? It is rapists, murderers, child traffickers and molesters, drug dealers, and gang mem-

bers that are being caught up with and sent packing. I personally don't give a hoot where they end up. GITMO? Sounds like a good idea. I doubt any of them have been working on farms anywhere. Roughly speaking, around 40 percent, or just slightly more farm workers in this country, are undocumented. But only 4 percent of undocumented people are actually farm workers. It is like slave labor, and I can understand why you would be in favor of that. It was, in fact, the Democrats who formed the original version of the KKK.

Realize how much money, just in this state alone, has been spent on illegals arriving here. Again, if you like giving your money away, I'm available.

I voted for Donald Trump, and have no regrets. You may want to resort to the usual name calling, and label me as some kind of threat to the nation, or Nazi sympathizer. Good luck with that! If you actually absorb my responses instead of just writing some tirade, you'll probably realize I could say the same about you. Not because you are, but because the freedom to have different views is what makes this country what it is, rather than being subject to a ruler's mandates.

JOHN GIAQUINTO
DUDLEY



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Dudley Women's Club supports local charities

DUDLEY — At the Dudley Women's Club's Feb. 13 Stew & Story of Giving, the club donated \$500 each to six local charities: Our Bright Future, Together We Blossom, the JAK-L Foundation, Literacy Vols of Central Mass, Make-a-Wish of Mass & and Rhode Island, and Animal Assisted Therapy Services.

Club members prepared and shared simmering stews with representatives from three of the charities while we heard their stories of giving.

The club also collected diapers valued at \$1,168 for the Webster-Dudley Food Share. We thank our more than 70 club members and our communities for supporting the club and all of our charitable undertakings.

The DWC membership of more than 70 women of various ages and backgrounds from Dudley, Webster, Southbridge, Charlton, Uxbridge, Millbury and several Northern Connecticut towns work together to uplift and support our communities.

Learn more at www.dudleywomansclub.org.



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Park Avenue students get a lesson in Medieval manners



2025's 4th Grade Student Leadership Team responsible for the event.



Two first grade students are having a blast eating their medieval meal and, of course, using their "Manners."



An aerial shot of the inside of The Medieval Manor.

WEBSTER — On Feb. 5, the fourth grade Student Leadership Team turned the Park Avenue Elementary Cafeteria into a Medieval Manor, with a focus on having "Good Manners."

The 4th Grade Student Leadership Team has been creating props for this event since early November.

"It was a lot of work," said one of the members as she enjoyed a giant piece of chicken supplied especially for this event.

The cafeteria staff graciously played along with the idea and created a medieval lunch of chicken legs, mashed potatoes, corn and a special dessert if the students used their manners.

"The leadership team could not have put this event on without the help of our custodial staff, cafeteria lunch ladies, lunch and recess aids, after school staff, front office staff, Mrs. Da'Ascanio our Art Teacher and the 4th grade teachers for being flexible," exclaimed Matthew Aronian (The Dean of Students), "It was truly a fabulous event."

Students were in awe as they entered the outside walls of the castle and their faces lit up, especially in the younger grades. "The Kindergarteners were funny as many said it felt like they were entering a real castle," said Gina Wojnarowicz, one of our Adjustment counselors that works with our young-

est population.

The students had flickering battery operated candles on every table, gothic chandeliers, red drapes hanging from the windows, table cloths, pictures hanging on the wall and a fake fireplace on the stage where the Students of the Month were able to sit and have a special snack.

"I heard a lot of students saying please, thank you and you're welcome," said Matthew Aronian. "It was an amazing event, one to remember."

The 4th Grade Student Leadership Team consists of board members and news team members. This initiative was part of Park Avenue's PBIS Program that is supported by the wonderful faculty at PAE, Ms Puliafco (Principal), Ms Ochocki (Assistant Principal) and currently led by Mr. Goodier (Assistant Principal).



A chandelier stays motionless before the student rush.

Courtesy

OXFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL ANNOUNCES HONOR ROLL

OXFORD — Oxford Middle School has released its honor roll for the second quarter of the 2024-2025 school year.

High Honors

Grade 8: Alexander Campbell, Bella Coghlan, Nikolas Coraccio, Emma Farrar, Ashlyn Halliday, Tucker Harrity, Ali Johnson, Riley Maki, Nathan Mayo, Tyler Melton, Catalina Montalvo, Gunjan Niroula, Brooke O'Connor, Savannah Pratt, Destiny Purcell, Colton Toedt, Samuel Yogarntnam

Grade 7: Abigail Burque, Sadie Crouch, Karoline D'Alessandro, Lily Dolbec, Zachary Dubsky, Max Figueroa, Jillian Gustafson, Liam Harrity, Willow Keller, Alana LaFrance, Lucas Laurie, Ashton O'Malley, Michael Peck, Mateo Quintero, Jenselys Ramos, Megan Riley, Heather Stebbins, Lilliana Tervo, Jordyn Torteson, Harrison Voas

Grade 6: Hazel Burlingame, Sadie Coghlan, Hadley Coraccio, Brynn Czernicki-Nasis, Cora Descheneau, Caleb Dubsky, Trevor Gould, Margaret Griffin, Jackson Harvey, Isabella LaMountain, Stella Pantano, Jenna Shenette, Chad Sliwoski, Sarah Stebbins, Sadie Stewart, Raean Teal, Liam Valipour, Marissa Worden, Maklenzie Zwang,

Honors

Grade 8: Brenna Burke, Ethan Campbell, Mason Case, Chase Checkoway, Kendra Cutroni, Kelsey Dunn, Michael Forbes, Sophia Francis, Natalie Gauthier, Emmery Gustafson, Mary-Jane Hall, Ethan Hamilton, Victoria LaMountain, Chloe Lavallee, Lily Margoupis, Samantha Marrier, Olivia Martinez, Keigan Mcilvaine, Agnes Molloy, Kaliyana Padilla, Joseph Peters, Noah Poirier, Dionne Quarshie, Isabelle Richmond, Jayden Rosado, Alexander Skeates, Ava St. Peter, Jameson Tyrrell, Jude Worden

Grade 7: Cameron Aquafresca, Lilah Archambeault, Gemma Balboni, Dylan Barberio, Marina Biancaniello, Olivia Boulette, Haley Capistran, Hailey Cicerchia, Noah Durand, Brielle Fournier, Ava Graika, Sophia Meneguzzo, Maxwell Palaia, Pedro Paniagua, Sophia Renaud, Hunter Rodriguez, Rhegan Stopyra, Parker

Tyrrell, Anabelle Watters,

Grade 6: Clayton Almstrom, Saige Angell, Diego Aponte, Charles Augustynski, Kaylee Augustynski, Logan Barnes, Hayden Bates, Jack Belmore, Narta Berisha, Brianna Borelli, Emile Bourbeau IV, Gavin Brown, Bradley Bush, Riley Capistran, Briella Caracciolo, Kyle Case, Amber Conway, Kaiden Corriveau, Olivia Daoust, Anthony Degaetano, Kendall Donnelly, Joshua George, Ethan Gustafson, Kellen Harrison, Travis Kogbe, Mason Livingston, Brooke Mastromatteo, Joseph Menke, Ava Montalvo, Caroline Montalvo, Beowulf Morin, Landon Morris, Brandon O'Connor, Tianna Parker, Matthew Peck, Tessa Peloso, Mason Roux, Elijah Sims, Jr. Mia St. Peter, Briley Todd, Aislyn White



The stone wall entrance to PAE's Medieval Manor.

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OBITUARIES

Anna M Durward, 92



Anna M Durward, age 92, of Dudley, MA died Friday, February 7, 2025, at Harrington Memorial Hospital in Southbridge, MA. Anna was born on October 17, 1932 in Boston, MA. She was the daughter of the late Jack and the late Josephine (Warrow) Wolf. She was pre-deceased by her husband of 41 years, Robert F Durward, who passed on November 1, 1997, and her two brothers Reginald Wolf and Jack Wolf. Anna is survived by one son, Robert Durward, and his wife Kerri of Dudley, MA; and four daughters: Pamela Katinas and her husband Fran of Auburn, MA, Kathleen Guenther of Webster, MA, Kelly Swift and her husband Dave of Fort Collins, CO, and Tracy Raynor of Leominster, MA. She is also survived by her sister, Jackie Monahan of Abington, MA, and two nieces, Cheryl Burns of Abington, MA and Karen Menard of Carver, MA. Anna was a grandmother of thirteen grandchildren: Lauren Hourihan (Guenther), Erin Katinas, Brianna O'Rourke (Guenther), Shane Swift, Gabrielle "Gigi" Guenther, Conor Durward, Jillian Katinas, Ariana Guenther, Abigail Swift, Bridget Durward, Danielle Raynor, Leisbeth

Swift, and Paige Raynor. She also had four great-grandchildren: Patrick and Keira O'Rourke, and John and Bennett Hourihan. Anna's love for her family was evident- she enjoyed supporting her grandchildren at various activities and events, having them over for visits in her home, and decorating her fridge with pictures from all stages of life. Her family will miss her sense of humor, as Anna enjoyed to joke and laugh, and endured many prank calls over the years. Anna was employed by the town of Dudley, MA for 27 years, initially as Assistant Tax Collector, and then later as the Tax Collector before her retirement. She was a former member of the Dudley Grange, and enjoyed many Strawberry Festivals on the hill. Anna enjoyed doing puzzles, was an avid Celtics fan, and an animal lover. She especially loved to feed the birds and watch them from her home. Anna was a vibrant and remarkable woman, and she will be missed deeply by her family and those who knew her. Calling hours will be private, and a private graveside service will be held at Corbin Cemetery in Dudley, MA. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Community Cat Connection 289 Thompson Rd. PO Box 724 of Webster, MA. 01570 . Bartel Funeral Home 33 Schofield Avenue Dudley is assisting the family . www.bartelfuneralhome.com

Bruce Lee McKinstry, 72



Charlton: Bruce Lee McKinstry, 72, of Oakridge Dr., Charlton, passed away peacefully with his loving family by his side on Saturday, Feb. 8th, after a brief illness.

He leaves his beloved wife of 51 years, Nancy R. (Reil) McKinstry; his brother, Gary S. McKinstry and his wife Virginia of Norway, ME; their son and nephew, Scott L. McKinstry; his three sister-in-law's, Judy Henderson of Douglas, Sally Longwell of Tyngsboro, Peggy LaDow and her husband Tom of Spencer and many nieces and nephews.

Bruce was born in Webster the son of the late Leon Joseph "Bud" and Sophie Rose (Borowski) McKinstry. He graduated from Bartlett High School in Webster in 1970 and went on to work as a Shipper/Receiver in textile, motorcycle parts/accessories and NDT businesses, retiring from the Mistras Group in Auburn in 2017. He was a very talented musician playing both the guitar and the ukulele. Bruce owned several

motorcycles over the years and enjoyed spending time on poker runs and cruising the back roads. He and his wife Nancy loved their more than 20 trips to the Hawaiian Islands. Bruce truly loved all things Hawaiian and had a special love for the island of Maui. Bruce and his wife also loved spending time on the Cape at their condo and taking long walks on the beach.

Please join us in a Celebration of Life for Bruce on Saturday, March 1st, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm in the Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge, with a remembrance service to follow in the funeral home at 1:00 pm.

In lieu of traditional mourning, we request the joy of your company in bright colors and Hawaiian shirts to celebrate Bruce's love of the aloha spirit.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Maui Strong Fund, 827 Fort Street Mall, Honolulu, HI 96813 or VNA Hospice and Palliative Care, 67 Millbrook St. 500 North, Worcester, MA 01606.

www.morrillfuneralhome.com

Dennis R. Anderson

1943 – 2025



Webster - Dennis R. Anderson, 81, of Humes St., died Thursday afternoon, February 13, 2025, at Harrington Healthcare in Webster. He was the loving husband of Frances J. (Beaushene)

Anderson. Born in White Plains, New York, he was the son of the late Russell and Mabel (Jenkins) Anderson.

Mr. Anderson received his bachelor's degree in engineering from Northeastern and his master's degree in finance from Clark University.

On September 9, 1967, at All Saints Church in Worcester he was united in marriage to the former Frances J. Beaushene.

Mr. Anderson worked as an engineer for Digital Corporation.

He was a member of the 200 Sportsmen Club, Singletary Rod & Gun Club, and the Douglas Beagle Club. He enjoyed target shooting, hunting, and

fishing.

Dennis is survived by his wife of fifty-seven years, Frances J. Anderson; his children, Damon Dennis Anderson and his wife Cathy Jean of Webster; Shelly Ann Anderson and her fiancé Mark DiFronzo of Merrimack, NH, and Darryl William Anderson and his wife Lisa of Oxford; his sister, Susan Kelce of Nashua, NH; his brother in law William Beaushene of Lunenburg, and sister in laws, Barbara Larson of Charlton and Joyce Lowney of Boylston; his grandchildren, Alexis Anderson and Brandon Anderson and his great grandchildren, Nyah Rodrigues, Mason Rodrigues, Jaiden Rodrigues, and Lucas Rodrigues.

Funeral arrangements are private and have been entrusted to the Shaw-Majercik Funeral Home, 48 School St., Webster, MA 01570. Memorial donations may be made to Veterans Inc., 69 Grove St., Worcester, MA 01605. For memorial guestbook visit www.shaw-majercik.com.

Claire Burgess, 89



Claire Burgess, age 89, of Dudley died Wednesday, February 12, 2025 at Harrington Memorial Hospital of Southbridge, MA After an illness Claire was born February 22, 1935 in Dudley, MA. She is the daughter of the late Romeo and the late Rose (Bousquet) Arpin. Predeceased by her husband John Burgess.

She is survived by two daughters: Karen Das of Stuart, FL and Nancy Kelly of Greensburg, PA, and one son: James Burgess of North Grosvenordale, CT; Sister : Linda Carter of Thompson Ct. and one brother: Gerald Arpin of Thompson, CT; She

also has seven grandchildren; Three great grandchildren and several nieces and nephews Her long time Companion, Don Farquhar of Webster, MA;

Predeceased by her Sister, Lorraine Marks, and Brother, Roger Arpin.

Claire was an Insurance broker at Nalewaik insurance for many years .

A private memorial Mass at St. Anthony Of Padua Church, 24 Dudley Hill Rd., Dudley, MA Private Burial will be in St. Joseph Cemetery, North Grosvenordale CT

In lieu of flowers donations to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital, PO Box 501 St. Jude PL Memphis TN 38105-9959 Bartel Funeral Home 33 Schofield Avenue Dudley is assisting the family .memory book at www.bartelfuneralhome.com

Elizabeth C. (Saad) Wetherbee

1936 – 2025



PIC

Webster - Elizabeth C. (Saad) Wetherbee, age 88, died peacefully, Wednesday, February 12, 2025, at Webster Manor.

Elizabeth was born in 1936 in Oxford, MA. She was the daughter of the late Michael and Mary (Derateau) Saad. After living in Oxford for several years, she moved to Webster is lived there the remainder of her life. She retired from Anglo Fabrics, where she worked as a Winder for many years. She was a lifetime member of the Webster Fish & Game and enjoyed playing bingo, going to the casinos, spending quality time with her family and "going-out" with them.

Elizabeth was the widow of the late Richard H. Wetherbee Sr., who died in 1992. She is survived by four sons, Richard Wetherbee Jr. and his companion Kim Costen of Southbridge, Mark Wetherbee of Putnam, John Wetherbee and his wife Jennifer of San Antonio, TX, Matthew Wetherbee and his fiancé Amy Parker of Webster; three daughters, Cindy Hudon and her

former husband Robert "Buzz" Hudon of Webster, Judy Boulet and her husband Gregory of Woodstock, Cathy Gomes and her companion Frank Farrar of Woodstock; twelve grandchildren, Debra Boulet, Renea Sharpe, John Wetherbee Jr., Shawn Wetherbee, Karah Wetherbee, Devon Wetherbee, Ethan Wetherbee, Maya Wetherbee, Joseph Wetherbee, Samantha Gatzke, Brooke Gomes and Skye Gomes; ten great-grandchildren; and a sister-in-law, Beatrice Demers of Southbridge. She was predeceased by her brothers, Charles Saad, George Saad, Joseph Saad and Michael Saad; by her sisters, Theresa Krvosky, Barbara Paquette, Lucille Keefe, Ramona Kudzal and Frances Henault.

Relatives and friends are invited to gather on Monday, February 17, 2025, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at Shaw-Majercik Funeral Home, 48 School Street, Webster. On Tuesday, February 18, 2025, funeral services will begin at 9:00 am in the funeral home, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 10:00 am in Saint Louis Church, 14 Lake Street, Webster. Burial will follow in Mount Zion Cemetery, Webster. A memorial guestbook is available at www.shaw-majercik.com.

Mary H. Lonergan, 93



DUDLEY - Mary H. Lonergan, 93, died on Saturday, December 21, 2024, at Christopher House, Worcester, after a period of declining health. She leaves a sister, Ann N. Stochaj of Dudley; a brother, Gary W. Lonergan and his wife, Carole L. Lonergan, of Alexandria, VA; godsons, James J. Stochaj and Kevin M. Lonergan; many nieces, nephews, grandnieces, grandnephews, great-grandnieces and great-grand-nephews. She was preceded in death by her siblings: L. James Lonergan, Rev. Richard V. Lonergan, Joyce S. Brezniak, V. June Butcher; Lee Ellen Olmstead and Paul J. Lonergan. Mary was born on May 30, 1931 at the family home, 56 Lake Street in Webster, as the Memorial Day parade passed by and the band played "Yankee Doodle." Her parents were Leo V. Lonergan and Helen E. (Smykowski) Lonergan. Mary was a 1948 graduate of Bartlett High School and received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Salem State College and her Masters in Education from Worcester State College. Ms. Lonergan began her career in edu-

cation as a business teacher, where she taught typing, shorthand, book-keeping and accounting in Woodstock, VT, and then at Bartlett High School and Framingham High School. She was very proud that many of her students later became CPAs. In addition, Mary taught typing at the Massachusetts State Police Academy. She was a communicant and active member of Saint Anthony of Padua Church in Dudley, and a past President of the Webster-Dudley Teachers Association, past Treasurer of the Saint Louis League of Catholic Women, past President of the Serra Club of Southern Worcester County, and a member of the Elizabeth Ann Seton Society. Her funeral Mass was held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 22, 2025 at Saint Anthony of Padua Church, 24 Dudley Hill Road, Dudley. The burial will be held privately. A calling period took place, before Mass, in the church hall from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. Funeral arrangements are under the direction of Scanlon Funeral Service, 38 East Main Street, Webster. Donations in her memory may be made to the Black Tavern Historical Society, PO Box 143, Dudley, MA 01571. Mass will be livestreamed at stanthony-dudley.org www.websterfunerals.com

Francis J. Spiewakowski, 85



THOMPSON, CT - Francis J. "Spin" Spiewakowski, 85, passed away peacefully Tuesday, February 4, 2025 at home.

He was born on May 15, 1939 in Webster, MA, a son of Frank and Catherine

(Duszlak) Spiewakowski and graduated from Bartlett High School in 1957, and also attended Worcester Junior College.

He served for 8 years in the United States Army National Guard.

Mr. Spiewakowski first worked as the distribution manager for Bates Shoe Company in Webster, MA, then became the lead man at Pratt & Whitney in Hartford, CT. He and his wife owned and operated Spinorama Laundromat in Webster, MA for 12 years. His final employment was as the purchasing manager for HT Machines in Webster, MA.

A devoted family man, Spin found great joy in spending time with his family. He was lovingly known as "dad" to his daughters, and "da" and "grampy" to his grand and great-grandchildren. In his retirement, he was a tinkerer and general handyman around the house. He enjoyed golfing with his buddies, gardening, and playing cards.

He leaves his wife of 63 years, Maryann E. (Willette) Spiewakowski;

2 daughters, Lisa

M. Frattura and her husband Roberto of Carmignano, Italy and Su Spiewakowski and her partner John Olender, Jr. of Ashford, CT; 3 grandchildren, Nastasia Frattura and her husband Enea Dinami, Maximilian Francis Frattura, and Alexia Frances Olender; 2 great-grandchildren, Nora Dinami and Edoardo Dinami; a brother, Walter Spiewakowski of Norton, MA; 2 sisters, Theresa Kudron of Brookfield, MA and Barbara Leduc of Webster, MA. He was preceded in death by his infant son Robert Spiewakowski and by his sister Dorothy Daviau.

A Memorial Mass will be held on Wednesday, April 23 at 11:00 AM in Saint Louis Church, 14 Lake Street, Webster, MA (please meet at church). Visitation will be held from 10:00 AM until the time of the Mass. Donations in his memory may be made to either St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105 or to Saint Louis Endowment Fund, 52 Negus Street, Webster, MA 01570. Funeral arrangements are under the direction of Sitkowski, Malboeuf & Hickey Funeral Home, 340 School Street, Webster, MA. www.websterfunerals.com

Helen J. Hession, 88



DUDLEY - Helen J. (Moroz) Hession, 88, died Saturday, February 1, 2025 in Webster Manor after an illness.

She was born in Dudley at home on April 12, 1936, the daughter of Stanley and Mary (Antos) Moroz. She was preceded in death by her husband of 56 years Tom Hession in 2016 and by her brother Stanley Moroz in 2020.

She leaves her niece and godchild Karen Moroz and her sister-in-law Agnes Moroz, both of Dudley. She also leaves several Hession in-laws, many nieces and nephews, and several very good friends, Deb, Lorraine, Dan and

LuAnn.

Helen was employed by the State Division of Unemployment Security in its Webster office for 33 years.

Like her husband, she was an enthusiastic traveler: they visited many places around the world, mostly during his school vacations. She loved candlepin bowling and belonged to several bowling leagues at Mohegan Lanes in Webster. She loved to walk for both exercise and relaxation.

As she wished, services will be held privately. She will be laid to rest next to her husband in Saint Joseph Garden of Peace, Webster. Arrangements were under the direction of Sitkowski, Malboeuf & Hickey Funeral Home, 340 School Street, Webster.

www.websterfunerals.com

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



Libraries reach out for public support

BY GUS STEEVES
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY — Area library fans came together last Friday at Pearle L. Crawford Public Library to start their annual push for library support from the Legislature. In the process, they got an update on some of the bills being proposed, pro and con.

Naturally, the core of them were those seeking funding for the Mass Board of Library Commissioners (which provides grants to most public libraries), the Mass Center for the Book (which promotes literacy and supports Bay State writers), and more general state library aid.

According to Commissioner Karen Traub, "it's been a while since we've seen an increase," but that's particularly important now with "the challenges we've seen lately."

Those include an increased push for censorship in some places, increasing need for

English-language education, proposed federal cuts, increasing costs for materials, and more.

Regarding the MCB, Traub noted that promotes the annual reading challenge with a different theme monthly (some audience members said what they were reading), Letters about Literature (where students write to authors culminating in a Statehouse ceremony), Children's Literature Festival and book awards.

For some people, she added, libraries were their "only contact with the outside world" during the pandemic, and some credit them with saving or changing their lives.

One of those was Dudley resident Kate Evanski, a teacher in Auburn.

"The library is and always has been my safe place, my happy place," she said.

In poetry, she told the story of how being able to escape to the library, especially to Tolkien's books, helped her "quiet the

noise" and get through her father's unexpected death as a teenager.

In the library, she recalled, "I was no longer the girl who'd just lost her father. I was just a girl reading a book. I was free."

Eventually, fiction "pulled me from the depths of despair," she said.

For Ed Bazinet, the library has been his refuge for 80 years. He recalled his first book in the late 1940s was about an egg in a barnyard hatching into a strange chimera creature that faced discrimination from other beings until it saved their community. To him, that book made him see the importance of "how you look at something through your difficult eyes ... and come to understand its purpose."

Both of those messages resonated with Jason Homer, Worcester's library director, who said libraries are safe spaces open to everyone "regardless of your belief sys-

tem." He talked about how they need to be safe for the staff, too, promoting the Safe Spaces for Librarians bill, which aims to protect "people facing direct threats over materials that are in their libraries."

Furthermore, Homer talked about the Act for Free Expression (S.141/H.625), which aims to challenge book bans in schools. According to its text, it expands student rights to specifically include "receive information, including through materials determined to be educational and age-appropriate ... by the school library teacher" or whomever selects such materials, based on policy drafted by the school committee that includes a process for book challenges. It also gives students, parents and guardians the right to challenge book removals.

One issue, he noted, is that Massachusetts doesn't require librarians be certified in K-6

schools, and many don't have one. To him, that raises the question of "where are they getting digital literacy knowledge" and other issues.

On the finance side, Homer said a growing concern is e-books. The publishers charge libraries three to six times more per copy (up to \$120 each) than they charge everyday people, and each copy goes away after 26 check-outs or two years, forcing the library to repurchase them repeatedly. That's "wasting taxpayer money," he argued, advocating for HD.1221/SD.2329 to correct such abuses. The bills prohibit contracts that stop libraries from "disclosing any terms of [their] license agreements" or "require or enable libraries to violate the confidentiality of patron records." It also creates a board to investigate how to make library prices be the same as everyone else's, let the library determine loan periods, prohibit license and number of loan-out

restrictions and other things.

CWMARS Executive Director Jeanette Lundgren said digital and physical item use has been growing, with a 5 percent increase in physical check-outs (10 million items) and 26 percent in digital (3 million items). The library network now has 165 members, including 18 new, small ones in the last four years, some of whom now have their first online catalogs.

She described libraries as being in "very trying times. We don't know what will happen at the federal level, and we don't know its impact on the state budget."

Lundgren and others urged library lovers to contact legislators with their personal stories of why libraries matter to them. They noted such stories, even brief ones, matter far more than form letters.

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



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LEGALS

LEGAL NOTICE CONTRACT NO. 2024-02 WATER MAIN INSTALLATION AUBURN, MASSACHUSETTS

AUBURN - WORCESTER INTERCONNECTION WATER TRANSMISSION MAIN PHASE 2 (Contract No. 2024-2) will be received by the Auburn Water District, MA at 75 Church Street, Auburn, MA 01501 on or before Wednesday, March 12th 2025 at 2 P.M. at which time and place all Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

This project includes the completion of an interconnection loop between the Auburn Water District's water supply system and the City of Worcester's water supply systems including a pressure reducing/metering facility (excluding prefabricated building shell and exterior water mains installed by others in 2023) and approximately 2,600 feet of 12" diameter ductile iron water main with associated valves and hydrants to be installed along Southbridge Street in order to tie into the existing system. Contract Documents may be examined and/or obtained after Wednesday, February 12th, 2025 at Comprehensive Environmental Inc., 41 Main Street, Bolton, Massachusetts 01740 from 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. Monday through Friday, except for holidays. A copy of the Contract Documents may be obtained upon the deposit of \$50.00 (refundable) by check or money order made payable to Comprehensive Environmental Inc. Instructions for submitting bids and Bid Security Deposit are contained in the Contract Documents.
February 21, 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. WO25P0518EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION**
Estate Of:
Patrick M McGrail
Also known as: Patrick McGrail
Date of Death: 11/26/2024

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Brian A McGrail** of **Rochdale 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:
Brian A McGrail of **Rochdale 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 03/11/2025.**

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: February 12, 2025
Stephanie K. Fattman,
Register of Probate
February 21, 2025

SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Under G.L. c.255 Sec.39A
Notice is hereby given by School St Towing 17-31 School St., Webster, MA 01570 Pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 255, Section 39A. that on or after MARCH 1,2025 at 17-31 School St., Webster, MA 01570 the following motor vehicle/s will be sold at private sale to satisfy the garage-keeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, care and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicle
2019 Chevy Tahoe
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VIN:1GNSKBK8KR354988
Jason F Wilson, 215 Main St, Apt. 1R
Oxford, MA 01540
Frank A Czechowski 29 Jan 2025

February 14, 2025
February 21, 2025
February 28, 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. WO25P0469EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION**
Estate Of:
Malcolm Engram
Also known as: Malcolm R Engram
Date of Death: 11/19/2024

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **John J Ferriter** of **Holyoke 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:

John J Ferriter of **Holyoke 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 03/11/2025.**

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: February 10, 2025
Stephanie K. Fattman,
Register of Probate
February 21, 2025

**(SEAL)
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT**
**Docket Number: 23 SM 003461
ORDER OF NOTICE**

TO:
Wayne H Taylor

And to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act: 50 U.S.C. c. 50 § 3901 (*et seq*):
Navy Federal Credit Union claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Oxford, numbered 399 Main Street, given by Wayne H. Taylor to Navy Federal Credit Union, dated September 28, 2017, and recorded at Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 57806, Page 139, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status. If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before March 24, 2025 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the grounds of noncompliance with the Act.
Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of said Court on February 6, 2025.
Attest:

Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
February 21, 2025

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Worcester Probate and Family Court**
Case/Docket No. WO25E0013PP
Petition To Partition

In accordance with MGL c.241, this Notice advises all interested persons that the Worcester Probate and Family Court will consider a Petition to Partition property located at 61 Main

Street (formerly So. Main St.), Oxford, MA, in Worcester County. The aforesaid property (2+ acres) is described in greater detail and registered/recorded on August 27, 1968 at Book 4879, pg. 2-3 at the Worcester County Registry of Deeds.

The Petitioner in this matter is Susan A. Sedor of Harwich, MA of Barnstable County, possessing title both by law and her inheritance, with an undivided share as a Tenant in Common along with Carolyn Sedor of Lexington, MA and Nancy Sedor of Woburn, MA (both being of Middlesex County), and Joseph Sedor of Oxford, MA.

The Petitioner desires the property be sold at private sale not less than seven hundred fifty thousand dollars, and praying that partition may be made of all the land aforesaid according to law, and to that end that a commissioner be appointed to make such partition and be ordered to make sale and conveyance of all, or any part of said land which the court finds cannot be advantageously divided either at private sale or public auction, and be ordered to distribute the net proceeds thereof.

All parties with an interest in the property, wishing to be heard or seeking to submit their objection to this Petition are hereby notified to make their appearance before the Court, located at 225 Main Street, Worcester, MA no later than 10 o'clock in the morning on the 4th day of March, 2025.
February 14, 2025

Notice is hereby given by: Precision Auto Rebuilders, Inc., 243 W Main St, Dudley, MA 01571 pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c.255, Section 39 A that on February 28, 2025 @ 5 PM at: Precision Auto Rebuilders, Inc., 243 W Main St, Dudley, MA 01571, the following motor vehicle will be sold at a private sale to satisfy the garage keeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, care and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicles:
Description of vehicles:
2019 Mits Mirage
Vehicle: VIN# ML32F3FJ0KHF09802
Owner: Amanda Menard 26 Allen Rd Sturbridge MA 01566

This notice has been given under the provisions of G.L. c.225, Section 39 A
February 7, 2025
February 14, 2025
February 28, 2025

MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by John J. Adams, Sr. to "MERS", Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., a separate corporation acting solely as nominee for "Lender", Residential Mortgage Services, Inc. and its successors and assigns dated January 19, 2021 and recorded with the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds, in Book 64303, Page 1, as assigned by Assignment of Mortgage dated May 23, 2024; recorded in Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds, Book 70578, Page 210, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at **Public Auction at 11:00 AM, on March 3, 2025**, on the premises known as **22 Morris Street, Webster, Massachusetts**, the premises described in said mortgage, together with all the rights, easements, and appurtenances thereto, to wit:

The land with the buildings thereon, situated on the northerly side of Morris Street in Webster, Worcester County, Massachusetts, bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at a stake in the ground on the northerly line of said Morris Street and being the southwesterly angle of the tract hereby conveyed;

Thence Northerly one hundred thirty (130) feet by land of one Jezierski to a stake in the ground at land of Angela Kokocinski, now or formerly;
Thence Easterly sixty-six (66) feet by land of Angela Kokocinski, now or formerly, to a stake in the ground at land of John Konkol;

Thence Southerly one hundred thirty (130) feet by land of one Davis to a stake in the ground on said Morris Street;
Thence Westerly sixty-six (66) feet by said Morris Street to the point of beginning.

Being Lot No. 6 as shown on Plan of Lots owned by Angela Kokocinski, Webster, Mass. Dated June 7, 1941 drawn by J.R. Kleindiesnt, Eng., recorded in Plan Book 154, Plan 99. Being the same premises conveyed to the herein named mortgagor(s) by deed dated July 26, 2019, and recorded with the Worcester District of Deeds in Book 60800, Page 139.

Terms of Sale: These premises are being sold subject to any and all unpaid real estate taxes, water rates, municipal charges and assessments, con-

dominium charges, expenses, costs, and assessments, if applicable, federal tax liens, partition wall rights, statutes, regulations, zoning, subdivision control, or other municipal ordinances or bylaws respecting land use, configuration, building or approval, or bylaws, statutes or ordinances regarding the presence of lead paint, asbestos or other toxic substances, sanitary codes, housing codes, tenancy, and, to the extent that they are recorded prior to the above mortgage, any easements, rights of way, restrictions, confirmation or other matters of record.

The purchaser shall also bear all state and county deeds excise tax. The deposit of \$10,000.00 is to be paid in cash or bank or certified check at the time and place of the sale, with the balance of the purchase price to be paid by bank or certified check within thirty (30) days after the date of the sale, to be deposited in escrow with Guaetta and Benson, LLC, at 73 Princeton Street, Suite 208, North Chelmsford, Massachusetts.

In the event that the successful bidder at the foreclosure sale shall default in purchasing the within described property according to the terms of this Notice of Sale and/or the terms of the Memorandum of Sale executed at the time of the foreclosure, the Mortgagee reserves the right to sell the property by foreclosure deed to the second highest bidder or, thereafter, to the next highest bidders, providing that said bidder shall deposit with said attorney, the amount of the required deposit as set forth herein within five (5) business days after written notice of the default of the previous highest bidder.

Other terms, if any, are to be announced at the sale.

Dated: January 31, 2025

Present holder of said mortgage, Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency by its Attorneys, Guaetta and Benson, LLC, Peter V. Guaetta, Esquire, P.O. Box 519, Chelmsford, MA 01824
February 7, 2025
February 14, 2025
February 21, 2025

(SEAL)
THE COMMONWEALTH
OF MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL
COURT
Docket Number: 25 SM 000381
ORDER OF NOTICE

To:
Joanne M. Nealley a/k/a Joanne Nealley, a/k/a Jo-Ann M. Nealley; Paige F. Nealley
and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq):
Select Portfolio Servicing, Inc. claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Webster, numbered 6 Henry Road, given by Joanne M. Nealley a/k/a Joanne Nealley, Mark R. Nealley to JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A., dated April 11, 2013, and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 52388, Page 238, and now held by the Plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108 on or before March 24, 2025, or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act.
Witness Gordon H. Piper, Chief Justice of this Court on February 10, 2025.

Attest:
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
27046
February 21, 2025

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WEBSTER

continued from page A1

said. "... It's either going to happen to us, or we'll have to do something in advance."

A small part of that work is being done on the building's three entryways, after Town Meeting approved funds to evaluate their stability, ADA usability and other issues. He noted the town needs to do something about the fact the library-side door has been a conduit for basement flooding, but said "It'd be nice to be able to get all three done this year."

The cost for the main entrance from the parking lot has been estimated at \$50,000, he said.

Lafond also brought up the growing cost of out-of-district special education tuition and transportation, noting he might have to fund it from either free cash or stabilization (often described as the "rainy day fund"). Both have about \$6 million in them now, and he observed, "well, it's starting to rain here."

"This is really getting to the point where it's sinking the town of Webster," he said. "We have some dynamics of a city, but don't have the financial aid coming from the state a city gets."

In other issues, the board formally promoted Gordon Wentworth to deputy police chief, approved two underground fuel storage tanks at 138 East Main St., voted to accept Dudley's application to rejoin the regional public health group, approved \$16.8 million in general obligation bonds for various projects, briefly discussed the process for this year's evaluation of Lafond, and mentioned the Conservation Commission's new Environmental Leadership Award.

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

SEND US YOUR NEWS!!!



news@stonebridgepress.news

DUDLEY

continued from page A1

October of 2024 through June 30, the end of the current fiscal year. Article 3 of the agenda sought another \$231,265 for July 1 through the end of the calendar year. Despite the urging of town officials at several meetings over the last few months, voters once again decided against both funding

OXFORD

continued from page A1

next year. A dean of students post is already being funded from that account, but the committee was concerned about taking more from it.

Cornacchioli noted they'd like those funds to be a preliminary kind of special education stabilization account until the town approves creating one for real. The goal is to have it available to pay for new special ed students needing services and/or transportation costs.

Without such a contingency, Palmina Griffin warned, having students arrive mid-year with seri-

ous needs could result in having to cut staff elsewhere to fund those kids' services. She recalled an earlier year when "everybody in this district was pink-slipped" due to an \$800,000 deficit sparked in part by federal and other aid that didn't come as expected.

"It was also not great leadership," Cornacchioli added, urging them to leave it at 3.1 percent although he'd noted elsewhere the town manager wants them to craft a level-funded budget.

If they do that, Chair Corey Burke said, they should also tell Town Meeting "here's what we believe are the needs, and here's what the budget

requests. While more voters said yes to the articles, the difference failed to meet the 2/3rds majority required for passage. Based on prior statements from town officials and Dudley's legal counsel, the board would now need to seek outside funding, adjust its budget, or face potential legal penalties from both MassDEP and the contractors.

While the possibility of adjusting the town

budget to cover the cost was discussed in December as a potential contingency plan, Town Administrator Jonathan Ruda shared a statement that he will not recommend to pay for the remediation from the existing budget and Dudley will now wait and see what happens in regards to the situation.

"I am opposed to making any budget cuts to fund PFAS remediation in the Eagle Drive neighborhood. Town Meeting set the FY25 budget, and we are bound to execute it as approved by residents," Ruda said. "Despite recommendations by the Board of Selectmen, the Finance Committee and Town Counsel, Town Meeting voters have rejected proposals to fund PFAS remediation twice; once in October and again at the Feb. 10 Special Town Meeting.

they'll have to keep three teaching posts now funded under federal Title I, but with that source of money decreasing, "we'll have to have [other] jobs go somewhere." Bobola also pointed to a few new special ed posts – an interventionist and two part-timers being made full-time – as costing close to the \$110,000 they'd need to cut to meet the 2.5 percent level. The committee members saw them as necessary.

Proctor also noted they should look at athletic costs, saying, "If we have hard conversations, athletics needs to be part of that conversation."

In other business, the board approved an ath-

letic department plan to create a football coop with Douglas in which Douglas will send about six players to Oxford. It also heard a building report from the high school and approved a updated course of studies, read a letter praising the NJROTC as "one of the best in the area," and learned it wouldn't be possible to set a virtual school cap then allow students with anxiety issues to use it beyond that cap. Therefore, they took no action on the idea of capping it proposed at the last meeting.

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

Although the town will face legal ramifications, we must abide by the residents' decision."

A fourth article at the town meeting seeking to increase the number of Board of Health members from three to five was approved. This now goes to the annual town meeting in May for further approval.

Proctor also noted they should look at athletic costs, saying, "If we have hard conversations, athletics needs to be part of that conversation."

In other business, the board approved an ath-

Dr. Bhaumik

POSITIVELY
SPEAKING

TOBY
MOORE

I was invited to a Super Bowl party in LA, so I figured—why not? I flew out, rented a car, and as I wound my way up the hills of Bel Air, I realized this wasn't just any party. The address led me to an opulent mansion owned by Dr. Mani Bhaumik—a scientist, entrepreneur, and someone whose life story made the Super Bowl seem like just another event.

The game was on, the food was great, and the energy in the room was electric—but being someone who is fascinated by those who have accomplished great things, I was more interested in getting to know Dr. Bhaumik than in watching the game.

As I spoke with him, I realized his life's journey was extraordinary.

He was born into abject poverty in a remote village in India, so poor his family had trouble meeting basic needs. He didn't receive his first pair of shoes until he was a teenager, but he made up for his lack of resources with an unstoppable hunger for knowledge.

Opportunities were scarce, and success was predetermined. Still, as destiny would have it, he lived with Mahatma Gandhi for a time, absorbing the wisdom of one of history's most outstanding leaders, not knowing that he, too, would one day leave a profound mark on the world.

Through sheer determination, he earned a place at the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology, where he pursued physics and eventually became the institution's first doctoral graduate.

In 1959, he set his sights on the United States to pursue postdoctoral research at UCLA. Arriving in the U.S. with almost

nothing, he faced an entirely new set of challenges. He was an immigrant scientist in a time when opportunities for foreign researchers were not easily handed out.

But failure wasn't in Dr. Bhaumik's nature. His relentless curiosity and determination eventually led him to breakthrough research in laser technology.

In 1968, he secured a position as the director of the laser technology lab at Northrop Corporation, where he played a pivotal role in the development of the excimer laser. This technology would later revolutionize vision correction, leading to the LASIK surgery that millions rely on today.

Yet, his success wasn't limited to science alone. Dr. Bhaumik had an entrepreneurial spirit that allowed him to expand his work beyond research labs and into the world of business.

His ventures in technology and industry earned him a fortune, enabling him to become a philanthropist.

Adding a touch of Hollywood glamour to his rags-to-riches story, He dated Eva Gabor and was featured in an episode of "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous" with Robin Leach!

Despite reaching the pinnacle of both scientific and financial achievement, he sought something even more significant. The fundamental questions of existence. How does science intersect with spirituality? Could quantum physics explain the mysteries of consciousness? Was there a higher power woven into the fabric of the universe?

These questions led him to write "Code Name God," a book exploring the intersection of cutting-edge physics and the search for meaning.

He wrote, "There is a grand design in nature, and that grand design is the reflection of a grand intelligence."

Dr. Bhaumik didn't frame this as religious doctrine—he wasn't preaching faith in a traditional sense. Instead, he proposed that science itself, through the discoveries of quantum mechanics, points toward a unifying intelligence behind the cosmos.

Dr. Bhaumik's journey isn't over. Even now, he stays up late writing research papers, speaking at conferences around the world, and funding initiatives that promote education and science.

While many might have retired to enjoy the fruits of their labor, Dr. Bhaumik remains as driven as ever, not for more success, but for deeper understanding; he's still asking questions, exploring, and giving back.

I finally turned my attention back to the game. But as I watched the players fight for victory, I couldn't shake the thought—here we were, celebrating champions on the field, and yet I was in the presence of a different kind of champion.

If there's one lesson to take from Dr. Mani Bhaumik's story, it's this: whether you're on the field, in a lab, or just navigating life, never stop learning, never stop striving.

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LEGALS

Docket No. WO24E0014PP**A.C. 92A****Petition to Partition****Commonwealth of Massachusetts****Worcester Probate & Family Court**

To John P. Stuczynski and to all other interested persons.

A petition has been presented to said Court by Kimberley Earley of Webster in the County of Worcester representing that he hold as tenant in common undivided part or share of certain land lying in Webster in said County Worcester and briefly described as follows:

See Attached

setting forth that he/she desire that all the aforesaid described part of said land may be sold at private sale for not less than four hundred and fifty thousand (\$450,000) dollars, and praying that partition may be made of all the land aforesaid according to law, and to that end that a commissioner be appointed to make such partition and be ordered to make sale and conveyance of all, or any part of said land which the Court finds cannot be advantageously divided either at private sale or public auction, and be ordered to distribute the net proceeds thereof.

If you desire to object thereto you or your attorney should file a written appearance in said Court at Worcester before ten o'clock in the forenoon on the eighteenth day of March 2025 the return date of this citation.

Witness, LEILAH A. KEAMY, Esquire, First Judge of said Court, this eleventh day of February 2025.

Stephanie K. Fattman

Register of Probate

February 21, 2025

February 28, 2025

March 7, 2025

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

Premises: 205-207/207A Main Street, Oxford, MA 01540

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Andrea M Loconto to Citizens Bank of Rhode Island, and now held by **Citizens Bank, N.A. f/k/a RBS Citizens, N.A. s/b/m Citizens Bank of Rhode Island**, said mortgage dated February 25, 2005 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 35943, Page 145, as affected by a Loan Modification dated August 5, 2016 and recorded in the Worcester

County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 58358, Page 85; for breach of the conditions in said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at **Public Auction on March 13, 2025 at 10:00 AM Local Time** upon the premises, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

The land with the buildings thereon situated in the Town of Oxford, County of Worcester, State of Massachusetts, being on the westerly side of Main Street, shown as Parcel A and off the westerly side of Main Street, being Parcel B on a plan by Albert L. Fitzpatrick dated October 11, 1973, in Plan Book 403. Plan 94 and to which plan reference may be had for a more particular description of both parcels. Being the same premises as conveyed to the Mortgagor by deed recorded with Worcester County Registry of Deeds, in Book 35118, Page 238

The description of the property contained in the mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

For Mortgagor's Title see deed dated November 17, 2004 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book

35118, Page 238.

TERMS OF SALE: Said premises will be sold and conveyed subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens and assessments, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described.

FIVE THOUSAND (\$5,000.00) Dollars of the purchase price must be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check at the time and place of the sale by the purchaser. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check within thirty (30) days after the date of sale.

Other terms to be announced at the sale.

Brock & Scott, PLLC

23 Messenger Street

2nd Floor

Plainville, MA 02762

Attorney for Citizens Bank, N.A. f/k/a

RBS Citizens, N.A. s/b/m Citizens

Bank of Rhode Island

Present Holder of the Mortgage

(401) 217-8701

February 7, 2025

February 14, 2025

February 21, 2025

Dudley, Charlton show mixed performance on 2024 MCAS tests

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY/CHARLTON — The Dudley Charlton Regional School District's MCAS scores garnered mixed results in terms of student performance in 2024. A report presented by Assistant Superintendent Kelly True revealed that while scores increased in some categories, notable decreases mean the district still has work to do in terms of helping students keep up with the rest of the state.

While a vote in the 2024 President Election eliminated the MCAS test as a graduation requirement in Massachusetts, the state test is still an important component of compiling data regarding comprehension in schools.

Assistant Superintendent True revealed the results of Dudley and Charlton's scores at the School Committee's Jan. 29 meeting where Grades 3-8 saw decreases in language arts and math but increases in science scores while high school students saw decreases in math scores and increases in language arts and science. Student growth percentages were also mixed with some district schools excelling in certain subjects while other schools and grades fell behind. The data showed notable decreases in performance for high needs, low-income, and multilingual students as well as students with disabilities. However, the high school saw increased participation and performance from those taking Advanced Placement tests.

While True didn't express significant concern for the results, she did say the data is clear that more work needs to be done to make sure their students are prepared and familiar with the material.

"There are a lot of different things that we can do which stems around having targeted interventions and developing Multi-Tiered Systems of Support at every level," said True. "We want to continue to build in opportunities to improve what we already have in place for Multi-Tiered Systems of Support. Those are most predominantly working well at the elementary level, but we really need to look at how we can provide more tiers of support at the secondary level, at both the middle school and the high school levels for students who are showing that they could use more support, especially our core classes."

Among the recommended solutions in her presentations were continuing to build in opportunities to improve our Multi-Tiered System of Support, a focus on struggling subgroups, exploring funding sources for high quality instructional materials, enhancing training for teachers, expanded AP opportunities, enhanced resource allocation, and an increased writing focus. A full document of True's presentation has been made available for the public as part of the Jan. 29 agenda of the Dudley Charlton Regional School Committee on the school district Web site.

Thomas Cowden qualifies for Dean's List at Seton Hall

SOUTH ORANGE, N.J. — Seton Hall University is pleased to announce Thomas Cowden of Auburn has qualified for the Fall 2024 Dean's List.

After the close of every semester, undergraduate students completing all courses with a GPA of 3.4, with no grades lower than "C" qualify for the Dean's List.

As one of the nation's leading Catholic universities, Seton Hall has been showing the world what great minds can do since 1856. Home to more than 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students and offering more than 90 rigorous majors, Seton Hall's academic excellence has been singled out for distinction by The Princeton Review, U.S. News & World Report and Bloomberg Businessweek.

One of the country's leading Catholic universities, Seton Hall has been showing the world what great minds can do since 1856. Home to nearly 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students and offering more than 90 rigorous majors, Seton Hall's academic excellence has been singled out for distinction by The Princeton Review, US News & World Report and Bloomberg Businessweek. Seton Hall, which embraces students of all religions, prepares its graduates to be exemplary servant leaders and caring global citizens. Its attractive main campus is located in suburban South Orange, New Jersey, and is only 14 miles from New York City, offering a wealth of employment, internship, cultural and entertainment opportunities. A new independent economic analysis of the University found that Seton Hall provides a significant impact on New Jersey's economy, totaling over \$1.6 billion annually and creating and sustaining nearly 10,000 jobs. The University's nationally recognized School of Law is prominently located in downtown Newark. The University's Interprofessional Health Sciences (IHS) campus in Clifton and Nutley, New Jersey, houses Seton Hall's College of Nursing, its School of Health and Medical Sciences as well as the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine.

Audio Journal's Random Acts of Music set for May date

WORCESTER — "Random Acts of Music," drawing on the great and varied musical talents of Worcester, will present an evening of dining and entertainment at the Hogan Ballroom at the College of the Holy Cross on Saturday, May 31. Audio Journal, the radio reading service for the blind and print disabled, returns to Hogan Hall in Worcester for its annual fundraising event. A ticket purchase, sponsorship or donation in support of this event, will help Audio Journal continue broadcasting news, information and entertainment to individuals in Central Massachusetts who are blind or print disabled.

"The entertainment aspect of the evening will include jazz, classical and folk standards of vocal and instrumental, solo and group artists. The event promises to be filled with surprises contributing to a musical night to remember," according to Executive Director Harry Duchesne of Audio Journal.

Starting at 5:30 p.m. with a cash bar, silent auction and raffle opportunities, the show and dinner are set to begin at 6:30 p.m. A single ticket costs \$75 with tickets for two at \$130. A table of eight costs \$500 with a table of 10 for \$600 in the front two rows. The dinner meal choices offered are chicken, fish, vegetarian/vegan, special choice for those with dietary needs.

This year's silent auction will begin online on April 1 and will be open to the public. The online auction will end the morning of the event and will continue as a live auction the night of the event.

"The silent auction and raffle offerings at Audio Journal events are exceptional and are the cause for enthusiastic bidding," says Duchesne.

Audio Journal's mission in Central Massachusetts is to connect individuals with a visual impairment, or

an inability to access print material, to their communities through broadcasting of local news, information, and entertainment with exclusive programs and content. Listeners hear broadcasts via an iPhone and Android App, smart speaker (Amazon Echo), internet, telephone, cable TV, or a special receiver tuned to Audio Journal's frequency. Audio Journal's 170 volunteers read newspa-

pers, magazines, books, grocery and retail flyers, health information, and more. There are more than a dozen specialty programs including Speaking Volumes, Radio Active Theatre and Talking Topics and Another Point of View. This local reading service for the visually impaired and print disabled is a valued source of information and companionship.

Kathryn James named to Champlain College Trustees' List!

BURLINGTON, Vt. — Kathryn James of Webster was named to the Champlain College Trustees' List for the Fall 2024 semester.

Students on the Trustees' List have achieved a 4.0 grade point average for two or more consecutive semesters. James is majoring in Computer Science and Innovation.

Making the Trustees' List is a tremendous achievement. Many of the high achievers balance their career-focused classes with jobs, internships, clubs, and volunteering. We congratulate you on this great accomplishment and honor.

Founded in 1878, Champlain College is a small, not-for-profit, private college in Burlington, Vt., with additional campuses in Montreal, Canada, and Dublin, Ireland. Champlain offers a residential undergraduate experience from its beautiful campus overlooking Lake Champlain. Additionally, Champlain College Online provides an expansive portfolio of online degrees and certificates, reaching students across all 50 states and U.S. territories, while fostering strategic partnerships with forward-thinking workforce organizations. The College is known for its distinctive and innovative approach to career-focused education and its Upside-Down Curriculum, which helps students be ready for work, ready for life, and ready to make a difference. Champlain is ranked as one of the "Best Colleges" by U.S. News & World Report for 2025, and was named one of the "Best 390 Colleges" by The Princeton Review for 2025, including among its "Best Northeastern colleges." For more information, visit www.champlain.edu.

Lilianna Sigalovsky named to dean's list at Tufts University

MEDFORD — Lilianna Sigalovsky, Class of 2026 of Webster, was named to the dean's list at Tufts University for the fall 2024 semester. Dean's list honors at Tufts University require a semester grade point average of 3.4 or greater.

Tufts University, located on campuses in Boston, Medford/Somerville and Grafton, Massachusetts, and in Talloires, France, is recognized among the premier research universities in the United States. Tufts enjoys a global reputation for academic excellence and for the preparation of students as leaders in a wide range of professions. A growing number of innovative teaching and research initiatives span all Tufts campuses, and collaboration among the faculty and students in the undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs across the university's schools is widely encouraged.

Oxford High School announces honor roll

OXFORD — Oxford High School would like to announce their Honor Roll for Quarter 2 of the 2024-2025 school year. Please see the list below. Let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information.

High Honors

Seniors: Muniba Awais, Nicole Brzozowska, Kayla Dodge, Edward Edison, Hailey Filipkowski, Isabella Geragonis, Zoey Gould, Marta Hellstrom, Nhu Huynh, Jacob Lanciault, Emma Martin, Erin Mulcahy, Alexander Paradise, Jonathan Sullivan, Aidan Vanarsdalen

Juniors: Justine Anderson, Gianna Snow Boucher, Cassidy Burke, Delaney Burke, Anna Costa Heroux, Conner Dawe, Michaela Dwyer, Veronica Griffin, Gwen Gustafson, Matthew Hilman, Rosy Krantz, Ava Vincent, Vanessa Walker, Ethan White

Sophomores: Shayla Boliver, Marie Cosentino, Abigail Davis, Cameron Davis, Kate Mayo

Freshman: Khloe Anderson, Haniya Awais, Lillian Burke, Andrew Collins, Laura Grenier, Olivia Hammond, Caroline Harty, Noel Jandrow, Ella Kasprzycki, Brooke Nitti, Krystiana Sobocinski, Mia Urbaz, Keagan Vanarsdalen

Honors

Seniors: Mikaela Baraklilis, Kayla Belmore, Rebeca Brito-Correia, Kellen Clarkson, Sophia Cornacchioli, Nathan Davis, Antony Delorge-Rheaume, Chloe Dumas, Sophia Hernandez, Ella Kirkpatrick, Valerie Magill, Annie Maynard, Hunter McQuillan, Luis Melendez, Calvin Nfodjo, Kaitlyn Ojerholm, Sarah Parker, Samantha Pretty, Maya Staltare

Juniors: Muhammad Anees, Hailey Angell, Sarah Arndt, Zack Bond, Jaelynn Caracciolo, Savannah Cioppa, Sarah Fonseca, Chloe Gabis, Alexander Hamilton, Abigail Kimball, Ava Liberis, Addisen Monsen, Andrew Nieber, Samuel Paradise, Leonardo Peterson, Emma Reis, Patrick Shilale, Thalyta Souza, Abigail Worster

Sophomores: Isabella Amorim, Michelle Annancy, Gabrielle Bartlett, Ava Benway, Makalieg Boyle-Muniz, Audri Chalifoux, Lillian Demicco, Zaria Edison, Angeliz Felix, Leeya Hernandez, Daymyin Lopez, Huckleberry McQuillan, Riley Moody, Brooklynn Mott, Chase Paul, Philip Rouillard, Theresa-Nickole Roy, Braden Stone, Taliah Valentin

Freshmen: Sabrina Adamiak, Travis Beaudette, Kaeli Cordova Del Cid, George Durand, Liam Fahey, Davi Fracalossi, Myles Francis, Calleigh Furtado, Tatiangelys Hernandez Barreto, Keith Kirkpatrick, Beatriz Luna, Zachary MacDonald, Adalisse Mercado Montanez, Leah Newkirk, Lacey Parker, Devyn Quarshie, Joseph Ricard, Jacob Rondeau, Adam Sliwoski, Torin Stone, Caiden Valipour

Sophia Gawronski named to dean's list at Tufts University

MEDFORD — Sophia Gawronski, Class of 2027 of Auburn, was named to the dean's list at Tufts University for the fall 2024 semester. Dean's list honors at Tufts University require a semester grade point average of 3.4 or greater.

Tufts University, located on campuses in Boston, Medford/Somerville and Grafton, Massachusetts, and in Talloires, France, is recognized among the premier research universities in the United States. Tufts enjoys a global reputation for academic excellence and for the preparation of students as leaders in a wide range of professions. A growing number of innovative teaching and research initiatives span all Tufts campuses, and collaboration among the faculty and students in the undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs across the university's schools is widely encouraged.

Nicole Grady of Oxford graduates from University of Tampa

TAMPA, Fla. — Nicole Grady, of Oxford, graduated from University of Tampa on Dec. 13. Grady received a Master of Physician Assistant Medicine in Physician Assistant Medicine.

The commencement ceremony honored 982 undergraduate and graduate candidates and included remarks by President Teresa Abi-Nader Dahlberg, Eric Freundt, professor of biology, and the student challenge speaker.

The University of Tampa is a private, comprehensive university located on 110 acres on the riverfront in downtown Tampa. Known for academic excellence, personal attention and real-world experience in its undergraduate and graduate programs, the University has about 200 programs of study and serves more than 11,000 students from 50 states and most of the world's countries.

Salve Regina University announces Dean's List

NEWPORT, R.I. — The following students were named to the Dean's List during the fall 2024 academic semester at Salve Regina University. To qualify for the Dean's List, students must earn a semester grade point average of 3.6 for full-time students completing at least 12 graded credits, or a semester grade point average of 3.8 for part-time students completing at least six credits.

Rebecca Dawson of Auburn
Emma McGrillen of Auburn
Cadence Stawiecki of Dudley
Panayiota Veronis of Dudley

Salve Regina University is a Catholic, coeducational institution of higher education founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1947. For more than 75 years, Salve has offered rigorous, innovative academic programming in the liberal arts tradition that prepares students to be global citizens and lifelong learners. More than 2,700 undergraduate and graduate students from around the world are enrolled at Salve in 48 undergraduate majors, 13 master's degree programs, combined bachelor's/master's programs, and doctoral programs.

Every undergraduate student engages in Salve Compass, a four-year transformational program through which they develop the experience, skills, and wisdom required for a fulfilling career and to make a positive difference in the world. The University is also home to the Pell Center for International Relations and Public Policy, a multi-disciplinary research center focused on the intersection of politics, policy, and ideas. For more information, visit salve.edu.

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Saint Joseph School celebrates Polish tradition of Koleda



Courtesy

Rev. Grzegorz Chodkowski blesses the PreK 3-year-old students during the Koleda in their classroom. The children, filled with excitement and reverence, smile as they prepare for their blessing. In the background, a small table is beautifully arranged for Father Gregory, featuring a delicate display of flowers, a small statue of the infant Jesus nestled in a bed of straw, and a plate set aside refreshments. The scene captures the warmth and tradition of Koleda, bringing faith and joy to the youngest members of the Saint Joseph School community.

WEBSTER — In the spirit of faith, unity, and cultural heritage, Saint Joseph School was honored to host a traditional Koleda, a cherished Polish Christmas tradition, during the month of January. This meaningful event was led by Rev. Grzegorz Chodkowski, Headmaster and Pastor, as he visited each classroom - from the PreK 3-year-old classroom to Grade 8 - to bring blessings and share in the joy of the Christmas season.

Koleda, a time-honored Polish custom, takes place during the 40-day Christmas season, culminating on Feb. 2, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. It is a sacred tradition in which priests visit the homes of parishioners to bring the presence of Christ into their lives, offer blessings, and strengthen the faith of the community. Through Koleda, the faithful receive God's grace while sharing in the warmth of fellowship and prayer.

At Saint Joseph School, Father Gregory adapted this tradition to the

classroom setting, fostering a deeper spiritual connection among students and faculty. Each visit included a selection of Christmas carols, prayers, and a special blessing. Students participated in singing beloved hymns such as "Silent Night," "Away in a Manger," "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," and "O Come, All Ye Faithful." These carols not only celebrate the birth of Christ but also highlight the importance of unity in faith.

The visits began with an opening prayer, the Hail Mary, and the Prayer of the Faithful. Students then joined in reciting the Our Father before receiving Father Gregory's final prayer and blessing. Each session concluded with another joyful Christmas carol and a time of fellowship over light refreshments.

In addition to celebrating the Polish tradition of Koleda, this event also provided an opportunity for students to share their own unique family customs surrounding

Christmas. Students were encouraged to discuss the diverse cultural traditions represented within the Saint Joseph School community, promoting a deeper appreciation for the rich tapestry of holiday customs that unite us all in faith and love. This celebration was not only a way to honor the school's Polish heritage but also an opportunity to recognize the increasing diversity within the student body and encourage dialogue about different cultural backgrounds.

"Koleda is a special time to bring Christ into our hearts and homes. It was a joy to share this tradition with our students while also learning about their own family celebrations. Together, we embrace the beauty of faith and culture," said Father Gregory.

Saint Joseph School remains committed to nurturing the spiritual growth of its students and celebrating the traditions that enrich our faith community. By incorporating customs such as Koleda, the school continues to honor its Catholic and Polish heritage while embracing the diversity of all its families.

For more information about Saint Joseph School and its faith-based traditions, please visit www.sjs-webster.com or email info@sjs-webster.com.



Courtesy

The Knights of Columbus District 10 held their Free Throw contest on Saturday, Feb. 15 at St. Joseph Gym in Webster. Winners are, left to right, front row: Jordan Ashton, Connor Shelburne, Keegan Wheeler, Briella Fraser, Reid Benjamin. Back row, left to right: Arianna Woodwary, Emmitt Champagne, Mia Alvarez, Ben Gilligan. All advanced to the Regionals, which will be held on March 15 at Nichols College in Dudley.

Cornerstone Bank now accepting applications for annual scholarships

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank, a community bank with locations throughout Central Massachusetts, is inviting high school students who are interested in pursuing studies in business or finance to apply for the Bank's 2025 scholarship program. Cornerstone is awarding \$2,500 scholarships to 16 students who best demonstrate achievement in academics, extracurricular activities and community involvement. Applications are being accepted through April 8.

"It's always inspiring to hear fresh ideas from young people interested in pushing our industry forward," said Cornerstone CEO Todd Tallman. "The more we support and invest in these teenagers now, the brighter the future will look for all of us."

Applicants must submit an official transcript and GPA from their guidance office and be on track to graduate high school in 2025. They also must provide a one-page typed essay based on the following prompt:

Describe your career goals and the steps you are taking to achieve them. How will this scholarship help you overcome challenges and support your path to success?

Interested students should complete and submit the application found here: cornerstonebank.com/community/scholarship-form. Recipients of the scholarship will receive funds after successful completion of the first college semester; and upon presentation of an official copy of the first-semester transcript and second-semester bill. For more information, please visit cornerstonebank.com/scholarships.

SOPHOMORES NAMED TO HONOR ROLL AT BAY PATH

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical School congratulates the following students in grade 10 on being named to the honor roll for the first quarter of the 2024-2025 school year.

High Honors

Anais Annette Alamo-Abad, Lillian Lauren Araujo, Boden Richard Barrell, Brett Julius Beltzer, Alexandria Helene Blanchard, Sagasse Mpolo Budimbu, Clara Mae Burlingame, Jenna Lynne Cianci, Trinity Chevelle Crompton, Benjamin Jackson Cryan, Luciana Isabel Flores, Brooke Nicole Fuller, Jady Marie Goodwin, Emma Grace Harrington, Vikram Kanchan Jha, Jayme Douglas Kenney, Jared Thomas Magnusson, Emily Arlene Malia, Thomas Andrew Nault, Johnny Ly Nhan, Katie Ann Putnam, Jason Timothy Richard, Jordyn Alexandra Sabotka, Owen Wajer Sanford, Isabella Christina Sepulveda, Kyle Dennis Twombly, Ryan James Ugrinow, Jazzelle Gia Wolverson, Jackson Robert Young

Honors

Salete Hellen Alves, Trevor Riley Amaral, Winifred Donna Aucoin, Collin William Bachand, Kennadie Taylor Balcunas, Vincent Louis Balducci, Zaclayia Rose Ballard, Benjamin Whitman Bassett, Lyla Rose Beauchene, Samantha Mackenzie Belanger, Kayleigh Rose Bissell, Alyssa Rose Bonneville, Benjamin Russell Boulmetis, Gavin Gradley Boyd, Alexia Rose Brown, Olivia Raychal Burgos, Ariana Kathleen Byrnes, Bella Kristina Calnan, Michaela Sarah Carter, Evalynn Rose Cedillo, Miya Elizabeth Chauvin, Keziah Sage Chipman, Leianna Marie Collins, Liam Zachary Colon, Eric Murphy Day, Hunter William Defosse, Livia Cassandra Deluca, Madison Clara Drewry, Brianna Nyarkoa Dwomoah, Molly Elizabeth Dwyer, Elizabeth Joyce Eccleston, Dylan Michael Filipkowski, Samantha Lynn Fleck, Aria Faith Fournier, Jinnette Lynn Goguen, Adrian Dariusz Golemo, Dakota Rylie Goodwin, Liam Reed Greenwood, Julia Abigail Holton, Colin Paul Hurley, Dominik Ignatovich, Evangeline Noelle Jackson, Kelsey Rose Karlowicz, Finnian John Keefe, Owen John Kennedy, Abena Kwartemaa Kwarteng, Benjamin Mitchell Labbe, Sangey Dawa Lama, Maximilian Thomas Lapriore, Ethan Michael Lemire, Damon James Libby, Perry Khai Lima, Apollo Ridge Logan, Julie-Anna Marie Marchetti, Jack Moriarty Maroney, Christopher Warren Martin, Aaron Robert Mazur, Finn McDaniel, Ava June McKelleck, Joshua Daniel McLaughlin, Johannys Marie

Melendez, Nicholas Isaac Meneguzzo, Jayden Anthony Minardi, Alexis Kayla Moore, Miles Joseph Moriarty, Miguel Angel Mosqueda, Nathaniel Thomas Munson, Kaiya Rowan Murphy, Anastasia Marie Nieuwenhoff, Daniel Anthony Nowlan, Sarah Hazel O'Donnell, Elijah Ziarre Orfori, Jacey Okyere-Tawiah, Izabella Grace Paquin, Matthew Dean Parmenter, Kiley Marie Paronto, Aylah Mae Patraw, Mayli Ann Pedersen, Iban Alexander Pelaez, Kyla Carmen Farai Pierre, Ava Marie Rennie, Isabella Lynn Richard, Dani Roemer, Leilani Marie Rohena Torres, Yarisbeth Michelle Rojas, Jennavicia Marie Roseberry, Julian Benjamin Saez, Isaiah Omar Santiago, Ella Lannei Schofield, Kayla Lynn Schroeder, Michael Ryan Scott, Jannessa Ellie Sepuka, Lucas Clement Silva, Zachary Stephen Sirard, Tiano Joseph Caole Sousa, Hadleigh Anne Splaine, Logan Frederick Stake, Dylan Robert Strzelewicz, Arianna Jayde Thomas, Rachel Lynnette, Torres, Nicholas Aiden Tremblay, Timothy Nicholas Tripp, Bryce Joseph Vautour, Sophia Ann Vigeant, Bradey Matthew Weeks, Connor Patrick Welsh, Christopher Paul Willey, Nico Anthony Yacavace, Lucy Vivian Zaleski

Principal's List

Lacie Rose Andrews, Riley Norman Baillargeon, Nolan Scott Barton, Dominic Francis Carofaniello, Eli Choiniere, Aidan Connor Clyne, Naomi Natania Cooper, Maya Janara Cronin, Liam Michael Cunniff, Nathan Stephan Donnelly, Zachary Michael Dumas, Brayden Alex Erickson, Ava Lila Erkok, Tobias Michael Falc-Foreman, Marcus Anthony James Feliciano, Ely Eric Gembofski, Cole Michael Going, Emma Lynn Grensavtich, Brady Nicholas Johnson, Cameron Joseph-Michael Kittredge, Alexander James Kowalski, Owen David Lemansky, Andrew Tadeusz Levitzky, Laiylah Rose Marquez, Colin Archak McIlvaine, Alysia Marie Melendez, Ayden Michael Morin, Corey Amoako Ntim, Jacob Jan Perry, Dylan James Poissot, Sophia Morrigan Ramirez-Murphy, Sophia Rivera, Evan Mitchell Roberts, Devin Matthew Robinson, Jake Albert Roemer, Adrian Miguel Rosa Bouthot, Gianna Kaylee Rosario, Trevor Anthony Rose, Eziajah Gianni Santiago, Logan James Schoff, Julia Rose Simpson, Addisyn Theresa Skeates, Brady Patrick Smith, Rebecca Marie Smith, Skylia Marie St. Francis, Amelia Jean St. Peter, Sean Michael Francis Sullivan, Travis Jacob Tong, Isabella Anna Vangel, Dahsiel Robert Williams, Payton Cailee Ziemski

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